



Sliding Tackles and Dangerous Play Guidance

9.13 Players must not tackle unless in a position to play the ball without body contact.

Reckless play, such as sliding tackles and other overly physical challenges by field players, which take an opponent to ground and which have the potential to cause injury should attract appropriate match and personal penalties.

Going to ground is not in itself an offence; however the creation of danger is as in interference or obstruction which also includes attacking players sliding for shots at goal. So there is no offence if a player takes the ball cleanly and the opponent does not need to take “legitimate” evasive action.

For field players. If the opponent must take legitimate evasive action, which may also be considered stopping playing a ball they well may have been entitled to play, then that is to be treated as dangerous play even if:-

The tackler takes the ball cleanly. If the slide was deliberate, then the match penalty and personal penalty should be appropriate for intentional dangerous play – potentially a yellow card.

When a deliberate slide takes the tackler into contact with an opponent, then the personal penalty is likely to be a ten minute yellow, however if obvious serious bodily injury occurs, for example broken bones, spinal injury, life changing injury or causing open wounds (not straight forward AstroTurf burns) then the penalty should be the issuing of a permanent suspension (red card).

Please note this is guidance and not an absolute: circumstances may vary according to the state and level of the match. In particular this applies to slides that are deliberate, and not genuine slips by the player.

For Goalkeepers. Goalkeepers can be expected to go to ground, and the GK should not be penalised if an incoming attacker jumps or falls over the GK. However, the existing note to 10.2a still applies to a GK sliding through a standing attacker:-

Goalkeepers are not permitted to conduct themselves in a manner which is dangerous to other players by taking advantage of the protective equipment they wear.

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