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From: Alfred Kleinaitis
Manager of Referee Development and Education

Subject: **Disallowed Goal from A Pass Back Violation Restart**

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In the 26th minute of a match played July 27 by Columbus at Colorado, the referee stopped play for an indirect free kick violation. An apparent goal scored from a quick restart was disallowed. All elements of this sequence of events were handled properly.

First, the assistant referee and the referee recognized an uncommon Law 12 offense often referred to as a “pass back” violation. The offense rests on three events occurring in the following sequence:

- The ball is kicked (played with the foot) by a teammate of the goalkeeper,
- This action is deemed to be deliberate rather than a deflection, and
- The goalkeeper handles the ball directly (no intervening touch or play of the ball by anyone else)

The attached clip clearly demonstrates that these requirements were met.

- The ball was deliberately kicked by Columbus player #12 (Gavin).
- The ball was then directly handled by the Columbus goalkeeper (Hesmer).

If the ball had continued on into the net, despite having been handled by the Columbus goalkeeper, the referee would have applied advantage and counted the goal.

Second, the referee did not interfere with the restart and thus allowed Colorado to perform a quick free kick. Quick restarts generally, and quick free kicks in particular, are favored by the Laws of the Game and should be allowed unless:

- the ball is not stationary,
- the location is not correct based on where the offense occurred, or
- a specific and compelling reason exists to delay the restart (e.g., a serious injury or the need to card for misconduct).

Third, because the ball was kicked directly into the net by Colorado #11 (Cooke) from an indirect free kick restart, the goal could not be allowed. Before announcing his decision, the referee took a quick look at the lead assistant referee and confirmed that the assistant referee was indicating that the goal was not valid. If the Columbus goalkeeper had made contact with the ball in any way, the goal would not have been scored “directly” from the indirect free kick and would have counted.

The officiating team’s decisions and actions were soundly grounded in their knowledge of the Laws of the Game and recommended mechanics.