

URS MEIER



Former FIFA Referee

Urs Meier was a Swiss referee who is widely regarded as one of the best in the world. Since ending his active career as a FIFA-referee, Urs Meier has become a popular keynote speaker and coach.

At the age of 16, recognising his lack of football ability, he decided to concentrate on becoming a referee and set himself the goal of refereeing at the World Cup in France in 1998. In 1990 he officiated at his first game in the top Swiss league. In 1994 he covered a number of UEFA Cup matches and international games.

When he was actually elected to the referees panel for the 1998 World Cup, he had already refereed more than 30 international matches. His handling of the politically charged match between USA and Iran brought him international renown.

But Urs Meier has also faced his share of controversy. After a European Championship qualification match between Denmark and Romania, he received heavy criticism in the Romanian press. And after England were knocked out by Portugal in the European Championship 2004, and Meier correctly disallowed an England goal in the 89th minute, he received intense criticism in the English press and even death threats. He considers the high point of his sporting career to be the Champions League final of 2002 between Real Madrid and Bayer Leverkusen, in which Zinedine Zidane scored a brilliant winning goal.

After covering 883 matches, Urs Meier retired as a professional referee in 2004 due to age restrictions. Afterwards he works for several years as a football commentator on German television. With Johannes B. Kerner and Jürgen Klopp he commented the 2006 World Cup and Euro 2008 and received the 2006 "German TV Award" for the best sports broadcast.

Topics (Selection):

- Decision-making under pressure
- Fair play in sport and business