



Hawk-Eye Innovations, Press release June 2010

It took a series of poor line calls in the 2004 US Open as the catalyst for change for electronic line calling in tennis. If this incident is the same catalyst in football, then whilst it is disappointing that FIFA have been reactive rather than proactive, at least football will change for the better in the long run. However, FIFA may decide to stick by their guns, and not allow this incident to change their decision. If they adopt this approach, they may use the following arguments to justify their decision, each of which is responded to below:

1) HAWK-EYE IS NOT ACCURATE ENOUGH

This is simply not true. Hawk-Eye has been independently tested by the English Premier League and the IFAB (International Football Association Board), and shown to work in all instances tested. These tests included having many people around the ball as it crosses the line. The official press statement after the IFAB meeting in March 2010 accepted that their decision was NOT because the technology did not work, but because of the fundamental issue of whether technology is good for the game. Despite this, more recently Sepp Blatter did justify their goal line decision by stating that Hawk-Eye is not accurate. This is a mis-truth, and Sepp Blatter is aware of that.

2) FOOTBALL IS BEST OFFICIATED BY HUMANS, AND THE ADDITIONAL ASSISTANT SOLUTION IS A BETTER WAY TO GO

This solution has had mixed success in the European League. Whilst additional assistants would have resolved this incident, if you look at a large set of close goal line incidents, many of them only go over the line for a fraction of a second, and no human is able to fairly officiate these incidents regardless of where you are standing.

3) FOOTBALL IS A BETTER SPORT WITH CONTROVERSY – THIS IS ALL PART OF THE DEBATE IN THE PUB AFTER THE MATCH

Maybe in 1966 when broadcast technology were far inferior, it was interesting to debate if it was or was not a goal. Things have moved on since then, and the only debate following this incident is “Why don’t the governing bodies do something about this?”

4) THE TECHNOLOGY IS TOO EXPENSIVE, AND IT WOULD BE ESSENTIAL THAT GOAL LINE TECHNOLOGY IS AVAILABLE AT ALL LEVELS OF THE GAME

The technology would be an attractive new sponsorship opportunity, as it is in tennis. Tennis makes money from Hawk-Eye, by selling the sponsorship of Hawk-Eye for more than Hawk-Eye is paid to provide the service. The same would be true in football. If you only adopt technology if it is available at all levels, then you will always progress the sport at the pace of the slowest. The biggest games are hyped, by the importance of winning, and by doing so football has an obligation to provide the players with the best opportunity for the destiny to be in their own hands. Everyone knows that the technology is available, and not using it undermines the credibility of the sport.

5) WHERE DOES IT STOP? IF WE HAVE TECHNOLOGY FOR GOAL LINE, DOES IT GET EXTENDED TO OFFSIDES, HAND BALLS ETC

Goal line incidents are the only decision which is entirely definitive and the answer can be provided to the referee within 0.5 seconds in the incident happening. This makes a clear distinction between goal line and other decisions. Referees want goal line technology, it would be there to help them not to replace them.