

## 2008-09 Soccer Rules Interpretations

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**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 and 1-2-1 Situation)

**SITUATION 2:** Many school districts are building multi-use, artificial-turf facilities primarily for soccer, football and track and field. 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 goalposts? **RULING:** No. **COMMENT:** Rule 1-4-1 states "If used on a football field, portable goals should be anchored at least 2 yards in front of the base of the existing football goalposts."

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

**RULING:** Yes. The school name or mascot is not considered advertisement. (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. (1-5-3 Exception)

**SITUATION 6:** Can a team substitute an unlimited number of players from the bench after a) a caution, b) an injured player who is required to leave the field of play or c) after a goal is scored? **RULING:** In a) and b), a team may not substitute an unlimited number of players from the bench but may substitute for the cautioned/injured player. In c), either team may substitute an unlimited number of players. (3-3-1, 3-3-2)

**SITUATION 7:** Neither team has substitutes at the scorer's table when a player becomes injured. Can either team substitute an unlimited number of players? **RULING:** No. **COMMENT:** However, the injured player may be substituted for from the bench. (3-3-2b)

**SITUATION 8:** 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 game without written authorization by a physician (MD/DO). (3-3-2b3)

**SITUATION 9:** 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. (3-4-1a and 3-4-1 Situation)

**SITUATION 10:** Are players required to wear NOCSAE-approved shinguards? **RULING:** Yes, beginning with the 2008 fall season, shinguards must meet NOCSAE specifications and bear the NOCSAE seal either on the inside tag or embossed on the actual shinguard. (4-1-1)

**SITUATION 11:** May a team use a navy-and-white striped jersey as both home and away uniforms?

**RULING:** Yes. **COMMENT:** Home jerseys must be light and away jerseys dark. (4-1-1a)

**SITUATION 12:** Are warm-ups with multiple logos permitted to be worn by bench players or coaches?

**RULING:** Yes. Warm-ups are not restricted. (4-1-1)

**SITUATION 13:** Is soft-padded headgear made of soft material legal for field players? **RULING:** Yes, as long as the product does not contain any hard or unyielding material. (4-2-2 Situation A)

**SITUATION 14:** 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 15:** The official observes that player A1 is wearing improper equipment. The official stops the game at the appropriate time and sends the player off the field of play. The coach wants to substitute for A1 (a) from the bench; (b) from players who had already reported before play was stopped. **RULING:** Illegal in both situations. (4-3 Penalty, Improperly Equipped Players)

**SITUATION 16:** 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 as long as this is the team's first illegally equipped penalty of the game. (4-3 Penalty, Illegally Equipped Players)

**SITUATION 17:** 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 18:** Is it mandatory for the head referee to address coaches and players prior to the game about good sportsmanship? **RULING:** No. **COMMENT:** The head referee shall address good sportsmanship during the pregame conference with the head coach and team captains. (5-2-2d2)

**SITUATION 19:** A player has a knee brace and she has a signed note from her orthopedic surgeon and a note from her athletic director. May the referee determine that the knee brace is dangerous and not allow her to play even though the girl was allowed to play last weekend wearing the same brace? **RULING:** The referee has the authority to determine whether equipment is dangerous or confusing. (4-2-1, Situation H (b), 5-2-2d4)

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

**SITUATION 21:** If a game is terminated by the referee due to fighting, regardless of the score at the time, does the official have the authority to declare a winner? **RULING:** No. The matter must be reported to the state association, which will declare a winner. (7-1-3 Situation)

**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. (9-2-1d)

**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 if the referee actually determines that the coach was text messaging. (12-8-1e)

**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. (5-3-1f2) **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. (13-2-1a and 13-2-2j)