



To: Officials Working MLS Matches

From: Paul Tamberino  
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Re: Serious Injuries

Date: March 25, 2009

There has been well established US Soccer guidance for referees at the highest level to be particularly mindful of serious injuries and to respond appropriately. Past National Program for Referee Development clinics have dealt with this matter in no uncertain terms and this was the specific topic of a directive this year which was covered at the Professional Seminar in Orlando and again in all the Referee Training Seminars preparing for the 2009 MLS/WPS/USL/PDL season.

In the DC United - LA Galaxy game (March 22), two players collided while attempting to jump for the ball. As a result, both suffered head injuries, with bleeding, that required stitches or staples to close the wounds.

Play should have been stopped immediately.

Whenever a player's head is injured—regardless of whether the collision was with an opponent, a teammate, or an object on the field such as a goal post—the safety of that player is of prime concern.

There is no higher priority.

Instructors, assessors, match inspectors, and others involved with referee training and administration must take every opportunity to remind referees of this requirement, if such a reminder is needed.