

# Football lags other sports on technology

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Brazil's midfielder Kaka reacts as he is sent off by French referee Stephane Lannoy (back) during the 2010 World Cup group G first round football match between Brazil and Ivory Coast on June 20, at Soccer City stadium in Soweto, suburban Johannesburg. Lannoy came under fire for sending off Brazil's Kaka against the Ivory Coast.

High profile sports like rugby, tennis, cricket and basketball have seamlessly embraced technology to aid referees and linesmen, so why doesn't football?

The short answer is that Sepp Blatter and the FIFA hierarchy are from the old school and reluctant to dilute the human factor that has governed

the game for so long.

UEFA president Michel Platini is in complete agreement, arguing that video replays would interrupt the flow of the game.

Their defiant stance is in sharp contrast to many other sports that have adapted to the modern age.

For example, [basketball](#) referees use replay systems to make sure players are shooting within the time allotted by the shot clock, while in cricket, a third umpire, with access to TV replays, has been successfully adopted

FIFA's position has again been brought into focus at the World Cup with a series of bad decisions sparking renewed calls for change.

Blatter awoke to headlines Monday like, "Soccer must leave the Stone Age" and "FIFA fossil Blatter needs to be buried" after Frank Lampard's perfectly good goal was ruled out in England's 4-1 mauling by Germany.

Replays showed the ball was clearly over the line.

Just hours later, Argentina's opening goal in their last 16 clash with Mexico was allowed to stand despite Carlos Tevez being in an offside position.

England coach Fabio Capello made clear how he felt.

"It's incredible that in a time of technology, the referees aren't capable of deciding if there has been a goal or not," said the Italian.

England captain Steven Gerrard also called on FIFA to look at goal-line technology.

"FIFA will have to look at that because I looked across at the linesman and he was by the edge of the area so how can he see if that's over the line or not."

While many of the referees and linesmen at the World Cup have been praised for their fitness and keeping their cards in their pockets, Sunday's howlers were just the latest in a string of questionable calls.

One of the most high-profile came when Mali's Koman Coulibaly disallowed Maurice Edu's goal for the United States in the 85th minute of their 2-2 draw with Slovenia, denying them a vital win.

French referee Stephane Lannoy also came under fire for sending off Brazil's Kaka against the Ivory Coast, while he allowed Luis Fabiano's second goal to stand despite a clear double handball.

Supporters of technology will say this mistakes could have been avoided.

[Football](#) authorities have trialled goal-line technology before, but the International Football Association Board ruled it out in March.

It followed cameras being placed on goal posts and electronic chips inserted in the ball to determine if it had crossed the goal line, similar to the HawkEye technology used in tennis and cricket.

They have also tested using two additional referees, in the Europa League, to prevent mistakes, with that experiment is still being analysed.

How long they can keep football as one of the last sports to adopt the latest technology remains to be seen.

But the ageing Blatter appears to be in no hurry to change.

"No matter which [technology](#) is applied, at the end of the day a decision will have to be taken by a human being," he said recently.

"This being the case, why remove the responsibility from the referee to give it to someone else?"

FIFA's official spokesman Nicolas Maingot reiterated the stance on Monday.

"We will not open any debate on refereeing decisions at the daily media briefing, this is not the place for this and you will appreciate that I am not competent to do that," Maingot told reporters.

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