

Subject: Youth Soccer Insider: Ref friendlies as if they count in the standings

From: Soccer America <news@socceramerica.com>

Date: 1/27/2017 4:02 PM

To: ASLSOC@SWCP.COM



Friday, Jan. 27, 2017

[Tweet This](#) [Share This](#)

Ref friendlies as if they count in the standings

By Randy Vogt

Friendly games can take many forms. It could be a preseason game, a match played for charity or the alumni game of a college or high school. College soccer has many friendly games on its schedule, such as the spring games as well as preseason games played before the regular season in the fall. It's no surprise that these college games are generally not as intense as the games played during the regular season.

Assignors give me more than my share of friendly games as they know that I take every match seriously. That's the trap some refs fall into when officiating friendly games as they believe there is very little to do and they will not have to make any major decisions that day. On the contrary as the ref is there to enforce the rules no matter what type of game it is.

Seemingly every year, Soccer America will report on a friendly game gone bad between a professional team and either a minor-league team or a college squad. Words were said, a player might have been hurt and maybe even a team left the field early, not wanting to continue the game.

So the ref approaches a friendly game as he or she would approach every other game. Don't do this and even a friendly can go south very quickly.

I was officiating a spring college game between two Division 1 men's college teams. We three officials said before the game that we would see how much the teams wanted to play and would officiate it accordingly. Which is good advice no matter if it's a friendly game or a cup final.

The first five minutes of the game was very intense with several fouls that needed to be whistled. Nothing malicious but the



players came onto the field in a very competitive mood to show coach that they deserve a starting position in the fall. The fouls were called, the players going at 95 miles per hour became fatigued and, midway through the first half, fewer fouls started to be committed.

The home team, dressed in white, had the better of play throughout the game. But they surrendered a bad goal 12 minutes into the game when the right defender passed to the central defender, who dummied the ball back to the keeper, not seeing a maroon attacker nearby. The attacker got the ball before the keeper and scored on a breakaway.

White scored on a header a few minutes later, then on a 35-yard golazo in the 58th minute.

With five minutes left, a maroon attacker was dribbling in the corner of the penalty area when a white defender tried a sliding tackle but wound up taking out the attacker and not touching the ball. A penalty kick, which maroon scored on. It was a silly challenge from the white defender as maroon was not dangerous since white had two other defenders by the ball.

So we were faced with white having the better of play but surrendering two bad goals to lead to a 2-2 scoreline, which was the final score. Yet this was and remained a friendly game as the refs were officiating it as if it counted in the standings.

(Randy Vogt has officiated over 9,000 games during the past three decades, from professional matches in front of thousands to 6-year-olds being cheered on by very enthusiastic parents. In his book [Preventive Officiating](#), he shares his wisdom gleaned from thousands of games and hundreds of clinics to help referees not only survive but thrive on the soccer field. You can visit the book's website at preventiveofficiating.com/)

[Post your response to the public Youth Soccer Insider blog.](#)

[See what others are saying on the Youth Soccer Insider blog.](#)

Friday, Jan. 27, 2017

FEEDBACK: Send comments to letters@socceramerica.com. Please include your first and last name and hometown.

You are receiving this newsletter at ASLSOC@SWCP.COM as part of your membership with Soccer America.

If you'd rather not receive this newsletter in the future [click here](#).

Please do not reply to this email.

Editorial Contact: mike@socceramerica.com

Membership Contact: circulation@socceramerica.com

We welcome and appreciate forwarding of our newsletters in their entirety or in part with proper attribution.

© 2017 Soccer America, 145 Pipers Hill Road Wilton, CT 06897 USA

