

## 2009-10 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 2009

**SITUATION 1:** A game is to be played on a field where the home team's logo obscures the halfway line and center circle. **RULING:** Illegal. The game may be played; however, the referee must notify the state association following the game. (1-2-1, Situation B)

**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 goal posts? **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. (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:** Kicks from the penalty mark are being utilized to determine the winner in a tie game. The official allows both teams to sit in the middle of the field while the kicks are being taken. **RULING:** Illegal. Unless participating in the kicks as a kicker or goalkeeper, team members, coaches and other bench personnel shall remain in the team area. (1-5-3)

**SITUATION 6:** 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 7:** Player A fouls Opponent B in the penalty area, resulting in a penalty kick for Team B. Player A is disqualified for receiving a second caution. Player B leaves the game due to an injury, or because of communicable disease concerns. (a) The substitute for Player B takes the penalty kick; (b) Player A is a goalkeeper and a substitute replaces him/her. **RULING:** (a) Incorrect. A substitute entering the game shall not take the penalty kick. (3-3-2-e2) (b) Legal. (3-3-2)

**SITUATION 8:** Player A2 is injured during the course of play but manages to hobble across the touchline to avoid disrupting play and to allow the game to continue. At the next stoppage in play (not necessarily a stoppage for which Team A would normally be permitted to substitute), the coach for Team A substitutes for Player A2 directly from the bench. **RULING:** Legal, unless Player A2 has been disqualified under the provisions of 12-8 that do not permit a substitution and provided that the other prerequisites for proper substitution have been met. Comment: An injured player leaving the field under his/her own power would not be considered a violation of 12-8-1a. (3-3-2, Situation K)

**SITUATION 9:** Team A is awarded a corner kick. (a) Team A chooses to substitute a player(s) who has reported to the scorer; (b) Team B chooses to substitute a player(s) who has reported to the scorer. **RULING:** In (a), player(s) may enter; in (b), player(s) may enter provided that Team A is also substituting. (3-3-3, 4)

**SITUATION 10:** 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). (3-3-2-b-3)

**SITUATION 11:** 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 Situation)

**SITUATION 12:** Are players required to wear NOCSAE-approved shinguards? **RULING:** Yes, 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 13:** Player A begins the game as required with legal shinguards under his/her stockings. During the first half, the referee observes him/her removing the shinguards and throwing them to the bench area. **RULING:** The referee should caution the player at the next stoppage of play or immediately when a dangerous situation occurs. (4-1-1, Situation F)

**SITUATION 14:** 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 D)

**SITUATION 15:** A2 enters the game with an ankle brace outside of the stocking. **RULING:** This is considered legal as long as the brace is not metal or made with unyielding equipment. Ankle braces made of metal or unyielding material must be covered by a stocking. (4-2-1-g)

**SITUATION 16:** 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 17:** Prior to the start of the contest, the referee meets with the teams' head coaches and captains and after reciting a sportsmanship message asks both head coaches if their teams are properly and legally equipped according to NFHS Soccer Rules. Each coach answers in the affirmative. (a) After the contest has started, Player A is noticed to have a shinguard that has the NOCSAE seal indicating that the shinguard is undersized for the player's height; (b) after the second half starts, Player A is noticed to be wearing illegal jewelry; (c) during the course of play, a knee brace is dislodged by a collision between two players. **RULING:** In (a) and (b), if it is the first offense, the player is sent off the field and the coach of Team A is cautioned for the team not being legally equipped. If it is the second offense, the player is cautioned. In (c), player is not cautioned, leaves the field and may re-enter after reporting to an official, who shall be satisfied that the knee brace is now in order. (4-3, Situation A)

**SITUATION 18:** 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)

**SITUATION 19:** (a) The officials arrive at the game with a shirt that matches the goalkeeper of one of the teams, but not the field players. (b) The officials arrive at the game with a shirt that matches the field players of one of the teams. **RULING:** (a) Legal; (b) illegal, the officials must change the color of their shirts. (5-1-3-a)

**SITUATION 20:** 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. (5-2-2d 2).

**SITUATION 21:** A player has a knee brace. 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. (5-2-2d 4)

**SITUATION 22:** Are officials mandated by rule to use the official NFHS Soccer Signals in a contest? **RULING:** Yes. (5-3-1-b)

**SITUATION 23:** Team A prepares to kick off and the ball is moved backward to a teammate. **RULING:** This is an incorrect kickoff. Team A will re-take the kickoff without penalty. (8-1-3)

**SITUATION 24:** 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 25:** A person within Team A's team area spits at the referee. **RULING:** The person, if identifiable, is disqualified. If not identifiable, the coach is disqualified. The game is restarted with an indirect free kick to the opposing team from the point where the ball was when play was stopped. (12-8-3, Situation C)