

## Reckless and Careless Fouls

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The following criteria can be used to distinguish a Careless from a Reckless foul:

1. Distance traveled, which helps determine the speed, and therefore the force of the challenge
2. Whether an attempt was made to play the ball, which helps determine its aggressive nature
3. The direction of the challenge
4. The position of the feet at the time of the challenge
5. The ability to play the ball.

In the attached clip, the Atlanta player (in red) sees the ball exposed after a heavy touch by the Boston player (in blue). Using the above criteria, it can be seen that:

1. A modest amount of force is used as the Atlanta defender traveled a short distance to the challenge.
2. The nature of the tackle is not aggressive, the Atlanta player is attempting to play the ball and does make contact with the ball using the lead leg.
3. The challenge originates from the side of the Boston player, which is within the Boston player's periphery.
4. The trail leg follows through the initial challenge and fouls the Boston player on the back leg.
5. The ability to play the ball clearly exists.

Using these criteria, the conclusion is reached that while the Atlanta player committed a foul, it does not rise to the level of Reckless at the professional level. The referee shows good urgency to get to the spot of the foul and the Boston player recovers quickly. A short verbal comment to the Atlanta player to be more mindful of the momentum and contact of the trail leg is a sufficient admonishment. The player can be isolated for added effect if a stronger response is needed.