

2007-08 NFHS Soccer Rules Interpretations

Publisher's Note: The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.
Robert F. Kanaby, Publisher, NFHS Publications © 2007

SITUATION 1: May a soccer game be played on a football field where all markings are in white?

RULING: Yes, however, the NFHS recommends that the soccer markings contrast in color to the football markings. (1-2-1)

SITUATION 2: Many school districts are building multi-use, artificial-turf facilities primarily for soccer, football and track. May soccer goals be placed on the end line of the football field even if they are not two yards in front of the football goal posts? **RULING:** No. **COMMENT:** Rule 1-4-1 states that "portable goals. . .if used on football fields should be anchored at least 2 yards in front of the existing football goal posts."

SITUATION 3: Can schools purchase nets with the name or mascot of the school stenciled on it?

RULING: Yes. (1-4-2)

SITUATION 4: If the required team area markings are absent, should the coach be restricted to the area directly in front of the team bench? **RULING:** Yes. (1-5-3)

SITUATION 5: The referee notices prior to the start of the contest that team benches are located on opposite sides of the field in unmarked areas at the halfway line. The referee informs game management to move the teams to areas diagonally opposite from each other, 10 feet from the sideline and provide some type of marking to denote each team's area. **RULING:** Correct procedure. In absence of host game management, inform the home team's head coach. If the situation cannot be corrected, play the game and file a report.

SITUATION 6: A player from Team A has a violent collision with an opponent when attempting to play the ball, is knocked down and, in the judgment of the official, was apparently unconscious. The player is removed from the game and after being checked by the school's athletic trainer, is sent to the table by the head coach to re-enter the game. **RULING:** Incorrect procedure. When this player was determined by the official to possibly be unconscious, the player may not return to play that day without written authorization by a physician (MD/DO). (3-3-2-b-3)

SITUATION 7: Both teams have players checked in at the scorer's table prior to a dead-ball substitution opportunity (injured player). Once the dead-ball substitution opportunity occurs and the referee beckons the players onto the field, must these players enter the field of play? **RULING:** Yes. (3-4-1-a)

SITUATION 8: Are players required to wear NOCSAE-approved shin guards beginning January 1, 2008? **RULING:** No, however, effective with the 2008 fall season, shin guards must meet NOCSAE specifications and bear the NOCSAE seal. (4-1-1)

SITUATION 9: May a team use a navy-and-white striped jersey as both home and away uniforms?

RULING: No. **COMMENT:** There is no predominant color, and the home jersey must be light and away jerseys dark. (4-1-1)

SITUATION 10: Can schools put players' names on the backs of their jerseys? **RULING:** Yes, as long as the name doesn't obstruct the player's number. (4-1-1-j)

SITUATION 11: Are padded headbands made of soft material legal for field players? **RULING:** Yes, as long as the product does not contain any hard or unyielding material. (4-2-3)

SITUATION 12: A player is wearing a protective face mask that is molded to the face with no protrusions. The player, who does not have a facial injury, has a medical release signed by a physician that suggests she wear the mask to prevent possible future injuries. **RULING:** Illegal. Only players with facial injuries are permitted to wear a protective face mask. (4-2-8)

SITUATION 13: The official observes that player A-1 is wearing illegal equipment. The official stops the game at the appropriate time, sends the player off the field of play, and issues a yellow card to the head coach. The coach wants to substitute for A-1 (a) from the bench; (b) from players who had already reported before play was stopped. **RULING:** Illegal in a); legal in b); however the player with the illegal equipment cannot be replaced until the next legal substitution opportunity. (4-3)

SITUATION 14: At the start of the second half, the referee observes that player A3 who had played the first half properly equipped is now wearing a watch. The game is stopped, the player is sent off the field and a yellow card is issued to the head coach. **RULING:** Correct procedure. (4-3)

SITUATION 15: A player who is properly equipped intentionally re-moves required equipment. The coach is cautioned. **RULING:** Incon-rect procedure. Stop play, caution the player for unsporting

conduct, send the player off and allow a substitute. (4-3, 12-8-1)

SITUATION 16: A player's equipment becomes illegal through the course of play, such as, a shin guard pops out, shoes come off, blood on uniform, etc. The coach is cautioned for an improperly equipped player. **RULING:** Incorrect procedure. Stop play at the appropriate time, do not issue a card, send the player off to correct or correct during stoppage if possible, and no substitutions allowed unless by rule.

SITUATION 17: A state association defines "immediate surroundings" to include that area between the field of play and the entrance to the parking lot. After the game, the referee is verbally assaulted by a coach (a) somewhere between the field of play and the parking lot; (b) in the parking lot. The referee issues a red card to the coach in both situations. **RULING:** Legal in (a), illegal in (b). A report to the proper authority must be filed in both situations. (5-1-2)

SITUATION 18: Is it permissible for officials to wear a shirt with the USSF logo on it? **RULING:** Only if permitted by the state association. (5-1-3)

SITUATION 19: Is it mandatory for the head referee to address coaches and players prior to the game about good sportsmanship? **RULING:** Yes. **COMMENT:** The NFHS has instituted this practice in all sports. (5-2-2).

SITUATION 20: Are officials mandated by rule to use the official NFHS Soccer Signals in a contest? **RULING:** Yes. (5-3-1-b)

SITUATION 21: Under NFHS rules, must the player actually touch the ball to be judged offside for "interfering with play?" **RULING:** No. **COMMENT:** Although other rules bodies may interpret this way, the high school game does not require that the player touch the ball in this situation. (11-1-3, Diagrams 8, 12, 13)

SITUATION 22: A player from both Team A and Team B are involved in misconduct at the halfway line while Team A is in possession of the ball on the 18-yard line near Team B's goal. **RULING:** Allow the play to exhaust its momentum and then card both players for their actions. **COMMENT:** Since it is an on-the-field infraction, a restart with a drop ball should occur at the spot of the fouls. (12-8-1, 2, 3)

SITUATION 23: The coach from Team B complains to the referee that the coach from Team A is text-messaging his assistant coach who is in the spectator stands. **RULING:** Illegal. The coach must be cautioned for unsporting conduct. (12-8-1-e)

SITUATION 24: A head coach is assessed a second yellow card for unsportsmanlike conduct. What should the official do? **RULING:** The proper procedure for a coach or bench personnel receiving a second yellow card is to disqualify that individual from the contest by displaying a yellow card first, immediately followed by a red card. (12-8-3) **COMMENT:** This mechanic is used because a substitute is not allowed as it is when a yellow card and red card are shown simultaneously.

SITUATION 25: A player from Team A is guilty of spitting at (a) an opponent and (b) a game official. The restart shall be a direct free kick in both situations. **RULING:** In (a), a direct free kick; in (b), an indirect free kick. (12-8-3 d and e)