

## Retrospective Interview with Amateur Soccer Officials Using Eye Tracker Footage

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**Abstract :** Objectives: Eye tracking technology is a valuable method of assessing individuals gaze behaviour, but it does not unveil why they are engaging in certain practices. To address limitations in sport eye tracking research the present paper aims to investigate the gaze behaviours soccer officials engage in during successful and unsuccessful offside decisions, but also why. Methods: 20 male active amateur qualified (Level 4-7) soccer officials (Mage 22.5 SD 4.61 yrs) with an average experience of 41-50 games wore eye tracking technology during an applied attack versus defence drill. While reviewing the eye tracking footage, retrospective semi-structured interviews were conducted (M=20.4 min; SD=6.2; Range 11.7 - 26.8 min) and once transcribed inductive thematic analysis was performed. Findings and Discussion: To improve the understanding of gaze behaviours and how officials make sense of the environment, during the interview's key constructs of offside, decision making, obstacles and emotions were summarised as the higher order themes while making offside decisions. Gaze anchoring was highlighted to be a successful technique to allow officials to see all relevant information, whereas the type of offside was emphasised to be a key factor in correct interpretation. Furthermore, specific decision-making training was outlined to be inconsistent and not always applicable. Conclusions: Key constructs have been identified and explained, which can be shared with soccer officials through training regimes. Eye tracking technology has also been shown to be a useful and innovative reflective tool to assist in the understanding of individuals gaze behaviours.

**Keywords :** eye tracking, gaze behaviour, decision making, reflection

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