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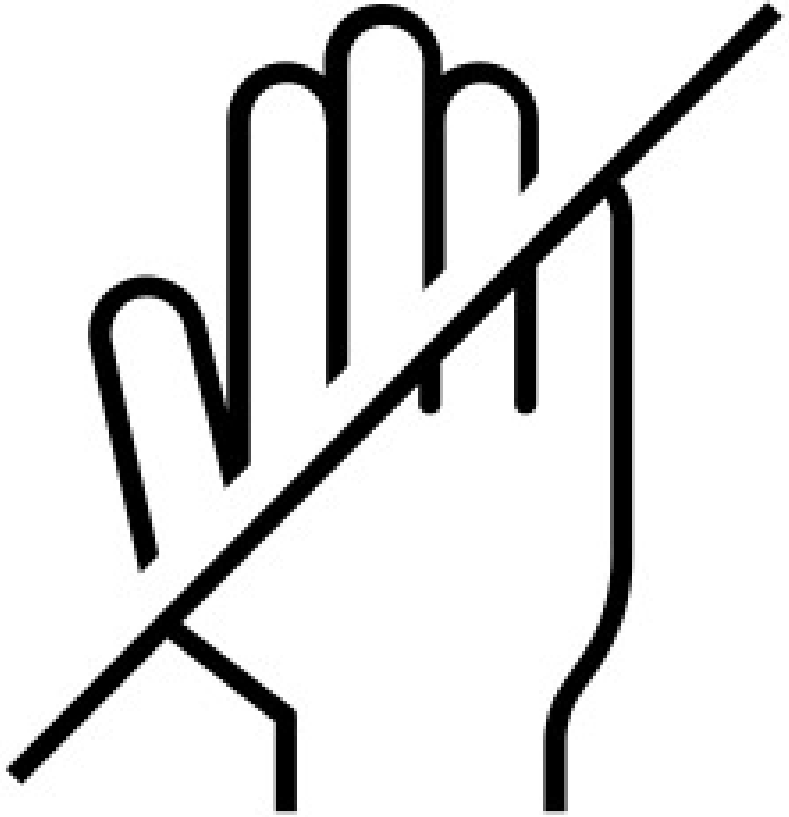

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Challenges

Fair or Foul?

August 08, 2024

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Types of Offences

Direct Free Kick / Penalty Kick

- **Offences against an opponent:**
  - Charges
  - Jumps at
  - Kicks or attempts to kick
  - Pushes
  - Strikes or attempts to strike
  - Tackles or challenges
  - Trips or attempts to trip

- **Handball**
- **Holds an opponent**
- **Impedes with contact**
- **Bites or spits at someone on team lists or match official**
- **Throws an object at the ball, opponent or match official or makes contact with the ball with a held object**

Indirect Free Kick

Focus will be on offences against an opponent resulting in direct free kick offences

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Challenges: Fair or Foul?

- How do we determine if a challenge is a foul?

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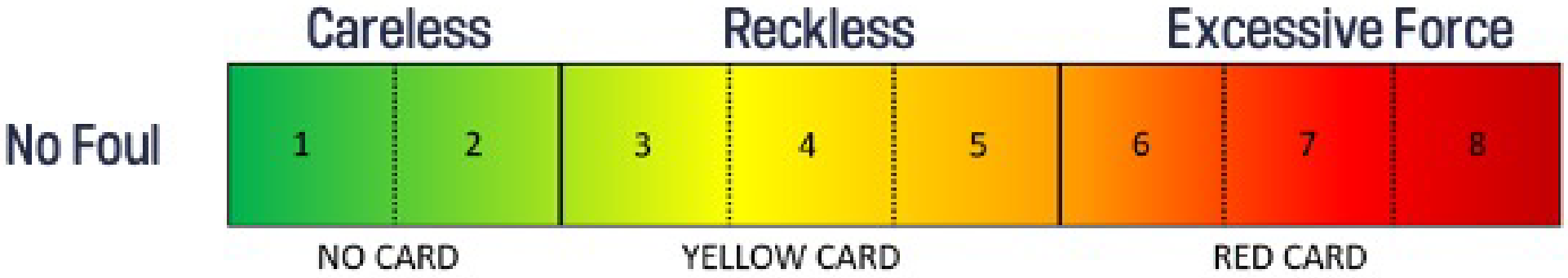
Challenges: Fair or Foul?

- Laws of the Game – Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct

"A direct free kick is awarded if a player commits any of the following offences against an opponent in a manner considered by the referee to be **careless**, reckless or using excessive force:

charges, **jumps at**, **kicks** or attempts to kick, **pushes**, **strikes** or attempts to strike (including head-butt), **tackles** or **challenges**, **trips** or attempts to trip."



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Challenges: Fair or Foul?

- Laws of the Game – Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct

> "**Careless** is when a player shows a **lack of attention or consideration** when making a challenge or **acts without precaution.**"

When determining fair or foul, we are really deciding if contact was **normal football contact** or **careless.**

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Considerations & Practical Guidance

- **Soccer is a contact sport**, and we expect some level of contact between players.
- **"Normal football contact"** is not a foul (no foul decision) and is considered fair play.
- How do we know what **"normal football contact"** is?
- What do you think is "**normal contact?**"

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Questions to ask yourself when determining if contact is fair or foul

- Who is in position to **fairly play the ball**?
- What is the manner in which the challenge is initiated?
- Does the player challenging have a chance to play the ball in a fair manner?
  - Consider **direction** and **timing** of the challenge.
- Does the player challenge for the ball at the moment the contact is made?
- Does the player touch the ball before making contact with the opponent?
- Does player make fair or unfair contact with the opponent after touching the ball?
  - Who is responsible for the contact?
- Does the player **exceed the necessary use of force** when making the challenge?

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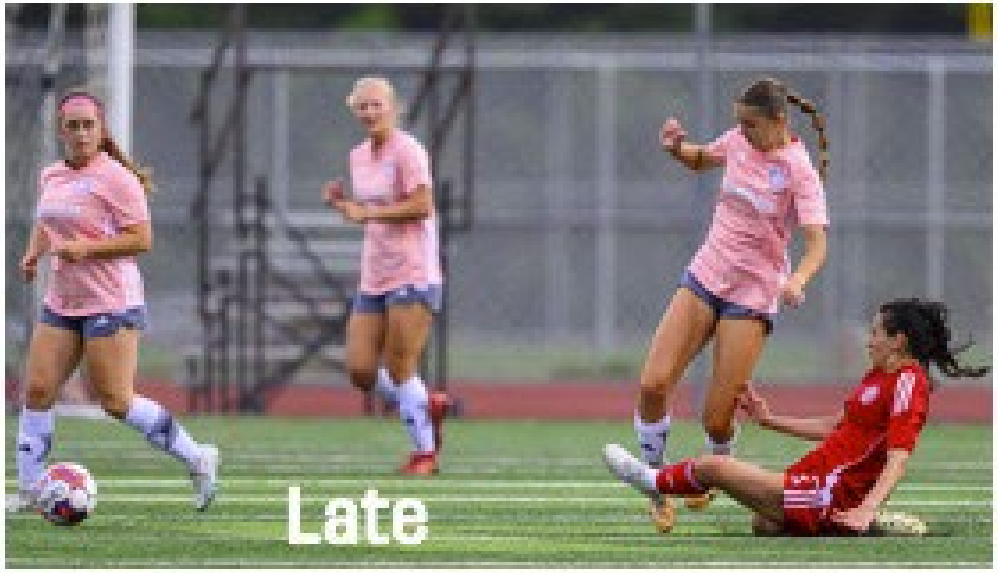
Direction and Timing



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Considerations & Practical Guidance Cont.

- **A player who plays the ball is in an advantageous position…**
  - …but a player who plays the ball first may still commit a foul if they play through an opponent, makes a secondary action, etc.
- **Watch the player who may commit the foul.**
  - We tend to watch the player that receives a possible foul or challenge (victim) rather than judging the actions of the potential perpetrator.
- **Lower body contact is much more objective than upper body contact.**

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Fair or Foul Based Upon the Type of Contact

Type of Contact during Challenge	Normal/Fair	Careless Foul/Unfair
Arms	Arms at the side or in an understandable playing position when challenging for the ball.	Arm(s) extended, preventing the opponent from gaining a fair way to play the ball (push).
Upper Body	Ball within playing distance and contact from the side, shoulder to shoulder (while moving in the same direction) with the expected amount of force for the play.	Opponent comes with higher force to gain advantage from their contact going through the opponent (e.g., dipping shoulder)
Lower Body	Slide tackle where the player plays the ball. With no secondary movement, the opponent then makes contact with the outstretched leg.	Slide tackle and the player missed the ball causing the opponent to fall over the outstretched leg (trip). Plays the ball but come through the opponent's legs.

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Attacking team: in RED

Defending team: in YELLOW

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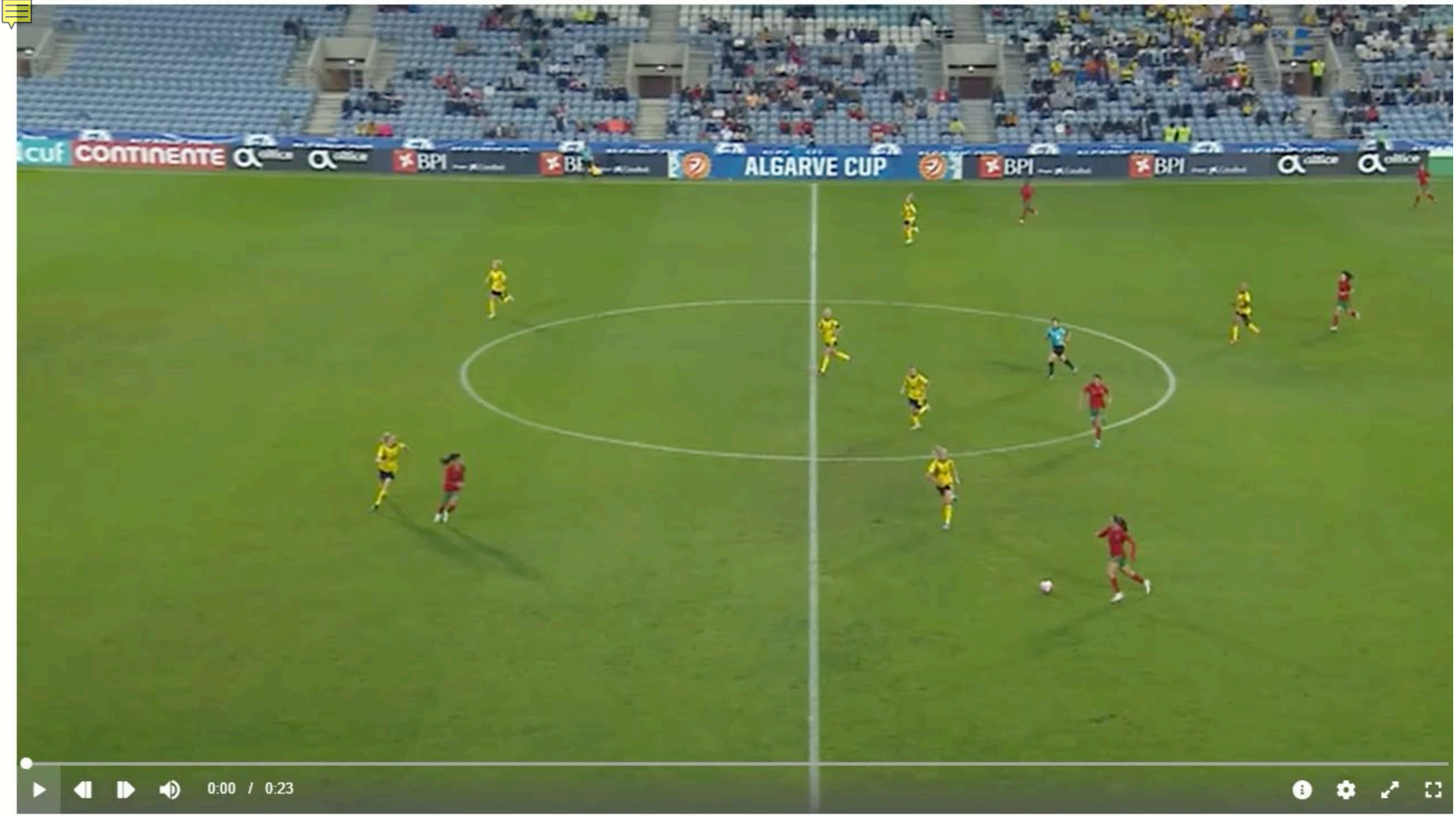
CONTINENTE
BPI
ALGARVE CUP
BPI
BPI
0:00 / 0:23

Summary

- Decision in the example: no foul / normal contact.
- Normal/fair contact is part of soccer.
- Distinguishing between normal/fair and a foul is a critical piece of match control.
- There are considerations and guidance that helps decide if a challenge was fair. Depending on the scenario, we select the most applicable to make the judgement.

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VIDEOS

Clip, Poll and Summary

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Clips

- For each clip, determine if you have:
  - NO FOUL
  - FOUL FOR ATTACKING TEAM
  - FOUL FOR DEFENDING TEAM

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Video Reminders

- Slow-motion vs Live Speed
  - Be careful of slow-motion and looping the video as they tend to make contact appear more severe. When possible, **use live speed** to determine most of the considerations.

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Attacking team: in WHITE

Defending team: in GREEN

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DICK'S
2018 MSYSA FALL STATE CUP
JAG
1
NAT
0
1st
HALF

Decision

- Careless charge (foul) by the player in White
- Direct free kick (DFK) for the team in Green
- The player in White moves towards the opponent rather than towards the ball
- Low force
- Lack of attention
- Not normal contact

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Attacking team: in RED

Defending team: in BLUE

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ANN
0 0
FCB
17:01

Decision

- No foul by the defender in Blue
- The player in Blue #14 reaches and plays the ball
- The attacker in Red makes the contact (initiates the contact) with the opponent and then falls

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Attacking team: in RED

Defending team: in WHITE

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MICHIGAN
Lakeshore FC 0
43:55
0 North Storm

Decision

- Careless charge (foul) by the player in White
- Direct free kick (DFK) for the attacking team in RED
- The player in White moves towards the opponent and charges on the back of the player in Red
- Low force and lack of attention
- Not normal contact
- Teamwork is important in this example given the proximity of the incident to the assistant referee

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Attacking team: in RED

Defending team: in WHITE

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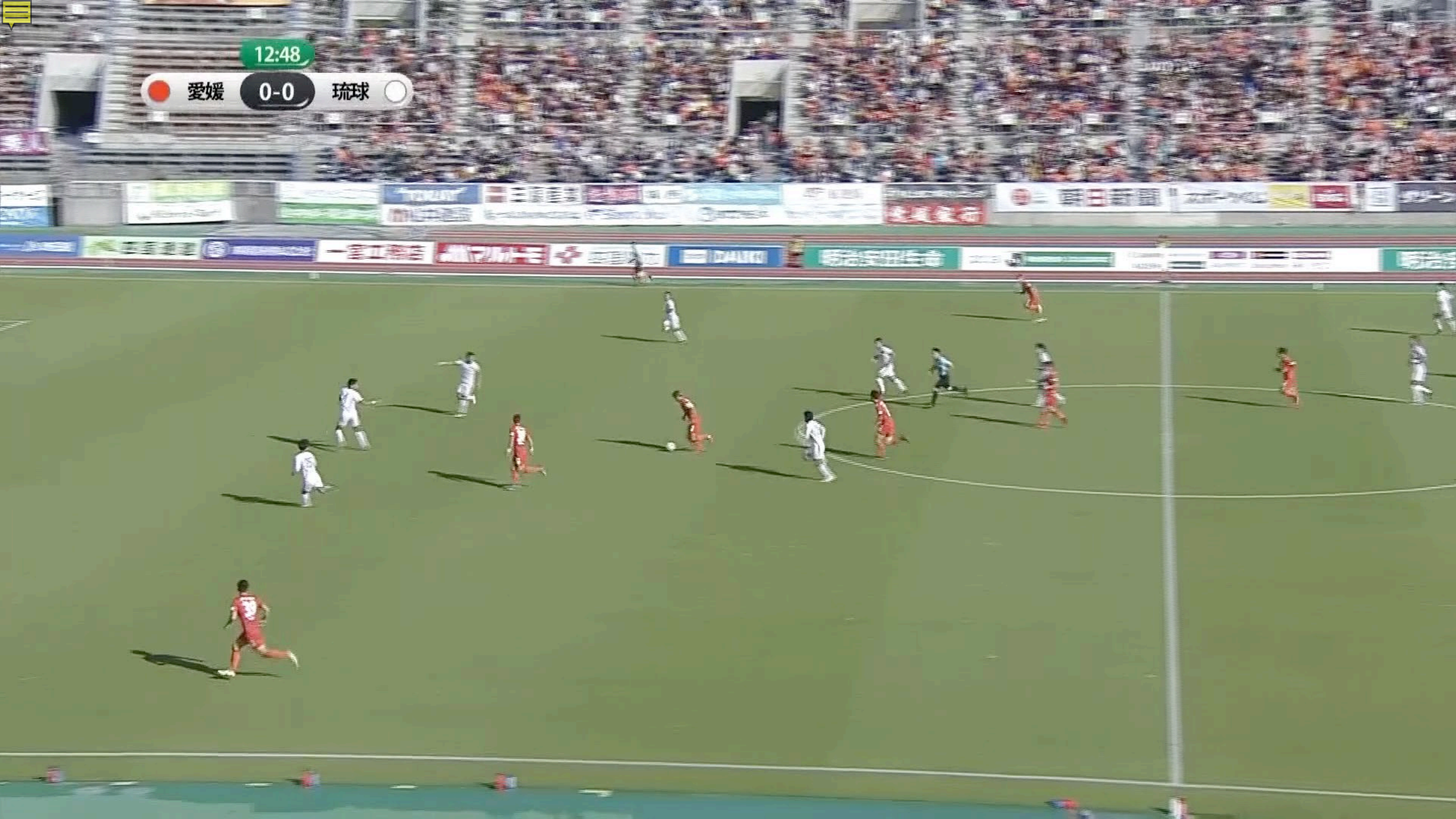
12:48
愛媛
0-0
琉球

Decision

- Careless challenge (foul) by the player in Red
- Direct free kick (DFK) for the goalkeeper's team
- The player in Red moves towards the opponent goalkeeper and challenges by sliding making contact
- Consider vulnerability of the goalkeeper
- Lack of attention
- Not normal contact

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