

# Referee Process for Appeals

## *MGAA Informational Series Topic #1*

This year we have introduced the IMGGA Appeals Process. You can find this in the IMGGA rulebook page 27 CR21.1 - CR21.4 Please read this section in the IMGGA rulebook.

[http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/4ed536\\_f56735cde2a042ab89468392a1d93516.pdf](http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/4ed536_f56735cde2a042ab89468392a1d93516.pdf)

You can also find the MGAA addendum here:

[http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/4ed536\\_02b45789e1c3423fa4bcbede032363d0.pdf](http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/4ed536_02b45789e1c3423fa4bcbede032363d0.pdf)

Riders/teams may appeal a decision that the rider/team was involved in. Appeals must be made regarding a race before the start of the next race. This means that teams must be informed of eliminations/results of one race before the start of the next race.

In most cases this season the referee has been walking onto the field to inform the team of an elimination directly. In some cases it is announced over the PA and the team signals the referee they are aware.

If a rider/team/trainer wishes to appeal, a single rider/trainer presents an appeal by standing at the penalty line (also known as the 10 yard line) with their green card raised in the air.

*The following is the process written out from the point of view of the referee.*

### **The Referee interacts with the rider/trainer.**

The single rider/trainer presents a polite appeal. The referee listens to the entire appeal. If multiple riders approach, the referee asks for only one rider/trainer to present the appeal.

The referee does not argue back, or discredit what the rider presents, but may ask additional questions as necessary.

The referee thanks the rider and lets them know they will follow up shortly and walks away. The rider/trainer stays with their team.

### **The Referee investigates.**

The referee then follows up with all means possible to assess the situation.

If it is possible the situation or incident could have been caught on an official video (ex: line A finish tablet) the referee may review this. No unofficial video or film may be considered.

The referee should review the exact wording in the rulebook, not just go off of the wording they remember for the call. Often we remember old wording or "pony club" wording, be sure you are up to date with the most current rule.

The referee should speak to all assistant referees. A "referee huddle" in the middle of the field would be ideal, where no outside influences can interfere and all assistant referees can discuss together.

An assistant referee may not remember seeing anything until they hear other assistant referees discussing it and their memory is jogged. They may realize "oh that wasn't the red team, that was the blue team". Or they may have seen the aftermath, or lead up to the situation that may be pertinent to the call.

Draw a diagram on the ground and have your assistant referees' review what happened, while the others look on, agreeing or disagreeing.

Some things you might ask your assistant referees:

- Are you sure?
- Which rider and pony was it?
- Were they in their own lane?
- Can you repeat the order it happened in?
- Slow down and let's go over that again.
- Did you see the whole situation?

Decision time

The referee must then make the final decision, does this call stand?

Some questions to ask yourself.

- Are my Assistant Referees on the same page or are they in disagreement?
- Am I SURE this took place?
- Does this incident fit the wording in the rulebook?

Remember benefit of doubt should be given, so if you are not reasonably sure, or your assistant referees do not agree, you may need to give the team benefit of the doubt.

Relaying the decision to the team.

The Referee should then go back to the single rider/trainer and present your decision. State your decision politely and clearly. A reason should be given.

EX: "After review, I am not completely confident that this happened so I am giving benefit of doubt in your favor and over turning the elimination."

EX: "After reviewing the Line A camera, it was clear your team had two riders on the field of play at the same time. The elimination stands."

If the team "wins" their appeal they will keep their green card and may make another appeal. If they "lose" their appeal they will not appeal again during that session.

The referee also relays this decision to the A line for official recording/announcing over the PA.

At this time the discussion is over. The decision is final. The rider/trainer/team may not continue to argue or discuss the call. Their appeal is complete. The competition continues on.

*Referees remember:*

*All appeals should be taken seriously and fully investigated. You do not simply double check with the one assistant referee that made the call, "you sure you saw that", "yep", "ok, call stands".*

*Think to yourself, 'If this were my team, how would I expect this to be handled?' and remember that this call is just as important to the team you are refereeing as it would be to your own team.*

*All interactions should be polite and clear.*

*You are the teacher of both the riders and the assistant referees. The assistant referees and the team should understand what the error was.*

*All divisions take their competition seriously, and all are putting in the time, money and effort to be there. The calls in Novice, Intermediate, O25, and Open*

*are all equally important to those riders and should all be handled with the same level of seriousness.*

*We all make mistakes. Even the best referees make bad calls on occasion. And we are dependent on our assistant referee eyes'. The appeals process gives riders a process to say, "Hey, wait a minute, that didn't happen". And for you to review it in more detail.*

*Riders/Trainers remember:*

*Your referee is doing the best job they can do, and they are relying on the eyes and reports of their assistant referees, and all of them are human. They are not out there to "get you". They will also make an occasional mistake, and they will probably rethink that mistake over and over again.*

*When your appeal is over it is over. You may not continue to discuss, argue, or appeal the situation. It is time to move onto the next race.*