



National Federation of State  
High School Associations



2014-15

# S O C C E R R U L E S B O O K

SORB15

# 2014-15 NFHS SOCCER RULES BOOK

**ROBERT B. GARDNER, Publisher**

Mark Koski, Editor

## NFHS Publications

To maintain the sound traditions of this sport, encourage sportsmanship and minimize the inherent risk of injury, the National Federation of State High School Associations writes playing rules for varsity competition among student-athletes of high school age. High school coaches, officials and administrators who have knowledge and experience regarding this particular sport and age group volunteer their time to serve on the rules committee. Member associations of the NFHS independently make decisions regarding compliance with or modification of these playing rules for the student-athletes in their respective states.

NFHS rules are used by education-based and non-education-based organizations serving children of varying skill levels who are of high school age and younger. In order to make NFHS rules skill-level and age-level appropriate, the rules may be modified by any organization that chooses to use them. Except as may be specifically noted in this rules book, the NFHS makes no recommendation about the nature or extent of the modifications that may be appropriate for children who are younger or less skilled than high school varsity athletes.

Every individual using these rules is responsible for prudent judgment with respect to each contest, athlete and facility, and each athlete is responsible for exercising caution and good sportsmanship. These rules should be interpreted and applied so as to make reasonable accommodations for athletes, coaches and officials with disabilities.

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**Republication of all or any portion of this rules book on the Internet is expressly prohibited. Published by the NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS, PO Box 690, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206; Phone: 317-972-6900, Fax: 317.822.5700, [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org). Cover photos courtesy of Kim Jew Photography, New Mexico, and Gary Stevens of Thornton Academy, Saco, Maine.**

# 2014-15 Soccer Rules Changes

[3-3-2b\(2\)](#): If the referee stops the clock for an apparent injury to a field player or goalkeeper, the field player or goalkeeper will have to leave the field. The field player may be replaced, and the goalkeeper must be replaced.

[5-1-2](#): The jurisdiction of the officials shall begin on their arrival at the field of play and its immediate surroundings, which shall be no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the game.

## **Points of Emphasis**

1. Sportsmanship
2. Communication
3. Concussion Management 4. Penalty Kick
5. Goalkeepers

# Major Editorial Changes 2014-15

**1.2.4 Situation:** A referee inspecting the field prior to the game detects (a) center circle spot 9 inches in diameter; (b) an "X" intersecting the halfway line; (c) no mark other than the halfway line. RULING: (A) legal; (B) legal; (C) illegal.

**3.3.2 Situation D-L:** Former Situations 3.3.3 D-L changed to 3.3.2 D-L

**3.3.2 Situation E:** Players A2 and B2 hit heads in attempting to head the ball and both are injured. In the opinion of the referee, player A2 exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion. RULING: Player A2 shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.

**4-1-1(a):** Delete former 4-1-1(a)

**4-1-1(a):** The home team shall wear solid white jerseys and solid white socks, and the visiting team shall wear dark jerseys and socks (dark is defined as any color which contrasts with white). Prior to and during the game, jerseys shall be tucked into the shorts, unless manufactured to be worn outside.

**4-1-1(b):** Both socks shall be the same color, with the home team wearing solid white socks and the visiting team wearing socks of a single dominant color, but not necessarily the color of the jersey. If tape or a similar material is applied externally to the socks, it must be of a similar color as that part of the sock to which it is applied.

**4-1-1(h)1:** All jerseys, including the goalkeeper, shall be numbered on the back with a different Arabic number at least 6 inches in height and on the front (jersey or shorts) with the same number, which shall be at least 4 inches in height. Numbers shall be of contrasting color to the jersey (or shorts) and clearly visible.

**4.1.1 Situation C:** Player A from the visiting team enters the game wearing (a) two different colored socks; (b) multi-striped socks, where one stripe is the dominant color (not white); (c) tie-dyed socks; (d) predominantly dark blue socks with the top quarter of the socks pale blue. RULING: (a) Illegal; (b) Legal; (c) Illegal; (d) Legal. Both socks shall be the same, single dominant color, Only the visiting

team may wear socks a color other than white.

**4.1.1. Situation D:** Team A, the visiting team, arrives wearing striped jerseys that have large, light blue and thin white alternating stripes. Two members of Team A are wearing visible light red T-shirts beneath their jerseys. **RULING:** Legal. Striped jerseys are permissible for the visiting team as long as the dominant color is dark (dark is defined as any color which contrasts with white). Jerseys with equal-sized stripes that have both dark and white stripes do not have a dominant dark color and would be illegal. Also, shirts may be worn under the jersey as long as the shirts are the same color and of similar length.

**4-2-7** A tooth and mouth protector (intraoral) which shall:

- a. include an occlusal (protecting and separating the biting surfaces) portion;
- b. include a labial (protecting the teeth and supporting structures) portion;
- c. cover the posterior teeth with adequate thickness;
- d. be made of any readily visible color;
- e. not be completely white; and
- f. not be completely clear.

**NOTE:** It is recommended that the protector be properly fitted, protecting the anterior (leading) dental arch and:

1. constructed from a model made from an impression of the individual's teeth, or
2. constructed and fitted to the individual by impressing the teeth into the tooth and mouth protector itself.

**12-8-2(d):** committing serious foul play:

1. any play in which the player commits one of the offenses punishable with a direct free kick (or penalty kick if the offense takes place by a defender in the penalty area) and uses disproportionate and unnecessary force against an opponent while playing for the ball.
2. a player (other than a goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area) deliberately handles the ball, attempting to prevent a goal and the goal is not scored;
3. a player commits a foul, attempting to deny an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, and the goal is not scored.

**14-1-3:** The opposing goalkeeper shall stand on the goal line, facing the kicker, between the goal posts, until the ball is kicked. Lateral movement is allowed, but the goalkeeper is not permitted to come off the line by stepping or lunging forward until the ball is in play.

**Sample Fourth Official Duties:** Fourth Official Duties have been added to the NFHS Soccer Rules Book

**Rules Comparison:** The 2014-15 rules book contains an updated comparison of the major differences among NFHS and NCAA rules and FIFA laws.

**NFHS Official Soccer Signals and Assistant Referee Signals:** The 2014-15 rules book contains updated pictures for each of the referee and assistant referee signals.



# PLAY RULINGS

The situations contained in this book have been developed from actual questions which have been raised in administering the many thousands of interscholastic soccer games each year. The situations have been arranged by rule number. New or revised situations are preceded by an asterisk (\*).

All interpretations have the approval of the NFHS Soccer Rules Committee, which consists of coaches, officials and athletic administrators active on the high school level. Each ruling has been given careful study and is intended to provide for fair, easily administered competition.

If there is need for additional interpretations, they may be received by contacting your state high school association. In case of doubt, the state association shall receive a ruling from the NFHS office.

# Coaches Code of Ethics

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student should be treated with the utmost respect and his or her welfare should be considered in decisions by the coach at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFHS Board of Directors.

**The coach** shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

**The coach** shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with students, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

**The coach** shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse.

**The coach** shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products when in contact with players.

**The coach** shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct the program in harmony with the total school program.

**The coach** shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

**The coach** shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.

**The coach** shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

**The coach** should meet and exchange cordial greetings with the opposing coach to set the correct tone for the event before and after the contest.

**The coach** shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give students special consideration.

**The coach** shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic association.

# Officials Code of Ethics

Officials at an interscholastic athletic event are participants in the educational development of high school students. As such, they must exercise a high level of self-discipline, independence and responsibility. The purpose of this Code is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all interscholastic officials.

**Officials** shall master both the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm and controlled manner.

**Officials** shall work with each other and their state associations in a constructive and cooperative manner.

**Officials** shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interaction with student-athletes, coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, colleagues, and the public.

**Officials** shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally, shall dress neatly and appropriately, and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.

**Officials** shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual obligations.

**Officials** shall remain mindful that their conduct influences the respect that student-athletes, coaches and the public hold for the profession.

**Officials** shall, while enforcing the rules of play, remain aware of the inherent risk of injury that competition poses to student-athletes. Where appropriate, they shall inform event management of conditions or situations that appear unreasonably hazardous.

**Officials** shall take reasonable steps to educate themselves in the recognition of emergency conditions that might arise during the course of competition.

**Officials** shall maintain an ethical approach while participating in forums, chat rooms and all forms of social media.

# 2014-15 NFHS SOCCER RULES COMMITTEE



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Coaches Code of Ethics](#)

[Officials Code of Ethics](#)

[FIELD DIAGRAM](#)

[Rule 1. The Field of Play](#)

[Rule 2. The Ball](#)

[Rule 3. The Players and Substitutions](#)

[Rule 4. Player Equipment](#)

[Rule 5. The Officials](#)

[Rule 6. Ball Holders, Timer and Scorer](#)

[Rule 7. Duration of the Game and Length of Periods](#)

[Rule 8. The Start of Play](#)

[Rule 9. Ball in and Out of Play](#)

[Rule 10. Scoring](#)

[Rule 11. Offside](#)

[Diagrams Illustrating Offside](#)

[Rule 12. Fouls and Misconduct](#)

[Rule 13. Free Kick](#)

[Rule 14. Penalty Kick](#)

[Rule 15. Throw-In](#)

[Rule 16. Goal Kick](#)

[Rule 17. Corner Kick](#)

[Rule 18. Definitions](#)

[State Association Adoptions](#)

[Points of Emphasis](#)

[Comments on the Rules](#)

[Comparison of NFHS and NCAA Rules and FIFA Laws](#)

[Sample Tie-Breaking Procedure](#)

[Dual Officiating System](#)

[Diagonal Officiating System](#)

[Double-Dual \(Three Whistle\) Officiating System](#)

[Sample Fourth Official Duties](#)

[NFHS Official Soccer Signals](#)

[Assistant Referee Signals](#)

[Mission Statement](#)

[Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion](#)

[Equipment Guidelines](#)

[Hygiene, Skin Infections and Communicable Diseases Guidelines](#)

[Handling Contests During Lightning Disturbances Guidelines](#)

# Disclaimers

Each state high school association adopting these rules is the sole and exclusive source of binding rules interpretations for contests involving its member schools. Any person having questions about the interpretation of NFHS rules should contact the rules interpreter designated by his or her state high school association.

The NFHS is the sole and exclusive source of model interpretations of NFHS rules. State rules interpreters may contact the NFHS for model rules interpretations. No other model rules interpretations should be considered.

## DISCLAIMER – NFHS Position Statements and Guidelines

The NFHS regularly distributes position statements and guidelines to promote public awareness of certain health and safety-related issues. Such information is neither exhaustive nor necessarily applicable to all circumstances or individuals, and is no substitute for consultation with appropriate health-care professionals. Statutes, codes or environmental conditions may be relevant. NFHS position statements or guidelines should be considered in conjunction with other pertinent materials when taking action or planning care. The NFHS reserves the right to rescind or modify any such document at any time. Position statements are located at the end of this eBook.

New rules changes are denoted with **highlights**.

# SOCCER FIELD

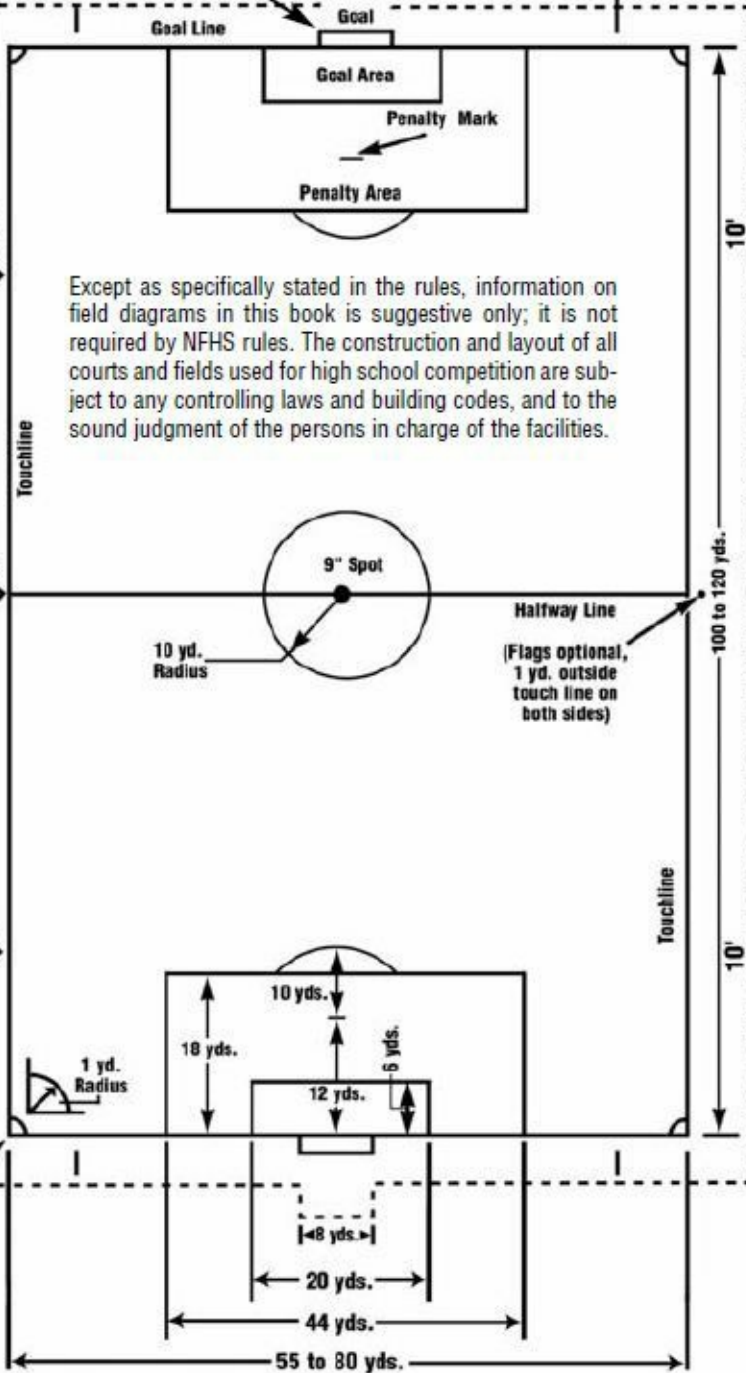
**\*MEASUREMENTS** are taken from outside to outside of the line.

**HASH MARK (optional)**  
 (1 yd. in length beyond goal line;  
 11 yds. from touch line;  
 located at each corner of field)

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.

For information on recommended specifications for lighting, you may contact:  
**Illuminating Engineering Society of North America**  
 345 East 47th Street  
 New York, NY 10017  
 212-248-5000

Dotted line is minimum boundary for spectators, fencing or any objects.



Except as specifically stated in the rules, information on field diagrams in this book is suggestive only; it is not required by NFHS rules. The construction and layout of all courts and fields used for high school competition are subject to any controlling laws and building codes, and to the sound judgment of the persons in charge of the facilities.

Pole: Minimum 1" diameter.  
 Flag: Minimum 5' high.  
 Install touching the outer edge of the lines at the corner.

An engineered natural turf soccer field should have a minimum of one-and-one-half percent (1.5%) slope for fields which are surface drained. For natural turf fields with a sub-surface drain system the slope should be no less than one (1.0%) percent. For synthetic turf fields with a sub-surface drain system the slope should be no less than one half of one (0.5%) percent. Slope is measured from center to side. For consulting services, contact SportsPLAN Studio, 816-842-5200.



# Rule 1 The Field of Play

## SECTION 1 SIZE OF THE FIELD

**ART. 1 . . .** The field of play shall be rectangular, 100 to 120 yards long and 55 to 80 yards wide. The following minimum dimensions are highly recommended:

- a. High Schools-110 yards by 65 yards;
- b. Junior High Schools-100 yards by 55 yards.

## SECTION 2 MARKINGS

**ART. 1 . . .** The field of play shall be marked in accordance with the diagram with non-caustic, distinctively colored material that is not injurious to the participants. Where games are played on a field marked for other sports, it is recommended markings which contrast in color to the other sport markings be used to indicate the soccer field areas.

**ART. 2 . . .** Boundary lines are a part of the field of play. They shall be 4 inches wide. The longer boundary lines are the touchlines, and the shorter boundary lines are the goal lines.

**ART. 3 . . .** A halfway line shall be marked across the field, equidistant from the goal lines and parallel to them.

**ART. 4 . . .** The center of the field of play shall be indicated by a spot 9 inches in diameter or other suitable mark; and, with this spot as the center, a circle with a 10-yard radius shall be drawn around it.

**ART. 5 . . .** A goal area shall be indicated on each end of the field of play by two lines drawn at right angles to the goal line, 10 yards from the midpoint of the goal line. These lines shall extend into the field of play for a distance of 6 yards. The ends of these lines shall be joined by a line parallel to the goal line. The lines are part of the goal area.

**ART. 6 . . .** A penalty area shall be indicated on each end of the field of play by two lines drawn at right angles to the goal line, 22 yards from the midpoint of the goal line. These lines shall extend into the field of play for a distance of 18 yards. The ends of these lines shall be joined by a line parallel to the goal line. The lines are part of the penalty area.

**ART. 7 . . .** A two-foot penalty kick line or a penalty spot 9 inches in diameter shall be drawn on each end of the field of play at a point 12 yards from the midpoint of the goal line and extending 1-foot on each side of the undrawn centerline and parallel to the goal line.

**ART. 8 . . .** A penalty arc is the restraining line for penalty kicks and shall be indicated by using the center of the penalty-kick line for drawing an arc with a 10-yard radius outside the penalty area.

**ART. 9 . . .** A corner area shall be indicated on each corner of the field of play by an arc with a radius of 1 yard from the intersection of the goal line and the touchline.

**ART. 10 . . .** A 1-yard-long hash mark may be made perpendicular to the goal line outside the field of play 11 yards from the corner of the field to assist the officials in enforcement of encroachment during corner kicks.

**ART. 11 . . .** When markings become obscured by the elements during the course of a game, the markings shall be assumed to be present and decisions shall be rendered by officials to the best of their ability to interpret original positions of the markings.

# RULE 1, SECTION 2 — PLAY RULINGS

**1.2.1 SITUATION A:** The game is to be played on a field which is also used for football. The playing area and boundary lines for soccer are: (a) marked with white lines similar to the yard lines for football; (b) marked with contrasting colored material which is noninjurious to eyes or skin.

**RULING:** In (a), if the referee considers that the lines are not confusing, the game may be played. However, it is recommended that the soccer markings contrast with other field markings. In (b), the field is properly marked.

**1.2.1 SITUATION B:** 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.

**\*1.2.4 SITUATION:** A referee inspecting the field prior to the game detects (a) center circle spot 9 inches in diameter; (b) an "X" intersecting the halfway line; (c) no mark other than the halfway line.

**RULING:** (a) legal; (b) legal; (c) illegal.

**NOTE:** Referee should notify home institution to correct the situation, but should not delay the start of play.

**1.2.6 SITUATION:** Observation of the penalty-area line leads the referee to believe measurements are incorrect. Upon measuring, it is verified they are not correct. **RULING:** The lines shall be used as marked, but the home coach will be advised of the error with corrections to be made prior to the next game. ([5-2-2](#))

**1.2.10 SITUATION:** When inspecting field markings, the referee notices that hash marks are not present 11 yards from the touchline and perpendicular to the goal line. The referee determines that the game will not start until the hash marks are made. **RULING:** Incorrect decision. Although these marks may be made, they are not mandatory.

## **SECTION 3 CORNER FLAGS**

The corner flag should be of a bright color, easily distinguishable from surroundings and approximately 2 feet long by 1 foot wide. It should be securely fastened to a post not less than 5 feet high with a non-pointed top, made of smooth, consistent and/or flexible material such as wood, plastic, or plastic foam. These flagposts shall be placed at each corner of the field of play and shall not be removed during the course of play. Similar flagposts may be placed opposite the halfway line at least 1 yard outside the touchline.

# SECTION 4 GOALS

**ART. 1 . . .** The goals shall be placed on the goal line. They shall consist of two upright posts between 4 inches and 5 inches in projected diameter placed an equal distance from the corner flags and 8 yards apart (inside measurement). The rear of each goal post shall be on the outer edge of the goal line. The tops of the posts shall be joined by a 4-inch, but not more than 5-inch horizontal crossbar, the lower edge of which shall be 8 feet from the ground. Soccer goals shall be white. No markings other than a single manufacturer's identification/logo may appear on the goal posts or crossbar.

Metal pipes of 3 to 4 inches in diameter may be used. If portable goals are used, they shall be adequately anchored, secured or counterweighted to the ground. If used on a football field, the front of the portable goals should be at least 2 yards in front of the base of the existing football goalposts.

The vertical portion of the soccer goal post may be padded with commercially manufactured material for soccer goals. This material shall be white, have a maximum thickness of one inch, be a minimum of 72 inches high and shall be properly secured. No markings other than a single manufacturer's identification/logo may appear on the goal post padding.

**ART. 2 . . .** Nets shall be attached to the posts and crossbar and be firmly fastened to the ground behind the goals. Each net shall be supported so that it will extend backward at the level of the crossbar for a distance of 24 inches from the crossbar. No advertising, other than a single manufacturer's identification/ logo, may appear on the net.

# **RULE 1, SECTION 4 — PLAY RULINGS**

**1.4.1 SITUATION A:** Referee observes that goal posts are placed (a) in front of goal line; (b) front edges are behind goal line; (c) rear edge on outer edge of goal line. **RULING:** Improper placement in (a) and (b) and should be brought to the attention of the proper authorities. Correct placement in (c).

**1.4.1 SITUATION B:** While inspecting the field prior to the game, the head referee detects that the portable goals in use are not securely anchored to the ground. **RULING:** The game will not start until the goals are properly secured.

**1.4.1 SITUATION C:** During a pre-game field check, the referee observes that the goalposts have two 48-inch, commercially manufactured pads, one above the other, on each upright. The referee considers that the padding is safe and allows the game to proceed. **RULING:** Legal.

**1.4.1 SITUATION D:** During play, a goal gets moved back off the goal line (away from the field), and the entire ball passes beyond the goal line, but does not pass beyond the goal posts and under the cross bar because the goal is not in its proper position. A goal is awarded. **RULING:** Correct decision. The goal shall be assumed to be in the proper position.

## **SECTION 5 OFFICIAL AND TEAM AREAS**

**ART. 1 . . .** There shall be designated specific areas for each team's bench, separated by an official area for entering substitutes, scorers and timers. These areas shall be at least 10 feet from the touchline.

**ART. 2 . . .** The official area shall extend 5 yards on each side of the halfway line.

**ART. 3 . . .** The team areas shall extend from 10 yards on each side of the halfway line for a distance of 20 yards, and each area shall be marked by a solid line. Coaches, bench personnel and team members shall be restricted to the team area.

### **EXCEPTIONS:**

- 1.** When teams are placed on the opposite sides of the field, each team area shall be located as specified above and shall be placed diagonally across from each other.
- 2.** A team member may leave the bench area in order to warm up prior to becoming a substitute.

## **SECTION 6 SPECTATORS' AREA**

Spectators shall be confined to areas at least 10 feet from the touch line, team/official area and goal line. No one shall be permitted directly behind either goal unless seated in bleachers.



# **RULE 1, SECTION 6 — PLAY RULING**

**1.6 SITUATION:** The referee instructs the home-team management to tell the spectators to remain 10 feet behind the touchline, goal line and/or team/official area, or the game may be terminated.

**RULING:** Legal. ([5-3-2e](#))

## **SECTION 7 FIELD CONDITIONS**

Up until the moment the game begins, it is the responsibility of the host institution or game management to judge whether or not the condition of the field, the elements and other conditions affecting the safety of the field of play allow for a safe game to begin. Once the game begins, and until it ends, the determination of whether or not a game may be safely continued shall be made by the referee.

# **RULE 1, SECTION 7 — PLAY RULINGS**

**1.7 SITUATION A:** Immediately prior to the start of the game, the home team's athletic director decides that the field is not playable and will not allow the game to begin. **RULING:** Correct procedure.

**1.7 SITUATION B:** During the course of a game a downpour occurs. The referee suspends the contest. **RULING:** Legal.

# **Rule 2 The Ball**

## **SECTION 1 SUPPLY**

It is the responsibility of the home team to provide three or more official game balls of similar quality. If the home team cannot provide three balls, the referee shall choose game balls from those offered by both teams.

# SECTION 2 SPECIFICATIONS

**ART. 1 . . .** Game balls shall be spherical, with a circumference of at least 27 inches but no more than 28 inches (0.68 to 0.71 meters). The weight of the balls at the start of the game shall be at least 14 ounces but no more than 16 ounces (396 to 453 grams).

**ART. 2 . . .** The outer casing of the ball shall be leather or other similar material that is weather resistant.

**ART. 3 . . .** The ball shall be inflated to the manufacturer's recommended pressure.

**ART. 4 . . .** If the ball becomes deflated during play, it is declared dead where it was last played and the game is resumed by a drop ball between any two opposing players at the spot where it was last played. If the ball becomes deflated within the goal area, then the ball is dropped between two opposing players subject to the provisions of Rule [9-2-2](#). **Ball deflated during a penalty kick results in retaken kick.**

**ART. 5 . . .** The ball shall include the NFHS Authenticating Mark. The mark can be displayed in one of the three formats shown. A current list of NFHS authenticated products can be found at [www.nfhs.org/authenticatingmark](http://www.nfhs.org/authenticatingmark)



# Rule 3 The Players and Substitutions

## SECTION 1 NUMBER OF PLAYERS

**ART. 1 . . .** The game shall be played by two teams, each consisting of not more than 11 players, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper. Each team shall designate a team captain on the field who:

a. is the team's representative; b. may address an official on matters of interpretation; c. may address an official to obtain essential information.

**ART. 2 . . .** A game shall not be started with fewer than seven properly uniformed players on each team. After the game is started, it may not be continued with fewer than seven players on either team. If a team has fewer than seven eligible players, the game shall be terminated and a forfeit shall be declared.

**EXCEPTION:** Should a team drop below seven players due to a player having to leave the field for a temporary equipment repair, minor the official may suspend the game momentarily until the problem is corrected and then continue the game.

**ART. 3 . . .** Each team shall submit a team roster, containing the first and last names and numbers of all players, and substitutes, all bench personnel and all coaches, to the officials at least five minutes prior to the start of the contest. The game shall not begin until this is complete. Players, substitutes, numbers, bench personnel and coaches may be added to the roster after the start of play. Goalkeepers may have two numbers listed on the roster, a goalkeeper's number and a field player's number.

# RULE 3, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULINGS

**3.1.1 SITUATION A:** Team A's coach decides to sacrifice defense and sends in a substitute for the goalkeeper in order to keep 11 players on the field. **RULING:** Legal. As long as there is a designated, properly attired goalkeeper.

**3.1.1 SITUATION B:** The referee observes that Team A has 12 players in the game (a) before the game is restarted following a goal by A2; or (b) after the game has been restarted following a goal by A2. **RULING:** In (a), the goal is disallowed and the game is restarted with a goal kick by Team B. However, in (b), the goal would stand. In both instances, the appropriate player would be removed from the game and cautioned. The game is resumed according to how it was interrupted.

**3.1.3 SITUATION A:** A player who is not listed on the roster scores a goal. The goal is allowed. **RULING:** Legal. Since players may be added to the roster after the start of play, a goal by a player who is not on the roster should be allowed and the player's name and number should be added to the roster.

**3.1.3 SITUATION B:** Team A begins the game with seven players. The rest of the team arrives after the game has begun and the coach writes their names on the roster and they enter the game at the next stoppage of play after approval by the referee. **RULING:** Legal. Players can be added as long as their names have been listed on the roster, even if the names are added after the beginning of the game. (3-3-8)

## **SECTION 2 POSITION OF PLAYERS**

**ART. 1 . . .** The team winning the coin toss shall have the option of:

- a. choosing which end of the field to defend; or b. taking the kickoff ([5-2-2d 3](#)).

**ART. 2 . . .** Teams shall exchange goal lines after each regular period and each overtime period.



# SECTION 3 SUBSTITUTIONS

**ART. 1 . . .** Time for Substitutions: either team may substitute an unlimited number of players from the bench between periods.

**ART. 2 . . .** Time for Substitutions: either team may substitute an unlimited number of players from the bench, provided they report to the scorer's table or nearest official and are beckoned in as per [3-4-1\(a\)](#):

a. when a goal is scored.

b. when a player is injured:

1. A coach or appropriate health-care professional may not enter the field without approval from a referee.

2. If the referee stops the clock for an apparent injury to a field player or goalkeeper, the field player or goalkeeper will have to leave the field. The field player may be replaced, and the goalkeeper shall be replaced.

3. Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. (Please see [NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion](#)).

4. If the injured player is being replaced during a penalty kick situation, substitutes may not take the penalty kick.

**ART. 3 . . .** Time for Substitutions: either team may substitute an unlimited number of players, provided they have checked in per [3-4-1\(d\)](#):

a. on a goal kick;

b. when a player from either team is cautioned (yellow card):

1. The cautioned player shall leave the field but may be replaced from the bench.

2. The cautioned player may not re-enter the game until the next legal opportunity for his/her team.

3. Should the team with the cautioned player elect to play shorthanded, the cautioned player may not be replaced until the next legal substitution opportunity for that team.

4. If the cautioned player is being replaced during a penalty kick situation, the substitute may not take the penalty kick.

c. when a player from either team is disqualified (red card):

1. A team shall not substitute for a player who has been disqualified except for the goalkeeper who is required by [3-1-1](#). When a team substitutes for a disqualified goalkeeper, a field player must be removed.

2. If a disqualified goalkeeper is being replaced, the substitute may not take the penalty kick.

d. when a player is required to leave the field because of communicable disease concerns:

1. An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform or has blood on his/her person shall be directed to leave the activity until the bleeding has stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to competition. That player shall leave the field and may be replaced.

2. If the removed player is being replaced during a penalty kick situation, the substitute may not take the penalty kick.

**ART. 4 . . .** The team in possession of the ball may substitute an unlimited number of players:

a. On a throw-in (provided the substitutes have checked in per [3-4-1\(d\)](#)); b. On a corner kick (provided the substitutes have checked in per [3-4-1\(d\)](#)).

**ART. 5 . . .** The team NOT in possession of the ball may substitute an unlimited number of players at a throw-in or corner kick if the team in possession of the ball is also substituting (provided the substitutes have checked in per [3-4-1\(d\)](#)).

**ART. 6 . . .** A substitute becomes a player when he/she is beckoned onto the field of play, at which time the replaced individual is no longer a player.

**ART. 7 . . .** A team that elects or is required to play shorthanded for reasons other than misconduct may have the player(s) re-enter the game during a dead ball.

**ART. 8 . . .** A team which starts a game with fewer than 11 players, but at least seven players, may have its additional player(s) enter the game during a dead ball provided that the names of the additional players are on the team roster ([3-1-3](#)).

## RULE 3, SECTION 3 — PLAY RULINGS

**3.3.2 SITUATION A:** Player A is injured while on the field and play is stopped. Both teams substitute three players from the bench before play resumes. **RULING:** Illegal, unlimited substitutions are permitted but the substitutes must check in and be beckoned in by the referee as per Rule [3-4-1a](#).

**3.3.2 SITUATION B:** A goal is scored and Team A elects to substitute four players from the bench without being beckoned by the referee. **RULING:** Illegal, all players must report per [3-4-1a](#) and be beckoned by the referee.

**\*3.3.2 SITUATION C:** The goalkeeper goes down after making a save and remains motionless for a few seconds with the ball in his/her possession. The official stops the clock to assess a possible injury. The referee determines that he/she is able to continue play immediately. No attendants are beckoned and play is restarted with an indirect free kick. **RULING:** Illegal. Whenever the referee stops the clock for a possible injury, the player or goalkeeper must leave the field.

**\*3.3.2 SITUATION D:** An attacker collides with the opponent goalkeeper and both appear to be injured; the referee stops the clock and beckons the coaches to attend to their players. Both players leave the field, but neither coach chooses to replace his or her injured player. **RULING:** Legal for field player, and illegal not to have a designated goalkeeper.

**\*3.3.2 SITUATION E:** The goalkeeper goes down after making a save and remains motionless for a few seconds with the ball in his possession. The official stops the clock to determine if the goalkeeper is injured. After examining the goalkeeper, it is determined that he/she is able to continue play immediately and no attendants have been beckoned, removal is not mandatory and play will start with an indirect free kick. **RULING:** Illegal.

**\*3.3.2 SITUATION F:** Players A2 and B2 hit heads in attempting to head the ball and both are injured. In the opinion of the referee, player A2 exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion. **RULING:** Player A2 shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.

**\*3.3.2 SITUATION G:** Player A2 goes down and is apparently injured. Following a preliminary examination, the official stops the clock and beckons A2's coach or athletic trainer onto the field to attend the injured player, but they refuse to comply. **RULING:** The injured player must be removed and may be replaced.

**\*3.3.2 SITUATION H:** Player A2 (a) is injured and attended to on the field; (b) is issued a yellow card for a cautionable offense. Although in both instances Player A2 must leave the field, Team A coach elects to play one player short. **RULING:** Legal.

**\*3.3.2 SITUATION I:** Player A2 is injured. After examining Player A2, the referee stops the clock and beckons A2's coach or athletic trainer onto the field to attend to the injured player. (a) Athletic trainer for Team A attends to the injured player while Coach A gives instruction to players on the field; (b) Coach A attends to the injured player and gives instruction as she/he walks out and back; (c) opposing Coach B calls his team to the sideline and gives instruction to the team; (d) Coach A, while on the sideline, calls for a substitute for A2 and gives instruction to the substitute. **RULING:** Legal in

(a), (b), (c) and (d).

**\*3.3.2 SITUATION J:** Player A2 leaves the field due to an injury and the team elects to play shorthanded. After the game has been restarted, (a) Player A12 replaces Player A2; (b) Player A2 re-enters the field. **RULING:** (a) Player A12 may enter the game only at the next legal substitution opportunity; (b) Player A2 may re-enter the field at the next stoppage of play.

**\*3.3.2 SITUATION K:** 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 L:** Team A substitutes an unlimited number of players that have already checked in at the scorer's table after (a) a caution, (b) an injured player is required to leave the field or (c) when a player has blood on her uniform. **RULING:** Legal in (a), (b) and (c).

**3.3.3 SITUATION A:** 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. (b) Legal.

**3.3.3 SITUATION B:** Goalkeeper A fouls Opponent B in the penalty area resulting in a penalty kick for Team B. Goalkeeper A is disqualified for committing serious foul play. Team A is permitted to substitute a goalkeeper from the bench but must have a field player leave the field. **RULING:** Team A must play short due to the disqualification ([12-8-2](#)) but must have a goalkeeper ([3-1-1](#)).

**3.3.3 SITUATION C:** An official observes a direct free kick foul by the defense in the penalty area, blows the whistle, stops play and indicates a penalty kick; the official simultaneously indicates an injured player and issues a caution for persistent infringement to the player committing the foul. The coaches, having no players at the scorer's table, substitutes for the injured and cautioned player from the bench. **RULING:** Legal. The injured player and cautioned player must be removed. The penalty kick must be taken by a player who was a player at the time the whistle stopped play.

**\*3.3.3 SITUATION D:** Team A substitutes an unlimited number of players from the bench after (a) a caution, (b) an injured player is required to leave the field or (c) after a goal is scored. **RULING:** (a) Illegal; (b) legal and (c) legal providing the substitutes check in and are beckoned in by the referee.

**\*3.3.3 SITUATION E:** Player A2 is issued a yellow card for misconduct and makes a profane remark to the referee: (a) the substitute has not been beckoned onto the field; (b) the substitute has been beckoned onto the field. **RULING:** (a) A2 is issued a red card and the team plays short; (b) A2 is issued a red card and the substitute is allowed to participate.

**3.3.4 SITUATION:** 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.

**3.3.5 SITUATION:** Team A is awarded a throw-in. (a) Team A chooses to substitute a player(s) who has not yet reported to the scorer; (b) Team B, having had players report to the scorer, chooses to substitute. **RULING:** In (a) Illegal, player(s) shall not enter; (b) Illegal unless Team A chooses to substitute. A player must have reported to the scorer before the substitution opportunity occurs on a throw-in for either team.

**3.3.7 SITUATION A:** Team A has elected to play shorthanded for reasons other than misconduct and (a) the player who left the field is permitted to return at the next stoppage of play and (b) the substitute for the player who left the field is permitted to enter the field at the next stoppage of play. **RULING:** (a) legal; (b) illegal.

**\*3.3.7 SITUATION B:** Team A is playing shorthanded with 10 players due to illegal equipment. (a) Player A2 runs onto the field during play; (b) player A2 enters the field of play during a stoppage with the permission of the referee; (c) player A2 enters the field at the next legal substitution opportunity. **RULING:** (a) Illegal; (b) illegal; (c) legal.

## SECTION 4 PROCEDURE FOR SUBSTITUTION

**ART. 1 . . .** To request a substitution, a substitute who desires to enter the game shall report to the scorer, giving his/her jersey number and the number of the player being replaced.

- a. The substitute shall remain at the scorer's table until a referee beckons the substitute onto the field of play. When there is no separate scorer/timer, incoming substitutes shall report directly to the nearest official from the official area.
- b. A substitute may enter the field of play at the beginning of a period without being beckoned by the referee. After a score and when a player is injured and removed from the field, substitutes must be beckoned.
- c. If entry is requested at any other time, the scorer shall require the timer to signal for the substitution immediately when there is a prescribed substitution opportunity.
- d. When an entry is taking place on a throw-in, a goal kick or a corner kick, the substitute(s) must have reported to the scorer (or official area) prior to the dead-ball situation.

**ART. 2 . . .** Entry onto the field of play by a substitute except at the beginning of a period is prohibited without the approval of a referee subject to provision in [3-4-1\(b\)](#).

## **RULE 3, SECTION 4 — PLAY RULINGS**

**3.4.1 SITUATION A:** Substitute A12 reports to the scorer as the kickoff takes place. Eight minutes elapse before the first opportunity for a substitution occurs. The referee beckons A12 on the field; however, A12 is withdrawn by the coach of Team A. **RULING:** Substitute A12 is now a player because he/she was beckoned onto the field by the referee; therefore, player A12 must enter the game once beckoned.

**3.4.1 SITUATION B:** After a goal is scored, coach for Team A sends substitute A2 directly into the game from the bench without reporting to the scorer for player A3. **RULING:** Illegal.

## **SECTION 5 GOALKEEPER CHANGE**

The goalkeeper may change places with a player on the field whenever the clock is stopped or a substitution takes place, provided the uniforms are legal. Any time the goalkeeper is changed, a referee shall be notified.

**PENALTY: Both players (goalkeepers) shall receive a warning at the next stoppage of play.**



## **RULE 3, SECTION 5 — PLAY RULINGS**

**3.5 SITUATION A:** A goalkeeper reports to the scoring table and, when the ball is dead, is beckoned onto the field by a referee. The goalkeeper immediately takes position without verbally notifying a referee. As soon as the new goalkeeper handles the ball, a referee awards an indirect free kick. **RULING:** Incorrect. When a referee beckoned the goalkeeper from the scoring table, this was sufficient “reporting or notifying” of a referee. The goalkeeper is dressed in a different uniform and could be recognized by his attire. A referee should not have stopped play. Play shall restart with an indirect free kick awarded to the new goalkeeper’s team.

**3.5 SITUATION B:** Substitute goalkeeper A12 enters the game and starts the second half but fails to notify the referee. **RULING:** The referee will give a verbal warning to goalkeeper A12 at the first stoppage of play.

## **SECTION 6 EXCESSIVE PLAYER SUBSTITUTIONS**

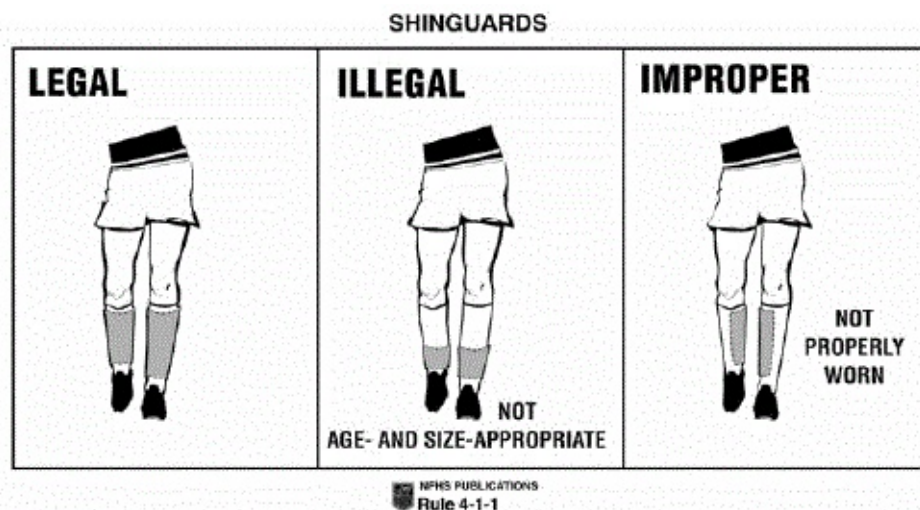
When a team repeatedly substitutes to consume time, a referee shall order the timer to stop the time clock during such substitutions and shall notify the coach of the offending team. The repetition may be construed as unsporting conduct.

# Rule 4 Player Equipment

The NFHS does not perform scientific tests on any specific items of equipment to determine if the equipment poses undue risks to student-athletes, coaches, officials or spectators. Such determinations are the responsibility of equipment manufacturers.

# SECTION 1 REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

**ART. 1 . . .** The required player equipment includes a jersey, shorts, socks, suitable shoes and shinguards. The shinguards shall provide adequate and reasonable protection, be professionally manufactured, age-and size-appropriate, not altered to decrease protection, worn under the socks, and worn with the bottom edge no higher than 2 inches above the ankle. (see [illustrations regarding shinguards](#)). Shinguards must meet the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) specifications at the time of manufacture. The NOCSAE seal and height range shall be permanently marked on the front of the shinguard. Equipment shall not be modified from its original manufactured state and shall be worn in the manner the manufacturer intended it to be worn. It is also recommended that male players wear a supporter and protective cup. Requirements for uniforms:



- a. The home team shall wear solid white jerseys and solid white socks, and the visiting team shall wear dark jerseys and socks (dark is defined as any color which contrasts with white). Prior to and during the game, jerseys shall be tucked into the shorts, unless manufactured to be worn outside.
- b. Both socks shall be the same color, with the home team wearing solid white socks and the visiting team wearing socks of a single dominant color, but not necessarily the color of the jersey. If tape or a similar material is applied externally to the socks, it must be of similar color as that part of the sock to which it is applied.
- c. A manufacturer's logo/trademark appearing on both sides of the socks is legal.
- d. If visible apparel is worn under the jersey and/or shorts, it shall be of a similar length, all alike and of a solid color.
- e. One manufacturer's logo/trademark or reference is permitted on the outside of each item which may not exceed 2¼ square inches and may not exceed 2¼ inches in any dimension. (Subject to the provisions in [4-1-1\(d\)](#))
- f. An American flag, not to exceed 2 by 3 inches, and either a commemorative or memorial patch, not to exceed 4 square inches and with written state association approval, may be worn on the jersey provided neither the flag nor the patch interferes with the visibility of the number.

g. When an illegally uniformed team is unable to correct the situation or cannot verify state association approval of the uniform, the game shall be played. The referee must, however, notify the state association following the game.

h. Except for the uniform of the goalkeeper, jerseys, shorts and socks of teammates shall be of similar color, design and pattern.

1. All jerseys, including the goalkeeper's jersey, shall be numbered on the back with a different Arabic number at least 6 inches in height and on the front (jersey or shorts) with the same number, which shall be at least 4 inches in height. Numbers shall be of contrasting color to the jersey (or shorts) and clearly visible.

2. Only those names, patches, emblems, logos or insignias referencing the school are permitted on the team jersey and/or shorts, except as in [4-1-1\(d\)](#), [\(f\)](#) and [\(g\)](#). The player's name may also appear on the team uniform.

3. The jersey of the goalkeeper shall be distinctly different from that of any teammate or opponent, except the other goalkeeper. The shorts or pants and socks of the goalkeeper are not required to be the same color as his/her teammates, but must comply with Rule [4-1-1h\(1\)](#).

i. Shoes must be worn by all participants in a game. Shoes with soles containing metal (aluminum, magnesium, titanium, etc.), leather, rubber, nylon, or plastic cleats, studs, or bars, whether molded as part of the sole or detachable, are allowed as long as the referee does not consider them dangerous or they have been altered in any way creating sharp edges thus rendering them unsafe.

**ART. 2 . . .** It is recommended that team captains wear an upper arm band of a contrasting color.

**ART. 3 . . .** It is recommended that substitutes wear distinguishing pinnies when warming up outside of the team area.

# RULE 4, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULINGS

**4.1.1 SITUATION A:** Prior to the game, the referee recognizes that members of Team A are wearing red shorts with (a) red compression shorts of similar length; (b) white compression shorts; (c) multicolored sliding pants. **RULING:** (a) legal; (b) legal; (c) illegal.

**4.1.1 SITUATION B:** The referee finds the player to be wearing (a) metal cleats; (b) plastic cleats; (c) baseball cleats; (d) track shoes with spikes; (e) turf shoes. **RULING:** (a) legal; (b) legal; (c) illegal; (d) illegal; (e) legal if they are determined to be safe by the referee.

**\*4.1.1 SITUATION C:** Player A from the visiting team enters the game wearing (a) two different colored socks; (b) multi-striped socks, where one stripe is the dominant color (not white); (c) tie-dyed socks; (d) predominantly blue socks with the top quarter of the socks pale blue. **RULING:** (a) Illegal; (b) Legal; (c) Illegal; (d) Legal. Both socks shall be the same, single dominant color. Only the visiting team may wear socks a color other than white.

**\*4.1.1 SITUATION D:** Team A, the visiting team, arrives wearing striped jerseys that have large, light blue and thin white alternating stripes. Two members of Team A are wearing visible light red T-shirts beneath their jerseys. **RULING:** Legal. Striped jerseys are permissible for the visiting team as long as the dominant color is dark (dark is defined as any color which contrasts with white). Jerseys with equal-sized stripes that have both dark and white stripes do not have a dominant dark color and are illegal. Also, shirts may be worn under the jersey as long as the shirts are the same color and of similar length.

**4.1.1 SITUATION E:** Player A2 desires to enter the game wearing (a) a jersey with the same number as a teammate already in the game; (b) a jersey similar (but not identical) to those of his teammates. **RULING:** (a) Illegal — if A2 is mistakenly allowed to enter, he/she must leave the game when the duplication is discovered; (b) Legal provided that the referee decides that the jersey provides sufficient contrast with those of his/her opponents.

**4.1.1 SITUATION F:** Player A begins the game as required with legal shinguards under his/her socks. 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 G:** Team A arrives at the game site to play Team B and the officials observe (a) Team A does not have numbers on the jerseys; (b) Team A has one player wearing a different color shirt. Officials allow the game to be played. **RULING:** (a) Team A must correct uniform problems if possible. If it is not possible for them to correct the problem, the game shall be played. The referee shall report the situation to the state association. (b) Player must correct uniform problem before he/she is allowed to participate in the game.

**4.1.1 SITUATION H:** Prior to the game, the referee recognizes that members of Home Team A are wearing white jerseys and socks of a gold color and Away Team B is wearing jerseys and socks of a blue color. **RULING:** Illegal, because the home team shall wear solid white jerseys and solid white socks. The home team needs to put on white socks. If unable to correct, the game shall be played and the referee must notify the proper authority following the game.

**\*4.1.1 SITUATION I:** Prior to the game, the referee recognizes that Team A has two goalkeepers; one with a red jersey and the number 15 on the back and front and one with a blue jersey with the number 15 on the back and front. **RULING:** Illegal. The goalkeepers must have different numbers and these should have been recorded on the roster.

**4.1.1 SITUATION J:** Team A's goalkeeper is wearing a replica jersey from the New England Revolution with the number 10 on the back. **RULING:** Illegal, any name, patch, emblem, or insignia that represents any soccer club, soccer association or sponsor(s), except for those that represent their school are prohibited.

**4.1.1 SITUATION K:** During play, bench personnel are required by officials to wear pinnies while warming up outside the team area. **RULING: False. It is recommended.**

**4.1.1 SITUATION L:** During the game, the referee notices a goalkeeper wearing (a) shorts, (b) pants and (c) padded goalkeeper pants. **RULING:** Legal in (a), (b) and (c).

**4.1.1 SITUATION M:** Prior to the game, the referee recognizes that Team A (the home team) has (a) solid white jersey with blue numbers on the front and red numbers on the back; (b) a solid white jersey with multiple colored numbers on the front and back; (c) a white jersey with red-and-blue piping and blue numbers on the front and red numbers on the back. **RULING:** (a) Legal, if clearly visible; (b) Legal, if clearly visible; (c) Illegal.

**4.1.1 SITUATION N:** Player A enters the game wearing (a) white socks with white tape, (b) blue socks with blue tape, (c) red socks with black tape, (d) white socks with green tape. **RULING:** (a) legal, (b) legal, (c) illegal and (d) illegal.

**\*4.1.1 SITUATION O:** Upon arriving at the field, the referee notices that the home team has a likeness of its school mascot on the team's socks. The referee informs the coach about the socks being improper because home team socks shall be all white and allows the game to be played. **RULING:** The official was correct and must report the uniform violation to the state association. (Per Rule [4-1-1\(b\)](#)) **\*4.1.1 SITUATION P:** The home team (a) has player names in red lettering on its socks, (b) and numbers in red on its shorts. **RULING:** (a) Illegal, the socks of the home team are to be all white, (b) Legal to have red numbers on their shorts.

## SECTION 2 OTHER EQUIPMENT

**ART. 1 . . .** Illegal equipment shall not be worn by any player. This applies to any equipment which, in the opinion of the referee, is dangerous or confusing. Types of equipment which are illegal include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. projecting metal or other hard plates, or projections on clothing or person; b. head, arm, thigh or hip pads containing sole leather, fiber, metal or any unyielding materials; c. hard and unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, etc.) on the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm or shoulder unless covered, and must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½-inch thick.
- d. shinguards which have exposed sharp edges or have been altered; e. spectacle guards;
- f. knee braces which are altered from the manufacturer's original design/production. Knee braces that are unaltered are legal and do not require any additional padding; g. ankle braces which are altered from the manufacturer's original design/production. Non-metal ankle braces that are unaltered are legal and may be worn outside a sock. Ankle braces of metal or unyielding material that are unaltered are legal if covered by a sock.
- h. helmets, hats, caps or visors.

### EXCEPTIONS:

1. The goalkeeper may wear a head protector made of closed-cell, slow-recovery rubber or other similar material that stays soft in its final form. This head protector shall not have a bill, or other protruding design. It shall not cover the face, other than the forehead, and shall be secured by a chin strap.
2. The goalkeeper may wear a soft-billed baseball type hat or soft-billed visor. If worn in conjunction with a head protector, it is to be worn outside and may not be attached to the head protector.
3. By state association adoption, players may wear soft and yielding caps during inclement weather. Caps must be alike in color.

**NOTE:** The wearing of illegal uniforms or equipment is prohibited even though the coaches of both teams approve it.

**ART. 2 . . .** Hair control devices may be worn if made of soft material and not for adornment.

**ART. 3 . . .** Sweatbands may be worn on the head or wrist if made of soft material.

**ART. 4 . . .** Jewelry shall not be worn except for religious or medical medals.

- a. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform.
- b. A medical alert must be taped and may be visible.



**ART. 5 . . .** All permissible artificial limbs must be padded with a closed-cell, slow recovery foam padding no less than a ½-inch thick.

**NOTE:** Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. The accommodations should not fundamentally alter the sport, heighten risk to the athlete/others or place opponents at a disadvantage.

**ART. 6 . . .** Hearing aids worn in or behind the ears are legal provided that the device does not create the threat of injury.

**ART. 7 . . .** A tooth and mouth protector (intraoral) which shall:

a. include an occlusal (protecting and separating the biting surfaces) portion; b. include a labial (protecting the teeth and supporting structures) portion; c. cover the posterior teeth with adequate thickness; d. be made of any readily visible color; e. not be completely white; and f. not be completely clear.

**NOTE:** It is recommended that the protector be properly fitted, protecting the anterior (leading) dental arch and: 1. constructed from a model made from an impression of the individual's teeth, or 2. constructed and fitted to the individual by impressing the teeth into the tooth and mouth protector itself.

**ART. 8 . . .** A protective face mask may be worn by a player with a facial injury. The mask may be made of hard material, but must be worn molded to the face with no protrusions. A medical release for the injured player signed by an appropriate health-care professional shall be available at the game site.

## **RULE 4, SECTION 2 — PLAY RULINGS**

**4.2.1 SITUATION A:** (a) Team A has a goalkeeper wearing a head protector of approved substance, with an attached bill to shield the player's eyes from the sun; (b) goalkeeper wears a soft-billed hat over the head protector. **RULING:** (a) Illegal. Attached bills are not part of the approved head protector; (b) legal as long as hat is worn over the head protector.

**4.2.1 SITUATION B:** Team A appears on the field ready for play with faces and/or arms painted in an objectionable manner. **RULING:** Illegal. The referee will require that the objectionable markings be removed or covered before allowing participation.

**4.2.1 SITUATION C:** A player wears (a) a hard cast on an arm, (b) a hard splint on a finger that has been covered with a foam-rubber padding and then securely covered with a soft elastic athletic bandage, (c) or has an artificial limb that is padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½ inch thick. **RULING:** (a) and (b) Illegal; (c) legal because in all instances the injury must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½ inch thick.

**4.2.1 SITUATION D:** A2 enters the game with an ankle brace outside of the sock. **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 sock.

**4.2.1 SITUATION E:** A girl from Team A is wearing a flak jacket, chest protector or properly padded body brace under her jersey. **RULING:** Legal, as long as there are no exposed sharp edges.

**4.2.1 SITUATION F:** A player enters the game wearing an ankle brace which contains hard material. **RULING:** This is considered legal equipment if covered by the uniform sock or other suitable material.

**4.2.1 SITUATION G:** A player enters the game wearing (a) a hockey face mask to protect an injury; (b) a securely fastened insulin pump. **RULING:** (a) Illegal; (b) legal provided that the referee determines that the insulin pump is not a hazard to the player or other players.

**4.2.1 SITUATION H:** A player enters the game wearing (a) prescription glasses; (b) protective sport eyewear. **RULING:** Legal in (a). In (b), sport eyewear that is durable and lies flat to the face is legal. Note that game officials can declare any equipment illegal that is dangerous or confusing.

**4.2.2 SITUATION A:** During pregame warm-up, the referee observes that (a) A2 is wearing a rolled bandanna tied around his/her head; (b) A3 is wearing a bandanna that completely covers his/her head; (c) A4 is wearing a red headband; (d) A5 is wearing a soft-padded headgear. **RULING:** Illegal in (a) and (b) because the bandannas are considered adornment and any knotted device may be dangerous.

Legal in (c) if worn to control the player's hair or prevent sweat on the face. Legal in (d).

**COMMENT:** The use of soft-padded soccer headgear is permitted but not required. Schools, parents and students are free to make their own assessments relative to this piece of equipment. The relevant ASTM standard can be found at [www.astm.org/Standards/F2439.htm](http://www.astm.org/Standards/F2439.htm).

**4.2.2 SITUATION B:** Team A is wearing "scrunchies," which are hair-control devices. Referee allows them. **RULING:** Legal.

**4.2.3 SITUATION:** A2 is discovered on the field wearing a (a) sweatband on the head; (b) wrist sweatbands. **RULING:** In (a) and (b) sweatbands are legal if they are of a soft material and not for adornment.

**4.2.4 SITUATION A:** A player wears (a) an earring; (b) rubber band to hold the hair back and a 2-inch ribbon over the rubber band; (c) taped body jewelry; (d) a ring which cannot be removed; (e) a single colored 2-inch headband; (f) medical bracelet or a medical medal on chain around the neck with the medal taped to the body. **RULING:** (a) Illegal; (b) illegal (the ribbon is considered decorative); (c) illegal; (d) illegal; (e) legal; (f) legal.

**4.2.4 SITUATION B:** Player A is discovered on the field wearing a yarn bracelet. **RULING:** This item of adornment is considered jewelry and is therefore illegal.

**4.2.5 SITUATION:** Substitute A12 comes on the field of play with (a) an artificial limb; (b) a knee brace. **RULING:** (a) and (b) are legal if they comply with the rule.

**NOTE:** The artificial limb and/or knee brace are to be checked by the referee prior to the game.

**4.2.6 SITUATION:** A player enters the game wearing a hearing aid in his/her ear. **RULING:** Legal.

**4.2.7 SITUATION:** A player enters a game wearing an intraoral mouth protector. **RULING:** Legal.

# SECTION 3 COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES

Each head coach shall be responsible for ensuring that each of his/her players is properly and legally equipped.

**PENALTY: Illegally Equipped Players (18-1-1r)** The head coach shall receive the first caution issued (yellow card) for an illegally equipped player. All subsequent cautions (yellow cards) for illegally equipped player(s) shall be issued directly to the player(s) and not to the head coach.

An illegally equipped player shall be instructed to leave the field of play when the ball next ceases to be in play. Play shall not be stopped for an infringement of this rule except where the referee may stop play immediately where there is a dangerous situation.

The player(s) must be removed and may be replaced at the time of the caution to the coach or player(s).

The removed player(s) may re-enter at the next legal substitution opportunity only after reporting to an official who shall be satisfied the player's equipment and uniform are in order.

**Improperly Equipped Players (18-1-1s)** Cautions will not be issued for improperly equipped player(s).

Improperly equipped player(s) shall be instructed to leave the field of play when the ball next ceases to be in play. Play shall not be stopped for an infringement of this rule except that the referee may stop play immediately where there is a dangerous situation.

In all situations, the removed player(s) may re-enter only after reporting to an official, who shall be satisfied the player's equipment and uniform are in order. There shall be no replacement until the next opportunity to substitute. However, the removed player may re-enter during the dead ball after reporting to an official, who shall be satisfied the player's equipment and uniform are in order.

## **RULE 4, SECTION 3 — PLAY RULING**

**4.3 SITUATION A:** 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 will be properly and legally equipped at the kickoff. 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 cannot re-enter until the next legal substitution opportunity, 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 B:** During play, a referee notices that the straps on a previously approved knee brace have come loose while the player continues to play. A referee allows play to continue until the ball is out of play. **RULING:** Legal. By a referee's judgment, if an immediate dangerous situation does not exist, he can wait until the next stoppage in play before removing the player from the field for being improperly equipped or having the player secure the loose straps.

# Rule 5 The Officials

## SECTION 1 GENERAL

**ART. 1 . . .** The officials shall be a head referee and a referee, a single referee and two assistant referees or a center referee and two side referees assisted by a timer, scorer and at least two ball holders. [An additional fourth official can also be used for the three referee systems \(see Fourth Official Sample Guidelines\).](#)

**NOTE:** If a state high school association chooses not to select one system, competing schools may do so by prior mutual agreement. Suggested mechanics are included in the back of this book for the dual, double-dual and diagonal systems of officiating.

**ART. 2 . . .** The jurisdiction of the officials shall begin [on their arrival at the field of play and its immediate surroundings \(to begin their official responsibilities\), which shall be not later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the game and end with their leaving the field of play and its immediate surroundings.](#) They shall enforce the rules, and their decisions on points of fact are final. The officials can only correct a decision so long as the game has not been restarted. The officials retain clerical authority over the contest through the completion of any reports, including those imposing disqualifications, that are responsive to actions occurring while the referees had jurisdiction. State associations may intercede in the event of unusual incidents that occur before, during or after the officials' jurisdiction has ended or in the event that a contest is terminated prior to the conclusion of regulation play. Protests of NFHS rules are not recognized. The officials shall not use video replays to assist in any decision. The officials shall not use any tobacco products during this period.

**ART. 3 . . .** The officials shall be dressed alike in the uniforms primarily consisting of:

- a. a shirt approved by the state association; in the event of a color conflict between the officials and the field players of either team, the officials shall change to a jersey of a color distinct from the field players of both teams.
- b. black shorts or long trousers;
- c. predominantly black shoes and black socks with white stripes;
- d. two whistles, yellow card, red card, stop watch, flipping coin, pencil and scorecard;
- e. a solid black cap, if worn.

# **RULE 5, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULING**

**\*5.1.2 SITUATION A:** The home team has video equipment to tape and replay the game action. The coach (a) plays a tape to players after the game; (b) plays tape at halftime interval for coaching purposes; (c) asks referee to review tape for evidence in the case of a disallowed goal. **RULING:** (a) Legal; (b) legal; (c) illegal. ([12-8-1e](#))

**\*5.1.2 SITUATION B:** Approximately one-half hour prior to kickoff, the referee inspects the field and notices that neither portable goal is properly secured. The referee addresses the home coach and requests that he/she address the problem. **RULING:** Legal since the referee's authority exists as soon as he/she is in the immediate vicinity of the field.

**5.1.3 SITUATION:** (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.

## **SECTION 2 PREGAME RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ART. 1 . . .** Officials shall be in uniform at the site of the game no less than 15 minutes before the scheduled starting time. The head referee shall conduct a pregame conference briefly reviewing the duties of all officials.

**ART. 2 . . .** The head referee shall:

- a. inspect and approve the game balls, field of play and nets, inquire about local ground rules and determine if a fair game can be started;
- b. verify the assistant referees or side referees, ball holders, official scorer and timer;
- c. review specific duties with scorer, timer and assistant referees or side referees;
- d. conduct a pregame conference with the head coach and team captains to:
  1. review pertinent rules;
  2. address good sportsmanship.
  3. conduct a coin toss at least 5 minutes before the scheduled starting time of the game. The visiting team captain shall call the coin while it is in the air. The winner of the toss shall choose a goal to defend or to kick off first. The loser of the toss shall be given the remaining choice.
  4. inquire of each head coach whether each of his/her players will be properly and legally equipped at the kickoff. Any questions regarding legality of a player's equipment shall be determined by the head referee, or the center referee in a game officiated using the double-dual system of officiating.

**ART. 3 . . .** The referee, assistant referees or side referees shall:

- a. assist the head referee or center referee in inspecting the game balls and field of play;
- b. review duties and responsibilities with ball holders;
- c. assist with the pregame conference with team captains.



# SECTION 3 DURING THE GAME

**ART. 1 . . .** The officials shall:

- a. sound the whistle to stop, start or restart as necessary;
- b. when signaling, use the Official NFHS Soccer Signals. The referee also must signal when the clock is to be stopped and confirm for the scorekeeper the players to be credited with goals;
- c. sound the whistle when the entire ball crosses a touchline or goal line unless it is obvious the ball is out of play;
- d. call out “play on” and, with an underswing of both arms, indicate a foul which was observed but shall go unpenalized because penalizing the offending team would give an advantage to the offending team. If the referee applies the advantage, which was anticipated but does not develop at that time, the referee shall penalize the original offense;
- e. hold a yellow card with arm fully extended above a referee’s head and indicate the player or coach being carded and notify both coaches, the scorer and other official(s) of the nature of the misconduct. ([12-8-1](#)) ([12-8-3](#));
- f. hold a red card with arm fully extended above a referee’s head and indicate the player or coach being carded and notify both coaches, the scorer and other official(s) of the nature of the misconduct. ([12-8-2](#)) ([12-8-3](#)).
- g. If a player, coach or bench personnel is being disqualified for a subsequent act of misconduct, the referee will show a yellow card indicating the subsequent caution followed immediately by showing a red card.
- h. signal the clock to be stopped or started;
- i. terminate or suspend the game for any infringements of the rules;
- j. confirm all scores with the scorer;
- k. not set aside or question decisions made by the other referee(s) within the limits of his/her respective outlined duties;
- l. notify the captains when play is about to begin at the start of the game, following an intermission or time-out for injury.

**ART. 2 . . .** The head referee or center referee shall:

- a. determine whether a goal shall count if the officials disagree;
- b. have the authority to terminate a game when stated rule and conditions warrant;
- c. decide matters upon which the timer(s) or scorer(s) disagree;

- d. at the end of each half, check and approve the score;
- e. have the authority to suspend play or terminate the game whenever the elements, spectators or other causes require; ([7-1-3](#))
- f. keep time and score of game when no other means are available;
- g. have the power to make decisions on any point not specifically covered in the rules;
- h. confirm or overrule the assistant referees' signals (diagonal system of control only);
- i. instruct the timer to correct the clock, when necessary.

# RULE 5, SECTION 3 — PLAY RULINGS

**5.3.1 SITUATION A:** During a shot on goal, B2, in the penalty area, reaches out and deflects the ball. Just as B2 deflects the ball with the hands, A2 kicks the free ball and (a) it goes into the goal; (b) does not go into the goal. **RULING:** In (a), award a goal and caution B2 for unsporting conduct; in (b) call handling, award a penalty kick, and disqualify B2 for serious foul play. ([12-8-1-f13, 14](#)), ([12-8-2-d1](#)), ([14-1-1](#))

**5.3.1 SITUATION B:** Near the end of the first half, the visiting coach is cautioned by a referee for unsportsmanlike conduct. The coach continues to indicate, by gestures, dissatisfaction with the referee's decision. **RULING:** The coach shall be disqualified and removed from the vicinity of the playing area. The coach shall be prohibited from further contact, direct or indirect, with the team members during the remainder of the game. Failure to comply shall result in termination of the game. The incident shall be reported in writing to the proper authorities by the head referee. ([5-4-1b](#), [12-8-3](#))

**5.3.1 SITUATION C:** Player A2 is fouled just outside the opponent's penalty area. The referee signals visibly and verbally "play on." (a) A2 then stumbles and within a couple of seconds falls to the ground; (b) A2 keeps the ball and gets off a shot that sails wide of the goal; (c) A2 manages to continue and is immediately fouled again, this time within the penalty area. The referee whistles and awards a direct free kick from the point of the original foul. **RULING:** (a) correct. The advantage did not materialize and the foul must be penalized; (b) incorrect. The advantage was gained even though the shot missed; (c) incorrect. Since the subsequent foul results in a greater penalty, a penalty kick should be awarded to Team A.

**5.3.2 SITUATION A:** Due to (a) extremely humid conditions; (b) thunderstorms; (c) a power failure, the officials temporarily suspend play. **RULING:** Legal. Officials may suspend play due to the elements or emergencies. If the adverse conditions continue, see [7-1-3](#) for options.

**5.3.2 SITUATION B:** The game is terminated by the head referee due to a fight among players of both teams and (a) the team trailing started the fight; (b) the team leading started the fight; (c) the score is tied. **RULING:** In (a), (b) and (c), no winner is declared by the official and all conditions regarding the incident shall be reported to the proper authorities in writing. ([5-4-1](#))

**5.3.2 SITUATION C:** When an official timer is not available, the head referee will count down the last ten seconds of each period of play. **RULING:** Incorrect procedure.

**5.3.2 SITUATION D:** After Team A scores a goal the head referee notices that the clock was not stopped. The referee determines that there is a discrepancy between the official time and the scoreboard time and instructs the timer to correct the clock. **RULING:** Legal.

**\*5.3.2 SITUATION E:** Team A is awarded an indirect free kick foul just outside the penalty area. The referee fails to raise his/her hand to indicate an indirect free kick and Team A shoots the ball directly into Team B's goal. Referee awards a goal kick. **RULING:** Legal. The ball crossed the goal line before being played by another player so a goal cannot be allowed. Since the ball was last kicked by an attacker, the restart is a goal kick.

# SECTION 4 AFTER THE GAME

**ART. 1 . . .** The head referee shall:

- a. verify the score;
- b. report in writing any disqualifications and unusual incidents to the proper authorities.

## **RULE 5, SECTION 4 — PLAY RULING**

**5.4.1 SITUATION:** The head referee terminates the game due to an altercation. He/she reports the termination in writing to the proper authorities. **RULING:** Correct procedure.

# Rule 6 Ball Holders, Timer and Scorer

## SECTION 1 BALL HOLDERS

**ART. 1 . . .** At least two ball holders shall be provided by the home team. If the home team cannot provide ball holders, the visiting team may.

**ART. 2 . . .** Ball holders are under the direct supervision of the official(s) whom they shall assist by carrying an extra game ball and retrieving balls which cross boundary lines.

# SECTION 2 TIMER

**ART. 1 . . .** The home school timer shall be the official timer. However, by mutual agreement of opposing coaches or by state high school association adoption, the official time may be kept by the head referee.

**ART. 2 . . .** The official timer shall use a visible timing device. The official time may be kept on a stadium clock.

**ART. 3 . . .** The official timer shall:

a. start the timing device when the ball is put into play and stop the timing device when signaled to do so by a referee for an injury, for a penalty kick, for a caution, for a disqualification, following the scoring of a goal and when an official orders the clock to be stopped; b. signal to the official(s) when substitutions are to be made; c. countdown verbally the last 10 seconds of each period of play to the nearest official; d. be aware of the position of the ball when it becomes dead; e. signal when time for a period has expired; f. signal two minutes after the end of the first and third quarters when applicable; g. signal two minutes before the end of the interval between the first and second halves.

## SECTION 3 SCORER

**ART. 1 . . .** The home school shall designate the official scorer. However, by mutual agreement of opposing coaches or by the state high school association adoption, the official score may be kept by the head referee.

**ART. 2 . . .** The scorer shall:

- a. verify that each team's complete roster (first and last name and number of each player and substitute, bench personnel and coaches) is submitted at least five minutes prior to the kickoff;
- b. record all scores;
- c. record the number and reason for all players cautioned and disqualified;
- d. after a substitute has reported to him/her, have the timer signal to the official(s) the first time the substitution is possible;
- e. obtain the head referee's verification of the score.

**ART. 3 . . .** By state association adoption, a **fourth official** may be appointed to assume the duties of the scorer. The **fourth official** is under the jurisdiction of the head referee and performs those duties as assigned.



# Rule 7 Duration of the Game and Length of Periods

## SECTION 1 LENGTH OF PERIODS

**ART. 1 . . .** Two equal halves of 40 minutes each shall be played unless, by state high school association adoption, four equal quarters of 20 minutes each are specified. It is recommended junior high schools play 30-minute halves unless by state high school association adoption, four equal quarters of 15 minutes each are specified.

**ART. 2 . . .** Periods may be shortened by state high school association adoption, or if mutually agreed upon or in any emergency, by agreement of coaches or ordered by the head referee, provided it is determined to shorten the periods before the game or before the second half begins and all remaining periods are the same length.

**ART. 3 . . .** In the event a game must be suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue play, the head referee shall declare it an official game if one complete half or more of the game has been played. If less than one-half of the game has been played, the game may be rescheduled from the start, or restarted from the suspension of play according to state association adoption ([18-1-111](#)).

**ART. 4 . . .** A period shall end at the expiration of time.

**EXCEPTION:** Play shall be extended beyond the expiration of a period, in regulation time and overtime, to permit a penalty kick to be completed.

**ART. 5 . . .** By state association adoption, a goal differential may be established whereby at the end of the first half if one team has gained the established goal differential or if it secures such differential during the second half, the game shall be ended.

## **RULE 7, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULINGS**

**7.1.3 SITUATION:** (a) The referee terminates a game due to spectator interference with five minutes remaining in the first half and Team A leading 2-0. The referee declares Team A to be the winner. (b) The referee terminates a game due to misbehavior by the coach of Team B ten minutes into the second half. Team B is ahead 2-1. The referee declares Team A to be the winner because Team B caused the termination. **RULING:** Incorrect in both (a) and (b). The referee may not determine the outcome of a terminated game, but must report the situation to the state association.

**7.1.4 SITUATION:** A penalty kick has been awarded (a) when time expires; or (b) with two seconds remaining in the game. The penalty kick is taken, but the ball is deflected by the goalkeeper, and is shot back into the goal by a teammate of the kicker. **RULING:** No goal is scored in (a), since the try ends when the kicker replays the ball, the ball goes out of bounds or its momentum is spent. A goal is scored in (b), if the ball enters the goal prior to the expiration of time. ([14-1-6](#))

## **SECTION 2 INTERVALS BETWEEN PERIODS**

**ART. 1 . . .** The halftime interval shall be 10 minutes unless opposing coaches mutually agree to a different length.

**ART. 2 . . .** The interval between the first and second quarters and the third and fourth quarters shall be a maximum of two minutes.

**ART. 3 . . .** Between each period teams shall exchange ends and alternate the kickoff.

## **SECTION 3 TIE GAMES**

**ART. 1 . . .** Regular-season games which are tied at the end of 80 minutes of play may be resolved by procedures adopted by state high school associations.

**NOTE:** No overtime procedures shall exceed 20 minutes of play during the regular season.

**ART. 2 . . .** The interval between the fourth period or second half and the first overtime period (if permitted by state high school association rules) shall be five minutes. The interval between the first overtime period and a second overtime period shall be two minutes.

## **SECTION 4 TIME-OUT AND IN**

**ART. 1 . . .** The clock shall be stopped for an injury, for a penalty kick, for cautioning (yellow card), for disqualifications (red card), following the scoring of a goal and when a referee orders the clock be stopped.

**ART. 2 . . .** The clock shall be restarted when the ball is properly put into play.

## **RULE 7, SECTION 4 — PLAY RULING**

**7.4.2 SITUATION:** The referee whistles to indicate the start of the game, at which time the timekeeper starts the clock. **RULING:** Incorrect. The clock starts when the ball is properly put into play, not when the whistle blows.

## **SECTION 5 PLAY**

If a team refuses to play after being instructed to do so, the game is terminated.

# Rule 8 The Start of Play

## SECTION 1 KICKOFF

**ART. 1 . . .** When the referee signals with a whistle, a kickoff shall initiate play at the start of each period and after goals.

**ART. 2 . . .** At the moment of the kickoff, all players shall be in their team's half of the field. Players opposing the kicker shall be at least 10 yards from the ball until it is kicked.

**ART. 3 . . .** The ball shall be kicked while it is stationary on the ground in the center of the field of play. A goal may be scored directly from the kickoff. The ball is in play when it moves forward. If the kickoff is taken improperly, it must be retaken.

**ART. 4 . . .** After the kickoff, the ball may be played by any player except the one who kicked off. The kicker may not play the ball until it has been played or touched by another player on either team.

**PENALTY: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent at the spot of the foul.**



## **RULE 8, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULING**

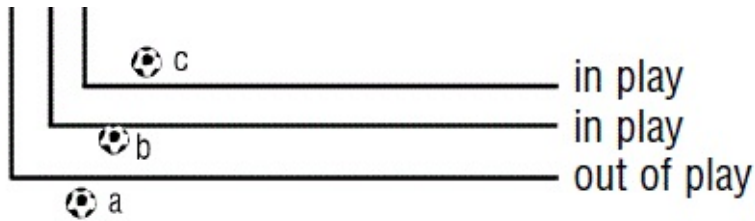
**8.1.3 SITUATION:** Team A prepares to kick off and the ball is moved backward to a teammate.

**RULING:** This is an incorrect kickoff. Team A will re-take the kickoff without penalty.

# Rule 9 Ball In and Out of Play

## SECTION 1 BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

**ART. 1 . . .** The ball is out of play when it has completely crossed a goal line or touchline, whether on the ground or in the air.



**ART. 2 . . .** The ball is in play at all other times, including:

- a. when it rebounds from a goal post, crossbar or corner flag post;
- b. when it touches an official on the field of play;
- c. until a referee sounds the whistle;
- d. when a drop ball touches the ground;
- e. when a player who has left the field in the normal course of play plays the ball while it is still on the field of play.

**ART. 3 . . .** The referee shall sound the whistle when needed to indicate that the ball is out of play or for a foul. As soon as the ball is in position to be played, it may be played without a second whistle. A second whistle is required to restart play for the taking of a penalty kick, after a substitution is made, after a caution, disqualification, injury and after setting a wall prior to a free kick.

# RULE 9, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULINGS

**9.1.2 SITUATION A:** A pass by A2 to A3 strikes the referee (a) who is inbounds; or (b) who is straddling the touchline, the ball being inbounds; or (c) who is out of bounds. The pass in both (a) and (b) is controlled by B2. **RULING:** In (a) and (b), the ball remains in play, since it struck the official while inbounds. There will be no interruption. In (c), a throw-in is awarded Team B, provided the ball passed completely over the touchline.

**9.1.2 SITUATION B:** An indirect free kick strikes an official while in the field of play and then (a) rebounds into the goal; or (b) rebounds to a player who is onside and then into the goal. **RULING:** There is no goal in (a) as the ball must be played by another player. Restart with a goal kick. It is a goal in (b) because another player did play the ball. ([13-1-1](#), [13-3-3](#))

**9.1.2 SITUATION C:** An official, while in the field of play, is struck by a direct free kick which rebounds into the opponent's goal. **RULING:** Goal. The ball is in play when it rebounds or strikes an official in the field of play. ([13-1-1](#))

**9.1.3 SITUATION A:** A direct kick foul has been committed outside the penalty area. The official sounded the whistle and signaled a direct kick. The kicking team takes the kick quickly and scores, but the defenders claim the goal should not be counted because there was no second whistle. **RULING:** Goal counts. No second whistle is required.

**9.1.3 SITUATION B:** Team A is awarded a free kick. Player A requests an official to ask Player B to move away from the ball the required 10 yards. **RULING:** Correct procedure.

**NOTE:** Play shall be restarted by a second whistle.

## SECTION 2 DROP BALL

**ART. 1 . . .** The game is restarted with a drop ball:

- a. when the ball is caused to go out-of-bounds by two opponents simultaneously;
- b. when the ball becomes deflated ([2-2-4](#));
- c. following a temporary suspension of play for an injury or unusual situation in which no team has clear possession of the ball (except as noted in [14-1-7](#));
- d. when simultaneous fouls of the same degree occur by opponents.

**ART. 2 . . .** The ball should be dropped at the location where it became dead unless this is within the goal area, in which case, it shall be dropped on that part of the goal-area line which runs parallel to the goal line nearest the location where the ball was when play was stopped. If the ball was caused to go out of bounds by two opponents simultaneously, the ball is dropped five yards inside the boundary line unless this is the goal area. (Also see [9-3](#).)

**ART. 3 . . .** The ball is dropped by an official from waist level to the ground between two opposing players. Other players may be positioned anywhere on the field of play provided they do not interfere with the drop-ball procedure.

**ART. 4 . . .** The ball shall touch the ground before it is played.

**PENALTY: If the ball is played before it touches the ground, an official shall drop the ball again. A second violation by the same player on the same drop-ball situation may result in a caution to the offending player. Play shall be restarted by a drop ball.**

## **RULE 9, SECTION 2 — PLAY RULINGS**

**9.2.1 SITUATION A:** The ball is being played by A2 in Team B's penalty area. B2 takes the ball away from A2 and kicks it to midfield. At the beginning of play, B3 had been hurt in the penalty area and appears to have a broken leg. The official sounds the whistle as B2 clears the ball from the penalty area. Following suspension of play, the official is about to put the ball in play by a drop ball just outside the penalty area when player B2 protests claiming his team was in control of the ball when kicked from the penalty area. **RULING:** When the ball was cleared there was no assurance as to which team would control the ball when it was next played. A drop ball should be given. (9-3)

**9.2.1 SITUATION B:** The referee inadvertently sounds the whistle. **RULING:** Stop play. If either team is in possession of the ball, then an indirect free kick is awarded to that team; if neither team is in possession of the ball, then a drop ball results.

**9.2.2 SITUATION:** With neither team in control of the ball, a player is injured. The referee stops play while the ball is (a) within the goal area; or (b) outside the goal area, but within the penalty area. **RULING:** In (a), restart play with a drop ball at the nearest spot on that part of the goal-area line which runs parallel to the goal line; in (b), restart play with a drop ball at the place where the ball was when play was suspended.

## SECTION 3 TEMPORARY SUSPENSION

In case of a temporary suspension due to an injury or any unusual situation (except as noted in [2-2-4](#)), if one team is clearly in possession of the ball, the game shall be restarted by an indirect free kick by the team in possession of the ball at the point where the ball was when play was suspended (except as noted in [14-1-7](#)). Should there not be clear possession at the time play is suspended due to an injury or any unusual situation, there will be a drop ball at the spot where the ball was declared dead subject to the provisions of Rule [9-2-2](#).

# Rule 10 Scoring

## SECTION 1 GOALS

**ART. 1 . . .** A goal is scored when the entire ball passes beyond the goal line, between the goal posts and under the crossbar provided it has not been deliberately thrown, carried or propelled by the hand or arm of a player of the attacking team (except as noted in [10-1-2g](#)).

**ART. 2 . . .** A goal MAY be scored directly from a:

- a. kickoff;
- b. direct free kick;
- c. goal kick;
- d. penalty kick;
- e. corner kick;
- f. drop ball;
- g. goalkeeper's throw, punt or drop-kick.

**ART. 3 . . .** A goal MAY NOT be scored directly from a/an:

- a. indirect free kick; b. throw-in;
- c. free kick into a team's own goal; d. goal kick into a team's own goal; e. corner kick into a team's own goal.

## **SECTION 2 FORFEITS**

The score of a forfeited game shall be 1-0 if the game is not started, the score is tied or the offending team is ahead at that time. If the offending team is behind at the time of forfeit, the score at that time is the final score.



## **SECTION 3 WINNER**

The winning team is the team scoring the greater number of goals during the game.

# Rule 11 Offside

## SECTION 1 OFFSIDE

**ART. 1 . . .** A player is in an offside position when nearer to his/her opponents' goal line than the ball, unless:

- a. the player is in his/her own half of the field of play; or
- b. the player is not nearer to the opponent's goal line than at least two opponents.

**NOTE:** The position of any part of the player's head, body or feet will be the deciding factor, not the player's arms.

**ART. 2 . . .** A player shall not be penalized for being in an offside position if the ball is received directly from a goal kick, a corner kick or a throw-in.

**ART. 3 . . .** It is not an offense in itself to be in an offside position. A player shall only be penalized for being in an offside position if, at the moment the ball touches or is played by a teammate, that player is involved in active play by:

- a. interfering with play or with an opponent; or
- b. gaining an advantage by being in that position.

**PENALTY:** Indirect free kick at the spot of infraction, subject to provisions in [13.1.3](#).

# RULE 11, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULINGS

**11.1.2 SITUATION A:** A defender on Team B, with the goalkeeper out of position, heads the ball out, but in doing so falls into the goal. A3 gets the ball and passes it to A2 who has only the goalkeeper to beat. **RULING:** The defender on Team B left the field during the normal movement of play. The defender cannot create an offside by stepping off the field. Therefore, A2 is not offside.

**11.1.2 SITUATION B:** A2, after having made a play on goal, leaves the field of play as a result of normal movement of play. A2 remains outside the field of play to indicate he/she will take no further part in the attacking maneuver and A3 then scores a goal. **RULING:** Goal. A2 left the field during the normal movement of play and since no advantage was gained, A2 is not offside.

**11.1.2 SITUATION C:** An offensive player steps off the field to avoid being offside. **RULING:** Legal, if the player left the field for the sole purpose of not being offside. If, after leaving the field, the player distracts an opponent or assists a teammate, it is an infraction.

**11.1.2 SITUATION D:** A2 is in an offside position with only the goalkeeper between A2 and the goal. The ball is in possession of Team A at midfield in the offensive half of the field. A2 is just outside the penalty area and is making no attempt to enter into play. **RULING:** There is no violation, but if the ball should be passed to A2, then an offside would be called.

**11.1.2 SITUATION E:** Player A2 attacks on the offensive half of the field. A2's teammates on the front line move into support positions. The defensive team uses an offside trap, putting A2's teammates in an offside position. Player A2 continues the dribble through the defense and scores. **RULING:** Goal. The players in the offside position did not participate in the play as A2 maintained possession of the ball.

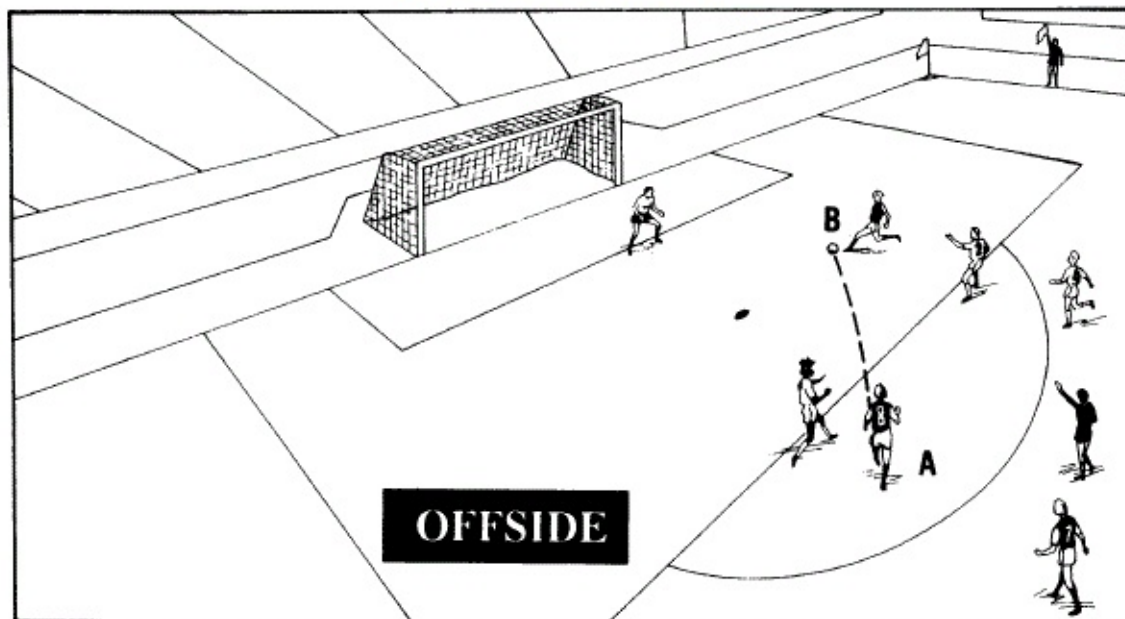
**11.1.3 SITUATION A:** A2, in an offside position, receives the ball directly from (a) A3; or (b) B2 who is participating in a drop-ball situation. **RULING:** (a) offside; (b) not offside because ball was last played by an opponent.

**11.1.3 SITUATION B:** While participating in a drop-ball, A is called offside by the official. **RULING:** A player participating in a drop ball cannot be called offside.

# DIAGRAMS ILLUSTRATING OFFSIDE

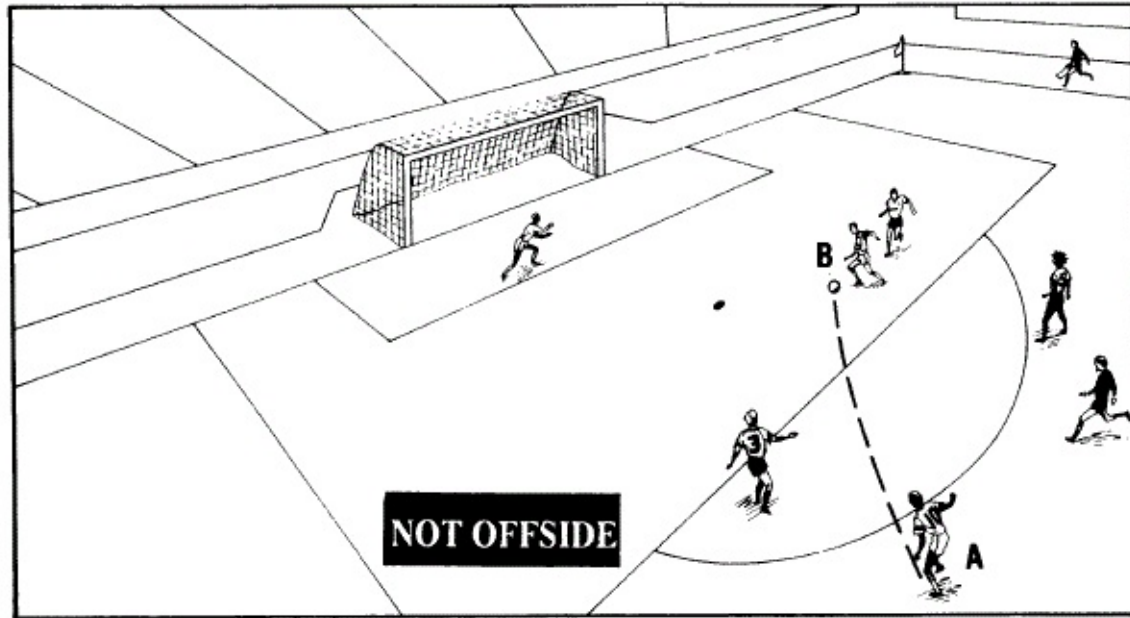
**NOTE:** Diagrams reprinted with permission of USSF/FIFA.

**OFFSIDE — Diagram 1**  
**Pass to a Teammate**



A passes the ball to B. B is offside because he is in front of A and is nearer to his opponents' goal line than at least two opponents when the ball was passed by A.

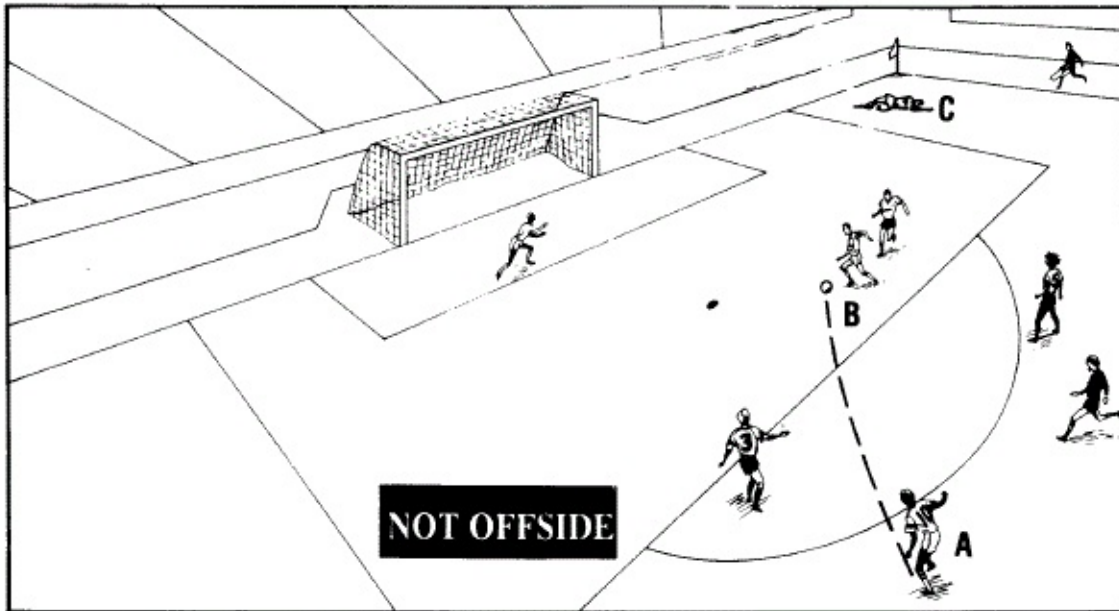
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 2



### Pass to a Teammate

A plays the ball forward to B who is level with the second last defender. B is not offside since, at the moment the ball was played by A, he was not nearer to his opponents' goal line than at least two opponents.

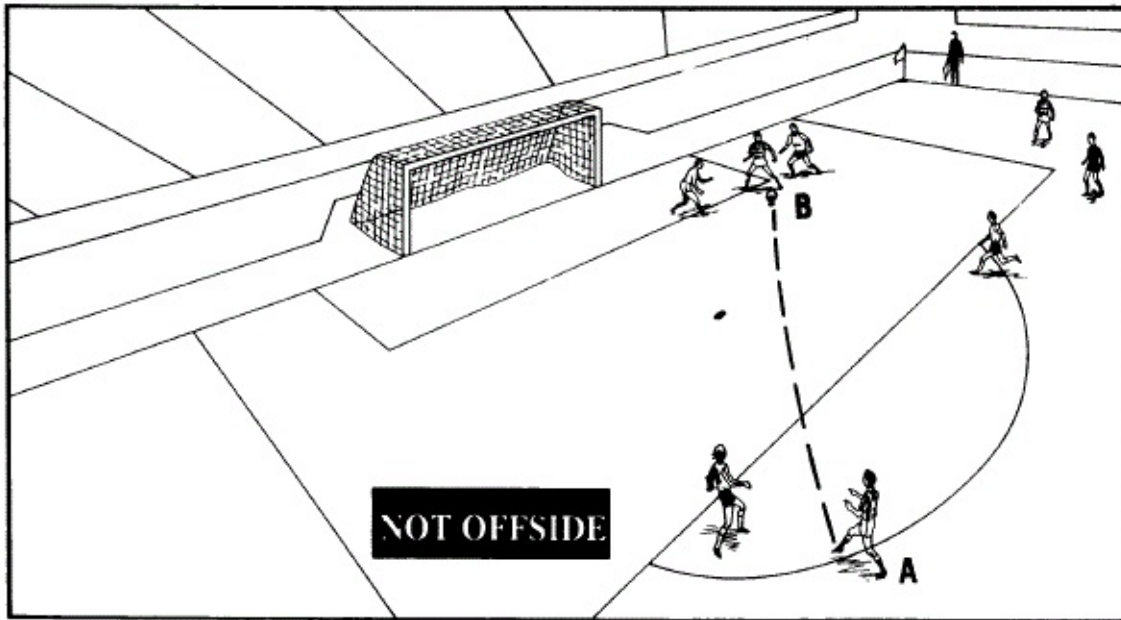
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 3



### Pass to a Teammate

A plays the ball forward to B who is level with the second last defender. B is not offside since, at the moment the ball was played by A, he was not nearer to his opponents' goal line than at least two of his opponents. Player C, lying injured outside the penalty area, is in an offside position but would not be penalized since he is not involved in active play.

## OFFSIDE — Diagram 4

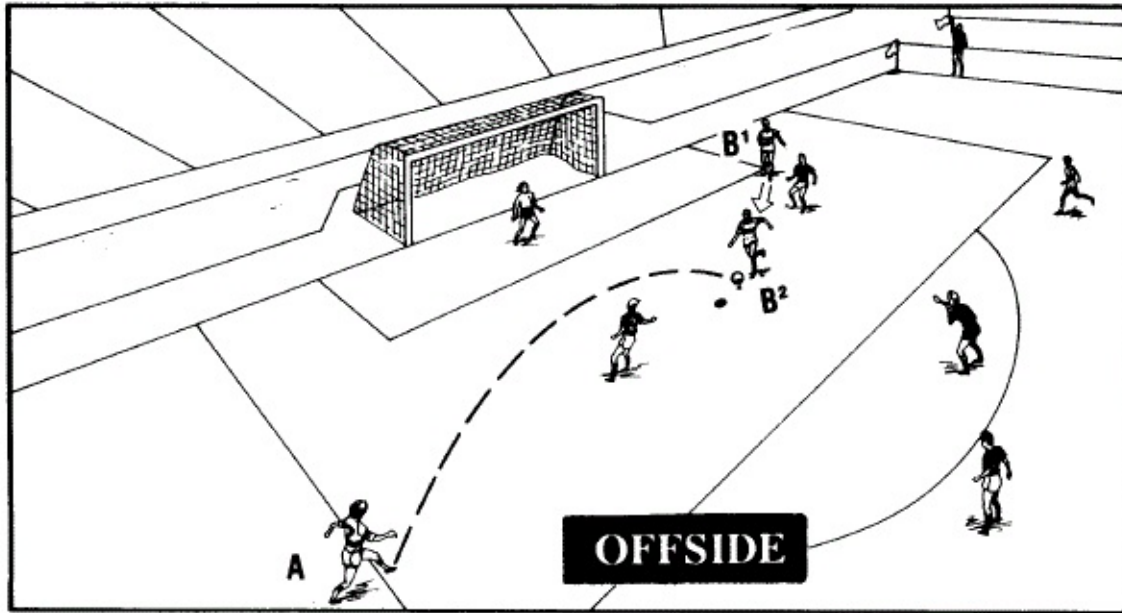


### Pass to a Teammate

A plays the ball to B who is level with the last two opponents. B is not offside since, at the moment the ball was played by A, he was not nearer his opponents' goal line than at least two of his opponents.



## OFFSIDE — Diagram 5

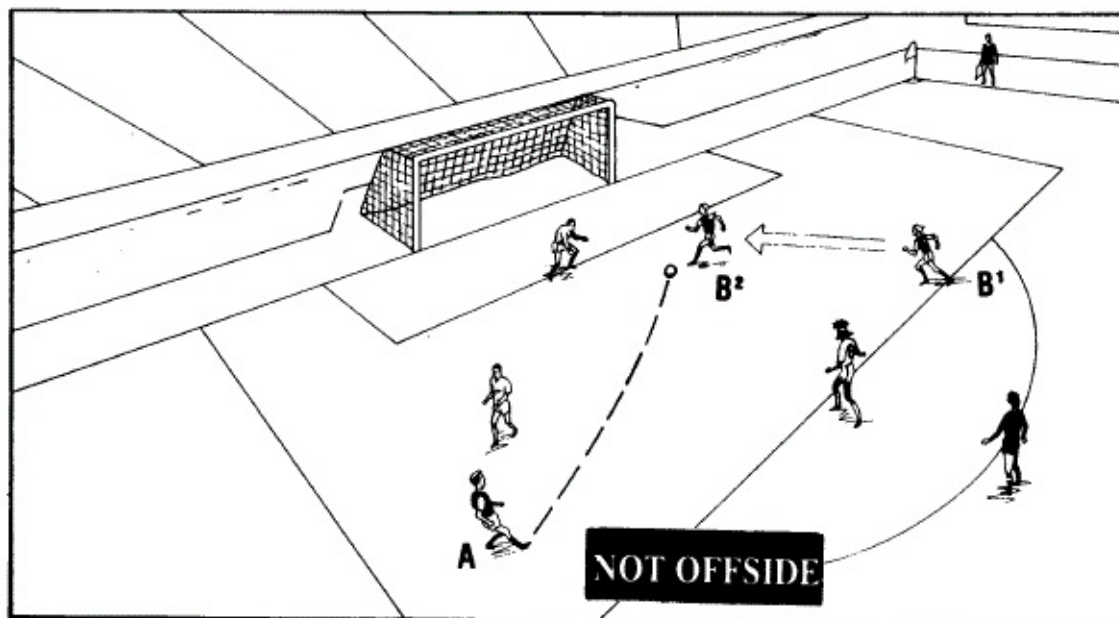


### Pass to a Teammate

A crosses the ball forward from outside the penalty area. B runs from Position 1 and collects the ball as it lands at Position 2. B is offside since, at the moment the ball was played by A, he was nearer to his opponents' goal line than at least two of his opponents and gained an advantage by being in active play.



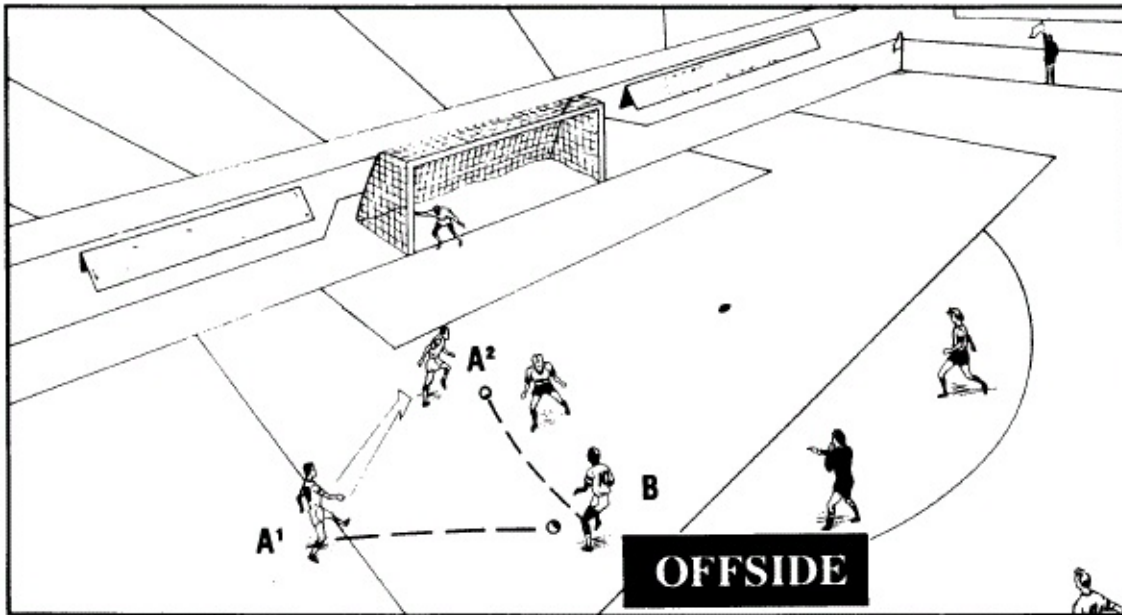
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 6



### Pass to a Teammate

A passes the ball to B who runs from Position 1 to Position 2 to play it. B is not offside because at the moment the ball was played by A, he was not in an offside position since he was not in front of the ball and was not nearer to his opponents' goal line than at least two of his opponents.

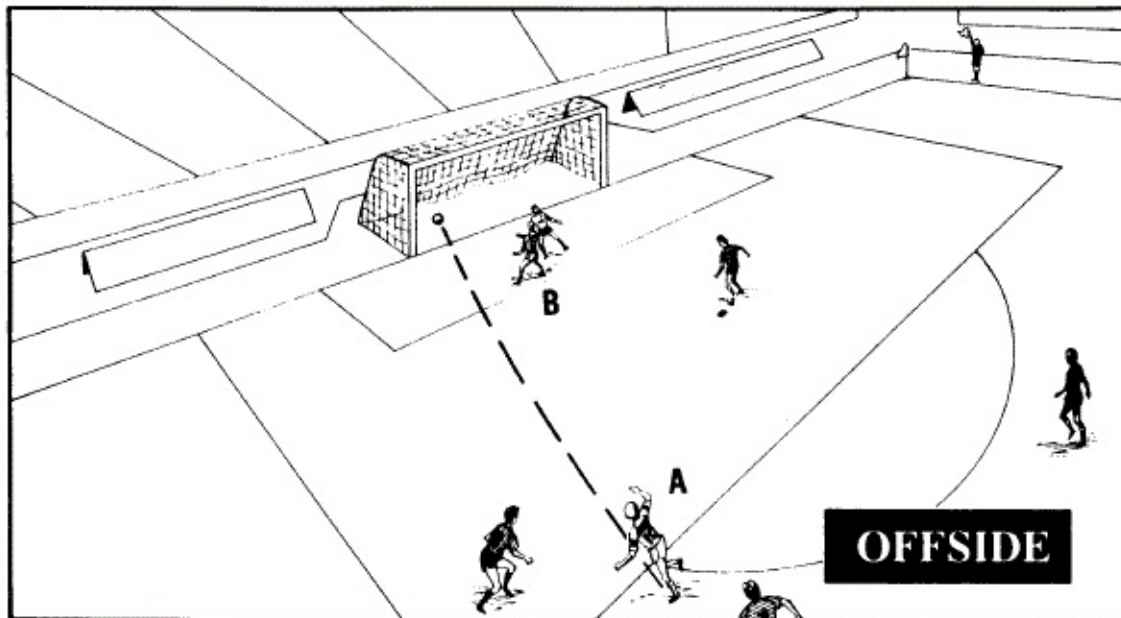
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 7



### Interpassing with a Teammate

A plays the ball to B from Position 1 and runs forward to receive the return pass. B plays the ball to A who is now in Position 2. A is offside since at the moment the ball was played forward to him by B, he was nearer his opponents' goal line than at least two of his opponents and gained an advantage by being in active play.

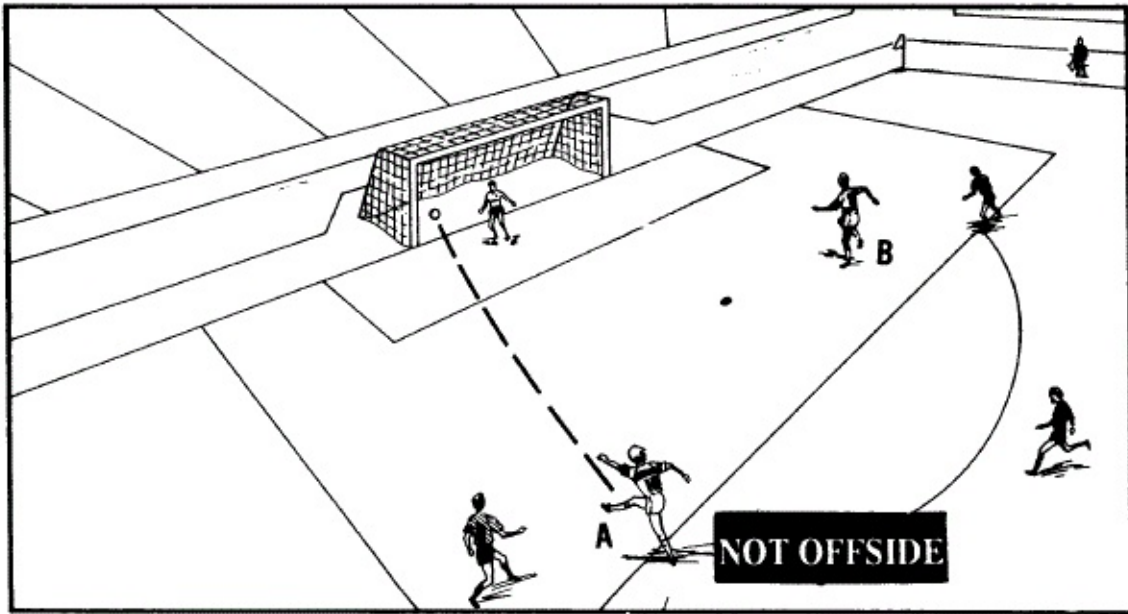
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 8



### Interfering with an Opponent

A shoots for goal and the ball enters the net. B is standing in front of the goalkeeper. The goal would not be allowed since B, who is in an offside position, is involved in active play and is interfering with an opponent.

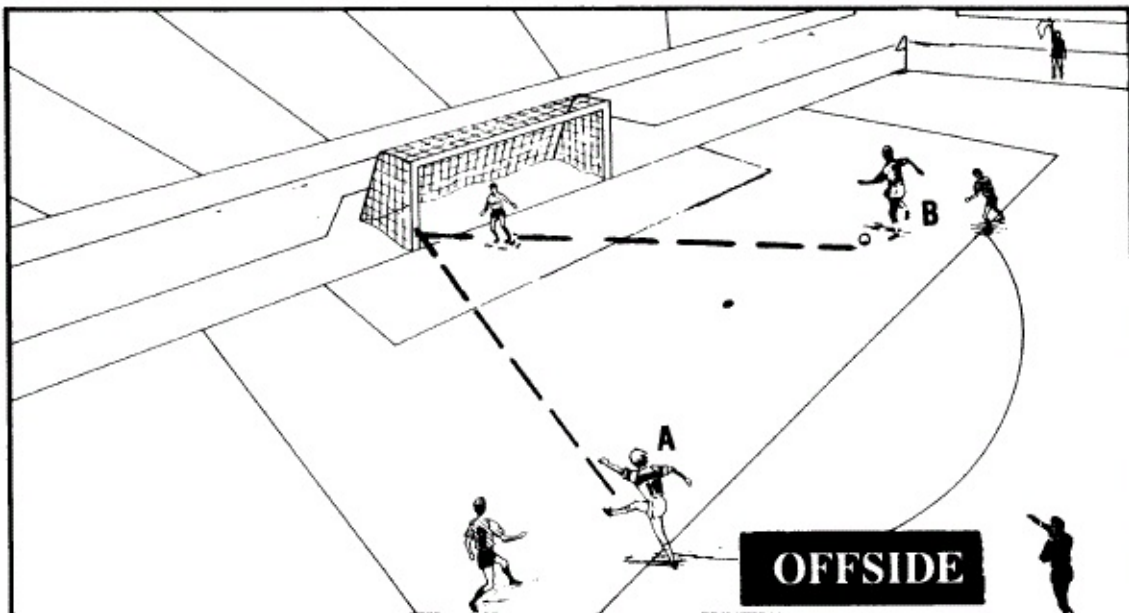
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 9



### Shot at Goal

A shoots for goal and scores. Although B is in an offside position, he is not involved in active play and the goal would be allowed.

## OFFSIDE — Diagram 10

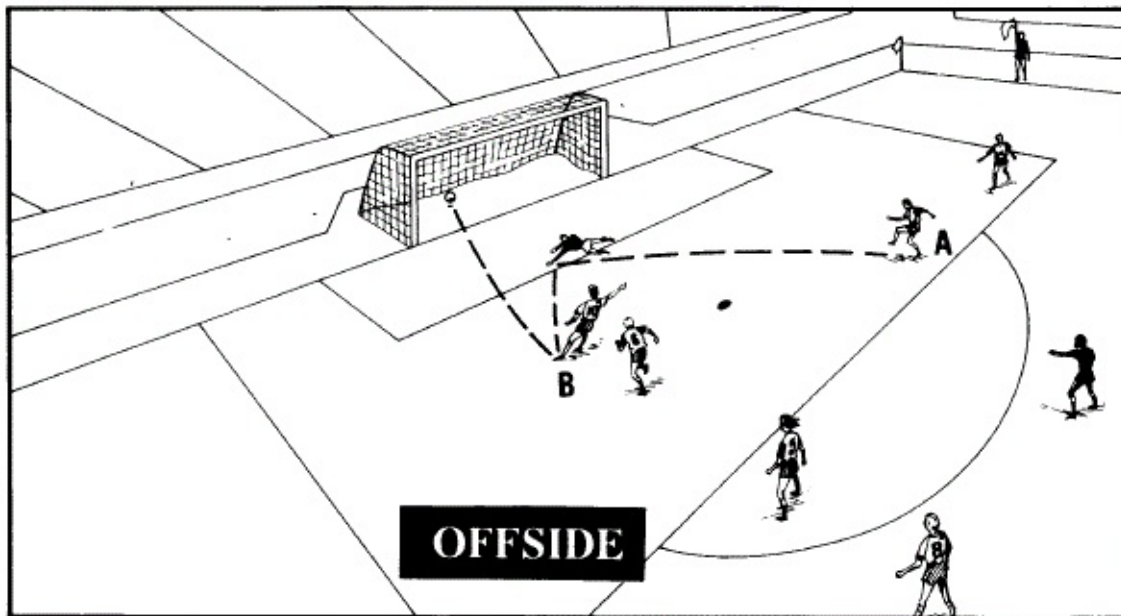


### Ball Rebounding from Goal Posts or Crossbar

A shoots for goal and the ball rebounds from the post to B who kicks the ball into goal. The goal would be disallowed since B, who was in an offside position when the ball was last played by A, was in active play and gained an advantage by being in that position.



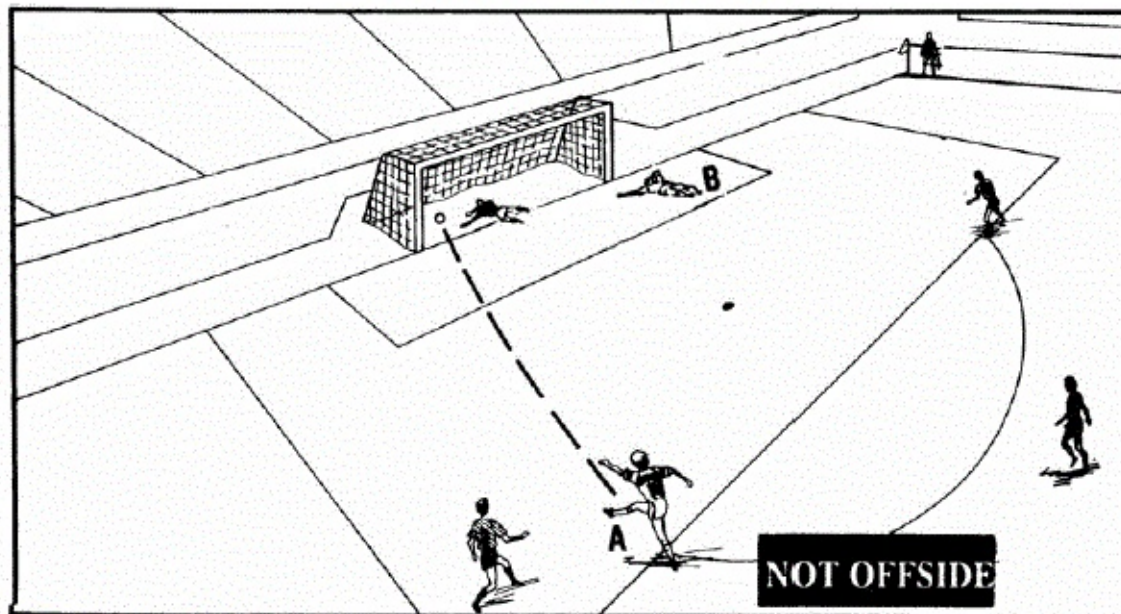
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 11



### Shot Rebounds from Goalkeeper

A shoots the ball at goal and the ball rebounds from the goalkeeper to Player B. The goal is disallowed since B, who was in an offside position when the ball was last played by A, was in active play and gained an advantage by being in that position.

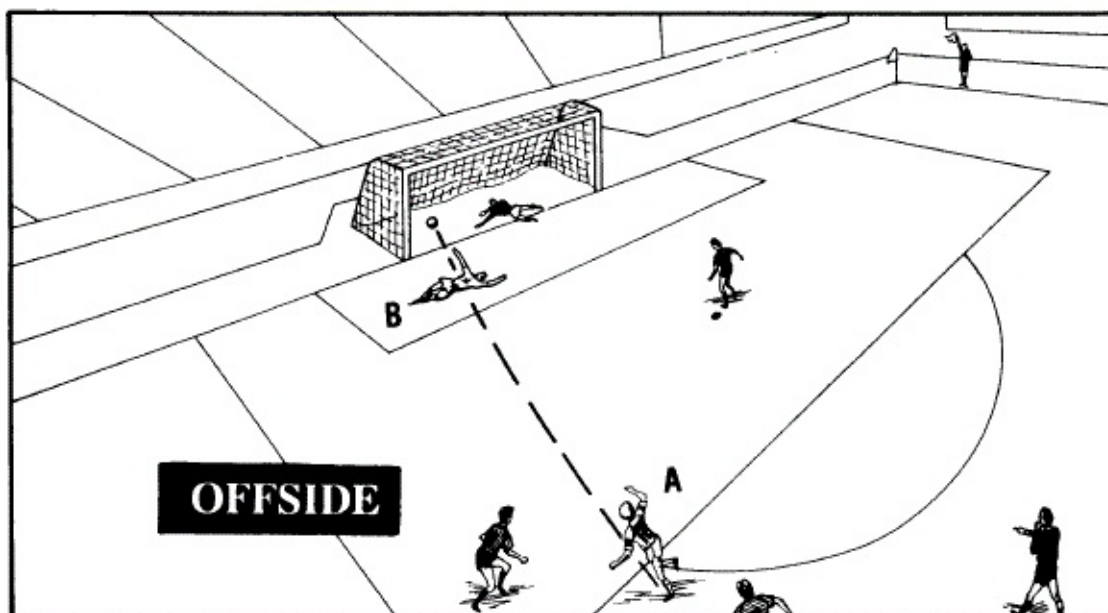
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 12



### Not Interfering with an Opponent

A shoots for goal and scores. Although B is lying injured in an offside position, he is not involved in active play. The goal would be allowed.

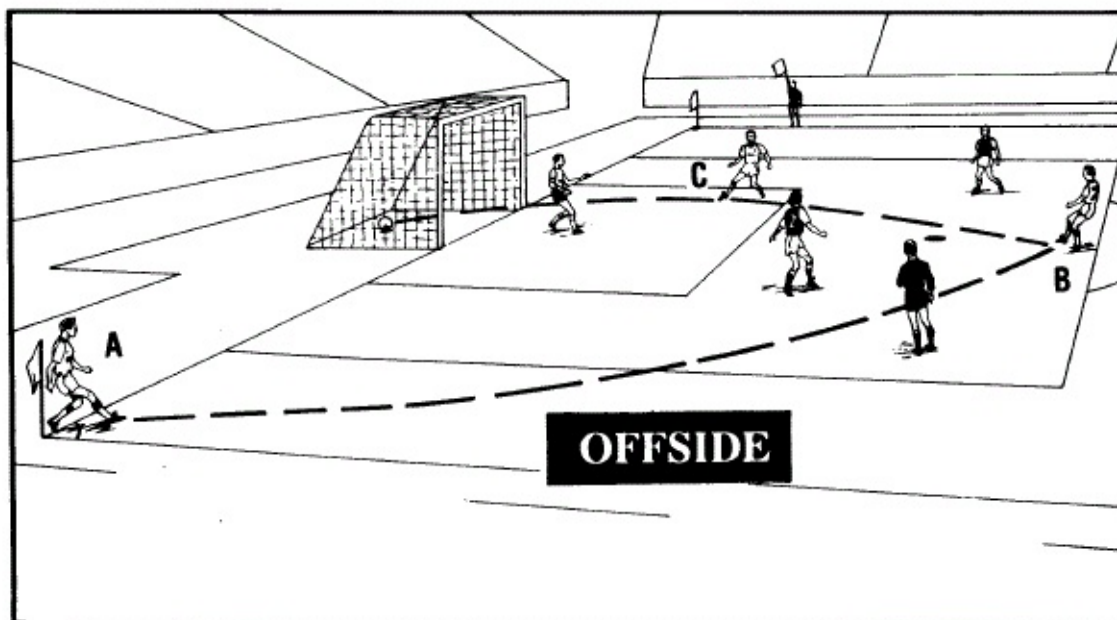
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 13



### Interfering with an Opponent

A shoots for goal and the ball enters the net. B, who is lying injured in the goal area and in the path of the ball, would be penalized for offside. By his presence, however accidental, he is involved in the active play and is interfering with an opponent.

## OFFSIDE — Diagram 14

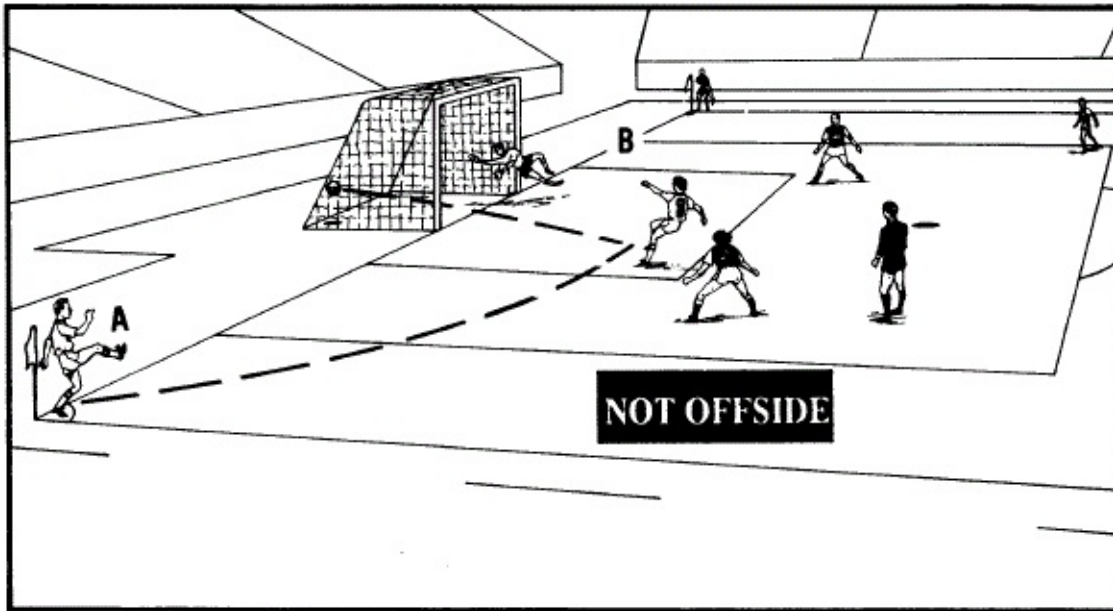


### Corner Kick

A takes a corner kick and the ball goes to B. B shoots for goal and the ball is touched by C and enters the goal. The goal is not permitted since C was in front of the ball and there were not at least two opponents between him and the goal line when it was last played by B.



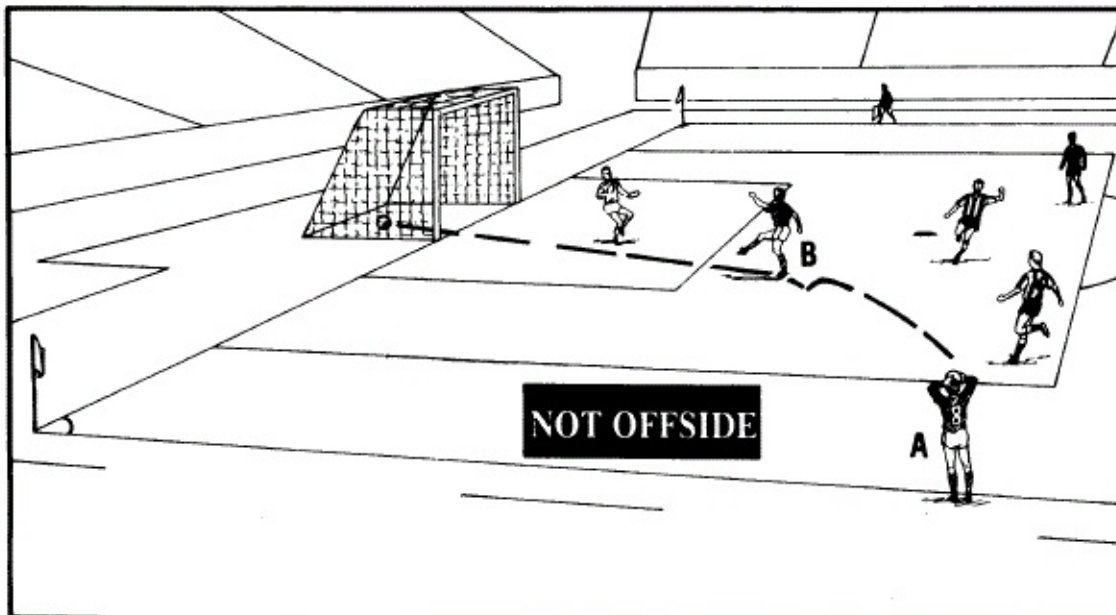
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 15



### Corner Kick

A corner kick is taken by A and the ball goes to B who scores. Although B has only one opponent between him and the goal line, the goal is allowed since a player cannot be offside if he receives the ball directly from a corner kick.

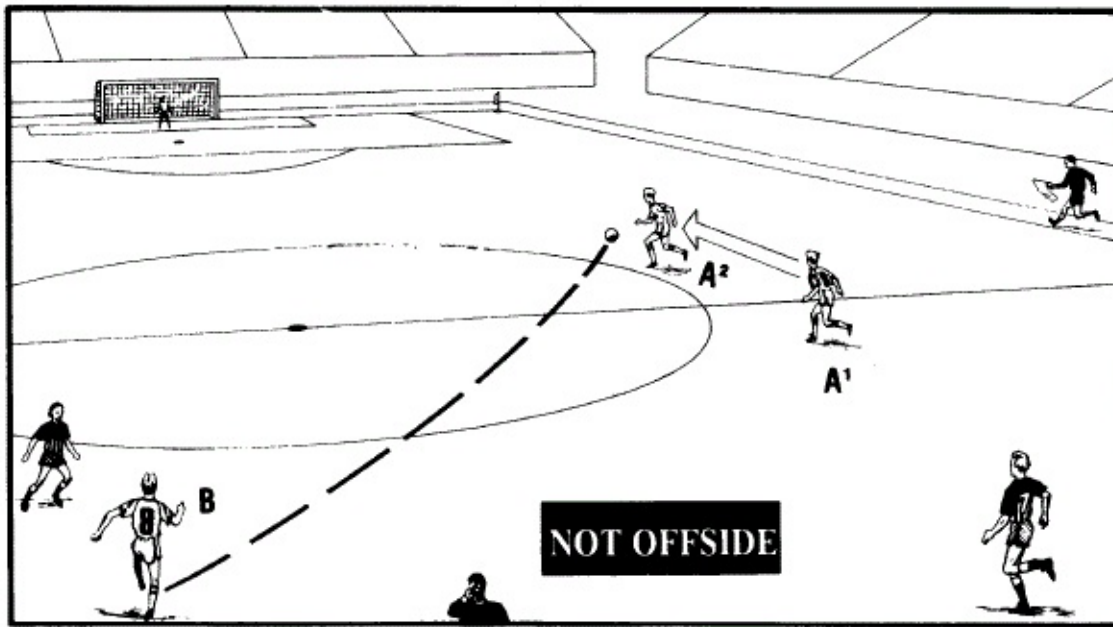
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 16



### Throw-in

A throws the ball to B who scores. The goal is allowed. Although B is in front of the ball and there is only one opponent between him and the goal line, he is not offside because a player cannot be offside if he receives the ball directly from a throw-in.

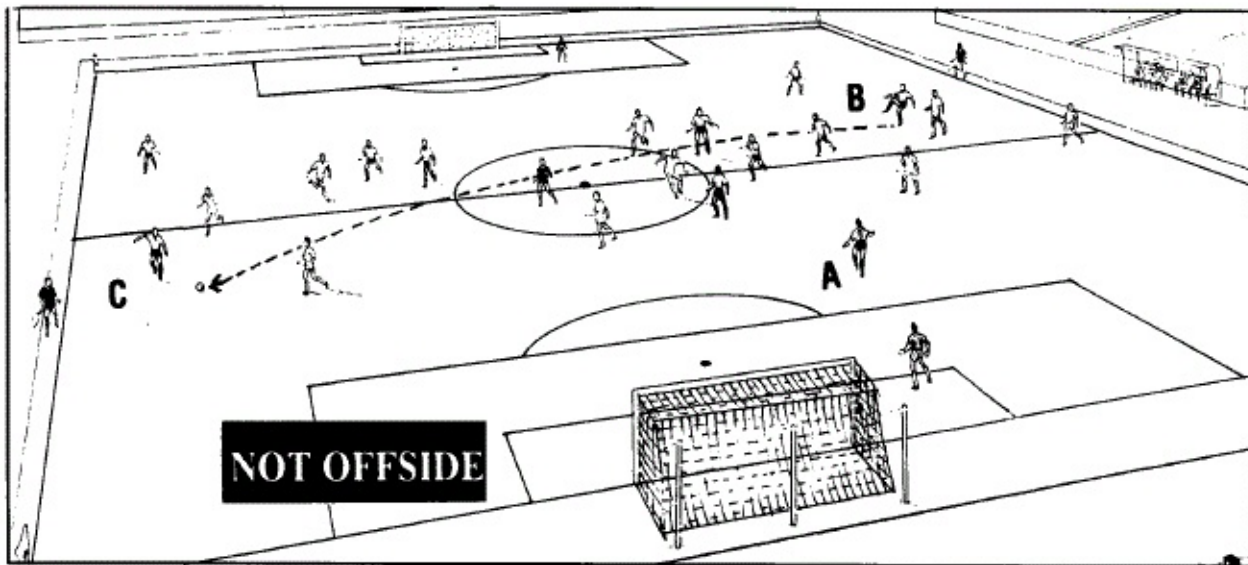
## OFFSIDE — Diagram 17



### Pass to a Teammate

B plays the ball ahead of A who is in his own half. Although there are not at least two opponents nearer their own goal line at the moment when B played the ball, A is not offside since a player cannot be offside in his own half of the field of play.

## OFFSIDE — Diagram 18



### Active Play

The ball is intercepted by player B, a teammate of the attacking player. It is transferred to another teammate, player C, on the wing. Although the attacking player A is in an offside position, he would not be penalized since he is not involved in active play.





# Rule 12 Fouls and Misconduct

## SECTION 1 SPITTING, KICKING, STRIKING, TRIPPING AND JUMPING

**ART. 1 . . .** A player shall not kick, attempt to kick, strike, attempt to strike, spit at, or jump at an opponent.

**ART. 2 . . .** A player shall not trip, or attempt to trip, an opponent. This includes tripping or attempting to trip an opponent by use of the legs, or by stooping in front or behind an opponent in such a manner as to cause a fall or loss of balance.

**ART. 3 . . .** A goalkeeper shall not strike or attempt to strike an opponent by throwing or kicking the ball at an opponent or by pushing an opponent with the ball while holding it.

**PENALTY: Direct free kick.**

## **RULE 12, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULINGS**

**12.1.1 SITUATION:** The goalkeeper, in trying to catch a high ball, raises a knee and contacts an opponent. **RULING:** If the official judged the goalkeeper to be playing the ball, no action need be taken unless the action was dangerous enough to warrant a caution; then the game must be restarted by an indirect free kick from the point of the infraction. If the official judged the goalkeeper was playing the opponent (kicking or attempting to kick an opponent), the referee has the discretionary power to judge the action severe enough to warrant immediate disqualification from the game without a previous caution and the game shall be restarted with the penalty kick.

**12.1.2 SITUATION:** Player A2 trips B2 but B2 maintains control of the ball. **RULING:** Foul. The referee may stop play and award a direct free kick or invoke the advantage clause.

**12.1.3 SITUATION:** A2 approaches B2 from outside B2's normal peripheral vision and executes a sliding tackle. **RULING:** Legal, if in the referee's judgment it is properly executed. (See definition of sliding tackle in [18-1-1ii](#))

## SECTION 2 HANDLING

A player shall be penalized for deliberately handling, carrying, striking or propelling the ball with a hand or arm.

**EXCEPTION:** Goalkeeper when the ball is within his/her own penalty area. ([12-7-1](#))

**PENALTY: Direct free kick.**

## **RULE 12, SECTION 2 — PLAY RULINGS**

**12.2 SITUATION A:** A player, who is part of a wall in a free kick, moves the hands after the kick to protect his/her face from the ball. **RULING:** This is a foul for deliberately handling the ball.

**12.2 SITUATION B:** A player who is in a defensive position during the taking of a free kick places hands or arms against any part of the body for protection. The offensive player kicks the ball which strikes the hands still in front of the body or arms over the chest. In both cases, the hands and arms are stationary. **RULING:** This is not handling because the ball struck a stationary hand or arm rather than a hand or arm playing the ball.

**12.2 SITUATION C:** A2 kicks a low hard pass to his/her teammate; (a) B2, a male player who is in the path of the ball, moves his hand to protect his groin and the ball touches his hand; (b) B2, a female player who is in the path of the ball, moves her hand to protect her chest and the ball touches her hand. **RULING:** Illegal in both (a) and (b) for deliberately handling the ball.

**12.2 SITUATION D:** A2 takes a shot on goal and goalkeeper B2 is outstretched on the ground and reaches outside the penalty area and touches the ball. **RULING:** Illegal.

## **SECTION 3 HOLDING, PUSHING**

A player shall not hold or push an opponent with the hand(s) or arm(s) extended from body.

**PENALTY: Direct free kick.**

## **RULE 12, SECTION 3 — PLAY RULING**

**12.3 SITUATION:** A2 dribbles in on the goalkeeper within the penalty area near the goal line. A2's maneuver causes the goalkeeper to fall down as the ball is pushed past him. Because the goalkeeper is in A2's path (a) A2 leaps over the goalkeeper within the field of play; or (b) A2 leaves the field of play just beyond the goal line. In each case, A2 is held by the goalkeeper who is still inside the field of play and inside the penalty area, and in each case the ball goes past the goal and out of bounds over the goal line. **RULING:** The fouls in both (a) and (b) result in a penalty kick and the goalkeeper is disqualified ([12-8-2-d2](#)), ([14-1-1](#)).

# SECTION 4 CHARGING

**ART. 1 . . .** A player shall be penalized for charging an opponent in a dangerous or reckless manner, or using excessive force. An allowable fair charge is where players make shoulder-to-shoulder contact in an upright position, within playing distance of the ball, have at least one foot on the ground and their arms held close to their body.

**ART. 2 . . .** A player shall not, in any manner, charge the goalkeeper in the penalty area unless the goalkeeper is obstructing the player or dribbling the ball with the feet.

a. An official shall disqualify, without caution, any player who flagrantly fouls the goalkeeper in possession of the ball. Possession or control of the ball includes when the goalkeeper has the ball trapped by either or both hands or when bouncing it to the ground or when releasing the ball into play.

b. Outside the penalty area, the goalkeeper has no more privileges than any other player.

**PENALTY: Direct free kick (Article 1 and Disqualification for 2a).**

**ART. 3 . . .** The goalkeeper in possession of the ball shall not be interfered with or impeded in any manner by an opponent. This includes the act of bouncing the ball or dropping the ball for a kick or attempting to throw the ball or tossing the ball in the air to recatch. When goalkeepers put the ball on the ground, they relinquish their privileges as goalkeepers.

**PENALTY: Indirect free kick.**

**ART. 4 . . .** A player shall not charge into an opponent when neither player is within playing distance of the ball.

**PENALTY: Indirect free kick.**

## **RULE 12, SECTION 4 — PLAY RULINGS**

**12.4.4 SITUATION A:** Team B's goalkeeper and A2 simultaneously play the ball. (a) The momentum causes A2 to collide with the goalkeeper; (b) A2 deliberately elbows the goalkeeper.

**RULING:** (a) Legal; (b) illegal, deliberate use of the elbow may also result in caution or disqualification.

**12.4.4 SITUATION B:** The goalkeeper places the ball on the ground and begins to dribble with the feet. Player A shoulder charges legally and gains control of the ball. **RULING:** Legal, goalkeeper relinquished goalkeeper privileges when the ball was placed on the ground.



# SECTION 5 OBSTRUCTION

**ART. 1 . . .** Obstruction is the deliberate act by a player, not in possession of the ball and/or not attempting to play the ball, of running between an opponent and the ball or using the body as an obstacle.

**PENALTY: Indirect free kick.**

**ART. 2 . . .** A player not attempting to play the ball, but remaining between the ball and an opponent, may be legally challenged from behind provided the challenge is not violent or dangerous and the ball is within playing distance.

## **RULE 12, SECTION 5 — PLAY RULING**

**12.5.1 SITUATION:** On an attack on goal by Player A2, defensive Player B2 runs between offensive Player A2 and the ball and uses his/her body as an obstacle, thus giving his/her goalkeeper time to reach the ball before offensive Player A2. **RULING:** This is obstruction and an indirect free kick is awarded to the non-offending team, regardless of where this occurs on the field.

## **SECTION 6 DANGEROUS PLAY**

A player shall not participate in dangerous play, which is an act an official considers likely to cause injury to any player. This includes playing in such a manner which could cause injury to self or another player (opponent or teammate).

**PENALTY: Indirect free kick.**

## **RULE 12, SECTION 6 — PLAY RULINGS**

**12.6 SITUATION A:** Player A2 does a scissors kick during a game when (a) an opponent is within playing distance and A2's foot is, in the opinion of the official, dangerously high; (b) no player is within playing distance. **RULING:** In (a), indirect free kick given to the defending team since this is considered dangerous play; in (b), the play is legal since no player was within playing distance.

**12.6 SITUATION B:** Player A2 performs a diving header trying to score. In the process, a defender playing the ball kicks A2 in the head. **RULING:** Indirect free kick given to the defending team since A2's dive created the dangerous situation.

**12.6 SITUATION C:** Player A2 tries to tackle B2. In the process A2 raises his/her foot showing cleats to B2 and blocks the pass. **RULING:** Indirect free kick awarded because of A2's dangerous play.

**12.6 SITUATION D:** A2 plays the ball to A3 while lying on the ground. **RULING:** Legal, provided A2 did not create a danger to A3 or another player.

# SECTION 7 RESTRICTIONS ON THE GOALKEEPER

**ART. 1 . . .** From the moment the goalkeeper takes control of the ball with the hands when playing as a goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area, he/she has six seconds in which to release the ball into play. During that interval, he/she may hold the ball, bounce it, or throw it into the air and catch it. Once the ball has been released into play, the goalkeeper may not touch it again with the hands until it has been played or touched by another player of the same team outside of the penalty area, or by a player of the opposing team either inside or outside of the penalty area. (Subject to [12-7-3](#) and [4](#).)

**ART. 2 . . .** A goalkeeper shall not deliberately parry the ball and then touch it again with his/her hands before it has been played or touched by another player of the same team outside of the penalty area, or by a player of the opposing team either inside or outside of the penalty area. (Subject to [12-7-3](#) and [4](#).)

**ART. 3 . . .** On any occasion when a player deliberately kicks the ball to his/her own goalkeeper, the goalkeeper is not permitted to touch it with his/her hands.

**ART. 4 . . .** A goalkeeper shall not touch the ball with his/her hands when receiving it directly from a throwin by a teammate.

**NOTE:** Players may not use trickery to circumvent Articles 3 and 4. Example: Players may not flick the ball with their feet to their own head, chest, knee and then pass it to their own goalkeeper who touches it with the hands.

**PENALTY: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent at the spot of the violation, unless in the goal area.**

## **RULE 12, SECTION 7 — PLAY RULINGS**

**12.7.1 SITUATION:** After Team A's goalkeeper has gained possession of the ball by use of hands, he/she pushes or rolls the ball along the ground and retrieves or touches the ball with his/her hand. **RULING:** Illegal. Official calls an infraction for illegal handling by the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper has relinquished possession of the ball after the initial push or roll. The official awards an indirect free kick to Team B.

**12.7.2 SITUATION:** An attacking player takes a shot on goal which (a) goes directly at the goalkeeper, who is able to deflect it to the ground so he can dribble it with the feet to the edge of the penalty area and then pick the ball up with his hands to distribute; or (b) the goalkeeper must dive in order to reach the ball, deflect it away from the goal, then scramble to pick it up with his hands to distribute. **RULING:** (a) Illegal. Goalkeeper is penalized for infringing when he/she picks up the ball with the hands after parrying; (b) legal. The deflection is not considered a parry.

**12.7.3 SITUATION A:** (a) A short goal kick is taken by a teammate and played to his/her goalkeeper standing outside the penalty area so that the goalkeeper plays the ball with his/her feet into the penalty area and picks it up; or (b) a pass to A1 is headed or chested to his/her goalkeeper, who picks the ball up with his/her hands. **RULING:** (a) An indirect kick is awarded the opponents at the spot of the violation, unless in the goal area; (b), there has been no violation.

**12.7.3 SITUATION B:** The ball is kicked to the goalkeeper by a teammate. The goalkeeper traps the ball with his feet and dribbles it into the penalty area where he picks it up. **RULING:** Illegal; award an indirect kick to opponents at the spot of touching. (Subject to [13-1-4](#))

**12.7.3 SITUATION C:** The ball is kicked to the goalkeeper by an attacker. The goalkeeper traps the ball with his feet and dribbles it into the penalty area where he picks it up. **RULING:** Legal. Goalkeepers who receive the ball directly from an opponent may dribble the ball into the penalty area and pick up the ball.

**12.7.4 SITUATION:** On a throwin, player A throws the ball (a) directly to his/her own goalkeeper within the penalty area who touches the ball with the hands; (b) to a teammate who heads the ball to his/her own goalkeeper within the penalty area who picks the ball up with the hands; (c) the ball is thrown to his/her own goalkeeper outside the penalty area by a teammate. The goalkeeper traps the ball with the feet and dribbles it into the penalty area where it is picked up. **RULING:** (a) An indirect free kick is awarded to the opponent; (b) there has been no violation; (c) illegal. Award an indirect kick to opponent at spot of touching.

# SECTION 8 MISCONDUCT

**ART. 1 . . .** A player, coach or bench personnel shall be cautioned (yellow card) for:

- a. entering or leaving the field of play (except through the normal course of play) without the permission of an official;
- b. persistent infringement of any of the rules of the game;
- c. objecting by word of mouth or action to any decision given by an official (dissent);
- d. any incidental use of vulgar or profane language;

**NOTE:** By state association adoption, incidental use of vulgar or profane language may be a disqualification (red card).

e. any use of electronic communication devices with the on-field players during play . Examples: Amplifying devices, wireless communication devices such as cell phones, headphones, personal digital assistant, etc.;

**NOTE:** A coach may engage in verbal communications with his or her own team during play.

f. unsporting conduct, including, but not limited to:

1. coaching outside the team area;
2. unnecessary delay (kicking, throwing the ball away on a free kick, etc.);
3. holding a shirt, short, etc.;
4. deliberate verbal tactics;
5. encroachment;
6. deliberate handball to stop an attack;
7. deliberate tactical foul;
8. faking an injury;
9. simulating a foul;
10. player who displays reckless play;
11. illegally equipped player, per [4.3](#);
12. any delayed, excessive or prolonged act(s) by which a player(s) attempts to focus attention upon himself/herself and/or prohibits a timely restart of the game;

13. a player (other than a goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area) deliberately handles the ball, attempting to prevent a goal, and the goal is scored;

14. a player commits a foul, attempting to deny an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, and the goal is scored.

g. Use of any tobacco products at the game site during the period of the jurisdiction of the officials.

**PENALTY: A cautioned player shall leave the field and may be replaced. Should the team with the cautioned player elect to play shorthanded, the cautioned player may not re-enter nor be replaced until the next legal substitution opportunity.**

**ART. 2 . . .** A player, coach or bench personnel shall be disqualified (red card) for:

a. exhibiting violent conduct;

b. taunting – use of word or act to incite or degrade an opposing player, coach, referee or other individual;

**NOTE:** The NFHS disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender or national origin.

c. subsequent caution;

d. committing serious foul play:

1. any play in which the player commits one of the offenses punishable with a direct free kick (or penalty kick if the offense takes place by a defender in the penalty area) and uses disproportionate and unnecessary force against an opponent while playing for the ball.

2. a player (other than a goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area) deliberately handles the ball, attempting to prevent a goal and the goal is not scored;

3. a player commits a foul, attempting to deny an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, and the goal is not scored.

e. spitting at an opponent, teammate or game official;

f. using insulting, offensive or abusive language or gesture;

g. leaving the team area to enter the field where a fight or altercation is taking place unless summoned by an official.

**ART. 3 . . .** Coach responsibility:

a. The head coach shall be responsible for ensuring that each of his/her player(s) is properly and legally equipped. The head coach shall receive the first caution issued for an illegally equipped



player.

b. The coach may be cautioned or disqualified either for team misconduct or for bench misconduct that cannot be attributed to a specific individual.

c. A coach who is disqualified shall leave the vicinity of the playing area immediately and is prohibited from any contact, direct or indirect, with the team during the remainder of the game. Failure to comply shall result in termination of the game.

### Misconduct Penalty Chart

	<b>Player</b>	<b>Bench Personnel</b>	<b>Coach</b>
<b>Yellow Card</b>	Must leave field until next legal substitution opportunity  May be substituted or play short	Substitute (nonplayer) remains in team area until next legal substitution opportunity  Other bench personnel remain in team area	Remains in team area
<b>Red Card</b>	Must leave field  May not return  May not be substituted; must play short  Restricted to team area	Restricted to team area for substitutes or other students  Adult bench personnel must leave vicinity of playing area	Must leave the vicinity of playing area

**NOTE:** The rules committee strongly recommends that each state high school association adopt a policy wherein a disqualified player or coach disqualified under articles 2 and 3 shall be barred from participating in the next contest(s).

# RULE 12, SECTION 8 — PLAY RULINGS

**12.8.1 SITUATION A:** Player A2 is waiting to receive a ball in the air. Opponent B2, who is behind A2, shouts “I’ll take it” in an obvious attempt to deceive A2 into thinking B2 is a teammate calling for the ball. **RULING:** Stop play, caution B2 for unsporting conduct and restart with an indirect free kick by Team A at the spot of the infraction.

**12.8.1 SITUATION B:** During the match, (a) A1 commits a foul in a reckless manner, (b) A1 is the second player from Team A observed with illegal equipment and (c) after scoring a goal, A1 celebrates excessively. **RULING:** (a), (b) and (c), caution A1 for unsporting conduct.

**12.8.1 SITUATION C:** During the game, while the ball is in play, (a) Coach A talks on a cell phone, (b) Coach B records video using a tablet, (c) Player A1 wears an electronic heart monitor, (d) A2 wears a hearing aid, (e) Coach A communicated with player A3 using a wireless mic/headphone system. **RULING:** (a) Legal; (b) legal; (c) legal (d) Illegal in (e) and coach is shown the yellow card for misconduct per [12-8-1\(e\)](#).

**12.8.2 SITUATION A:** Player A2 is cautioned by the official and is leaving the field. Player B2 approaches player A2 and applauds in player A2’s face and follows A2 off the field, continuing to applaud. **RULING:** Illegal. The official will disqualify B2 for taunting and not permit a substitution.

**12.8.2 SITUATION B:** Player A2 dribbles along the goal line into the penalty area. The goalkeeper comes out of the goal mouth to challenge A2. A2 pushes the ball by the goalkeeper and steps off the field to go around the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper then steps off the field and violently contacts A2 to prevent A2 from completing the play. **RULING:** The referee must stop play, disqualify the goalkeeper for exhibiting violent conduct and restart play with an indirect free kick from the location of the ball at the stoppage or the goal area line as appropriate.

**12.8.2 SITUATION C:** 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 ([12-8-3b](#)). The game is restarted with an indirect free kick to the opposing team from the point where the ball was when play was stopped.

**12.8.2 SITUATION D:** Player A2 has the ball in Team B’s penalty area. Team B’s athletic trainer uses foul language to the referee. **RULING:** The referee should apply the advantage clause if there is a clear advantage to Team A. At the next stoppage, the referee should disqualify the athletic trainer. If the referee stops play for the disqualified athletic trainer, the game is restarted because of misconduct with an indirect free kick by Team A from the point where the ball was when the time was stopped.

**12.8.2 SITUATION E:** (a) Player A2, 30 yards from goal, has an obvious goal-scoring opportunity and is fouled from behind by Player B2. The foul does not involve unnecessary or disproportionate force. The referee gives advantage and Player A2 scores. (b) Player A2 shoots on goal. Fullback B2, standing on his/her defensive goal line, handles the shot, which goes to A2, who scores. (c) Player A2 shoots on goal. Fullback B2 standing on his/her defensive goal line, handles the shot, which continues into the goal. **RULING:** In all cases, Player B2 is not disqualified for serious foul play, as the goal was scored from the advantage. The referee should caution B2 in each case. In all cases, if the goal is not scored on the advantage, or if the referee stops play for the foul before the goal is scored, B2 is

disqualified under [12-8-2d\(1\)](#) or [12-8-2d\(2\)](#), respectively.

**12.8.2 SITUATION F:** Between periods or during the halftime interval, a team member directs offensive, insulting or abusive language at an official. The team member is disqualified. The team will be able to play with 11 players the next period. **RULING:** Legal. A team does not play short for a team member disqualified during an interval between periods.

**12.8.2 SITUATION G:** With the game in progress, a fight breaks out between opposing players on the field. As the altercation expands to other field players, the assistant referee observes a substitute from the Team A bench entering into the fracas. After stoppage of the game and establishment of control by officials, the assistant referee informs the referee of his observance of the Team A substitute, also mentioning he did not see the substitute actually throw a punch. **RULING:** The Team A substitute observed will be disqualified for leaving the team area to enter into the altercation on the field.

**12.8.2 SITUATION H:** After entering the field of play, the referee finds two opposing players guilty of using abusive language and disqualifies them from the game before it begins. **RULING:** Legal.

**12.8.2 SITUATION I:** Player A2, having been cautioned earlier in the game, commits a second cautionable offense. **RULING:** Stop play, show the yellow card, sequentially show the red card to disqualify A2 and do not permit a substitution for the disqualified player.

# Rule 13 Free Kick

## SECTION 1 DESCRIPTION OF A FREE KICK

**ART. 1 . . .** Free kicks shall be classified “direct” from which a goal may be scored against the offending team or “indirect” from which a goal may not be scored unless the ball is touched or played by another player of either team.

**ART. 2 . . .** All free kicks, with the exception of kickoffs and penalty kicks, may be taken in any direction. Free kicks are taken from the spot of the foul except for restarts following certain temporary suspensions of play, e.g., misconduct committed by bench personnel during a live ball and fouls committed in the goal area by either team.

**ART. 3 . . .** Any free kick awarded to the defending team within its own goal area may be taken from any point within the goal area.

**ART. 4 . . .** Any indirect free kick awarded to the attacking team within its opponent’s goal area shall be taken from the part of the goal-area line which runs parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the offense was committed.

**ART. 5 . . .** Any player of the offended team may take a free kick.

**EXCEPTION:** Substitutes for cautioned, injured or bleeding players may not take the penalty kick when entering the game during a penalty kick situation.

## **RULE 13, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULINGS**

**13.1.3 SITUATION:** Attacker A2 is penalized for obstructing the goalkeeper near the right goal post.

**RULING:** An indirect free kick is awarded Team B and may be taken anywhere in the goal area.

## SECTION 2 WHEN AWARDED

**ART. 1 . . .** Direct free kicks are awarded and taken from the point of the infraction (Except as in [13-1-3](#) and [14-1-1](#)):

- a. if a player spits at, kicks, strikes, attempts to kick or strike, or jumps at an opponent ([12-1-1](#));
- b. if a player trips or attempts to trip an opponent ([12-1-2](#));
- c. if a goalkeeper attempts to strike, strikes or pushes an opponent with the ball ([12-1-3](#));
- d. if a player, other than the goalkeeper in his/her own penalty area, deliberately handles the ball ([12-2](#));
- e. if a player pushes an opponent with the hand(s) or arm(s) extended from the body ([12-3](#));
- f. if a player holds an opponent ([12-3](#));
- g. if a player charges an opponent in a dangerous or reckless manner, or using excessive force ([12-4-1](#));
- h. if a player charges an opponent while the opponent, in the act of playing the ball, has both feet off the ground ([12-4-1](#));
- i. if a player charges the goalkeeper ([12-4-2](#)).

**ART. 2 . . .** Indirect free kicks are awarded and taken from the point of the infraction (except as in [13-1-3](#) and [13-1-4](#)):

- a. if the ball is played next by the kicker following a kickoff ([8-1-4](#)), a free kick ([13-3-3](#)), a penalty kick ([14-1-5](#)), a goal kick ([16-1-4](#)), a corner kick ([17-1-5](#)), or by the thrower following a throw-in ([15-1-4](#));
- b. if a player is penalized for being offside ([11-1-3](#));
- c. if a player fairly charges into an opponent when neither is within playing distance of the ball ([12-4-4](#));
- d. if a player who is not in possession of the ball obstructs an opponent who is attempting to play the ball ([12-5-1](#));
- e. if a player kicks or attempts to kick the ball while it is in the possession of the goalkeeper ([12-6](#));
- f. for dangerous play ([12-6](#));
- g. if the goalkeeper takes more than six seconds before releasing the ball for play ([12-7-1](#));
- h. if the goalkeeper illegally handles the ball while in his/her own penalty area after once

relinquishing possession of the ball ([12-7-1](#));

i. If the goalkeeper touches the ball again with his/her hands before it has been touched or played by another player ([12-7-1](#));

j. If the goalkeeper touches the ball with his/her hands after it is deliberately kicked by a player to his/her own goalkeeper ([12-7-3](#));

k. If the goalkeeper touches the ball with his/her hands when receiving it directly from a throw-in by a teammate ([12-7-4](#));

l. if the game is stopped for misconduct of a player, and no other restart takes precedence ([12-8-1](#), [2](#), [3](#));

m. spitting at a teammate or game official.

**ART. 3 . . .** The following indirect free kicks are taken from where the ball was when the referee stopped play: (Subject to restrictions in [13-1-3](#) and [4](#).)

a. if a player, coach or bench personnel enters or leaves the field of play without permission of an official ([12-8-1](#));

b. for temporary suspension of play for an injury or unusual situation and one team has clear possession of the ball ([9-3](#));

c. if the game is stopped because of misconduct by a person in the team and coaching area ([12-8-1](#), [2](#), [3](#)).

**ART. 4 . . .** If a direct or indirect free kick taken from outside a team's penalty area goes untouched into a team's own goal, a corner kick shall be awarded to the opposing team.

## SECTION 3 HOW TAKEN

**ART. 1 . . .** Players opposing the kicker shall be at least 10 yards from the ball until it is kicked, unless they are standing on their own goal line between the goal posts. If the free kick is awarded to the defending team in its penalty area, players opposing the kicker shall be outside the penalty area at least 10 yards from the ball and must remain there until the ball clears the penalty area.

**PENALTY:** An official shall caution a player who fails to move the required distance away from the ball or engages in time-wasting tactics such as kicking or carrying the ball away after a free kick has been awarded to the opponent's team.

**ART. 2 . . .** The ball shall be kicked while it is stationary on the ground at the spot specified by the official. To be in play, the ball shall be moved in any direction. If the free kick is awarded to the defending team in its penalty area, the ball is not in play until it is beyond the penalty area and into the field of play. Failure to kick the ball as specified shall result in a rekick.

**ART. 3 . . .** The kicker may not play the ball until it has been touched or played by another player.

**PENALTY:** Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent from the spot of the foul.



# **RULE 13, SECTION 3 — PLAY RULINGS**

**13.3.1 SITUATION A:** During a free kick A2 steps over the ball, and then A3 kicks the ball.

**RULING:** Legal.

**13.3.1 SITUATION B:** Team A is attacking in Team B's half of the field about 35 yards from Team B's goal. A Team B player non-violently trips a Team A player who has possession of the ball. The referee whistles for the foul and quickly signals for a direct free kick to be taken by Team A. A Team A player sees an advantageous situation for a quick kick and takes the kick within two seconds of the whistle. A Team B player is standing 3-4 yards from the ball and moving backwards toward the required distance when the ball strikes him/her. **RULING:** Legal.

**13.3.1 SITUATION C:** The defending team is awarded a free kick inside its own penalty area. The team elects to take a "quick kick" and kicks the ball before all of the attackers have cleared the penalty area. The ball leaves the penalty area, travels at least 10 yards and (a) is intercepted by an attacker who plays it to one of his teammates who is onside and still in the penalty area; (b) rebounds from a defender to one of the attackers who is onside and still in the penalty area. **RULING:** Legal in (a) and (b).

**13.3.1 SITUATION D:** After being awarded an indirect free kick, (a) Player A1 steps on top of the ball and A2 kicks the ball into Team B's goal, (b) Player A1 kicks the ball and it moves and A2 kicks the ball into Team B's goal. **RULING:** (a) No goal because the ball was not in play after A1 stepped on top of the ball, a goal kick is awarded to Team B; (b) Legal goal.

# Rule 14 Penalty Kick

## SECTION 1 PENALTY KICK

**ART. 1 . . .** A penalty kick shall be awarded when a foul, which ordinarily results in the awarding of a direct free kick, occurs within the offending team's penalty area.

**ART. 2 . . .** All players except the kicker and the opposing goalkeeper shall be within the field of play but outside the penalty area and at least 10 yards from and behind the penalty mark until the ball is kicked.

**ART. 3 . . .** The opposing goalkeeper shall stand on the goal line, facing the kicker, between the goal posts, until the ball is kicked. Lateral movement is allowed, but the goalkeeper is not permitted to come off the line by stepping or lunging forward until the ball is in play.

### PENALTY KICK SITUATIONS: (14-1-2 and 14-1-3)

RESULT OF PK	NO VIOLATION	VIOLATION BY ATTACHING TEAM ONLY	VIOLATION BY DEFENSE ONLY	VIOLATION BY BOTH
Enters Goal	Goal	Rekick	Goal	Rekick
Goes Directly Out-of-Bounds	Goalkick	Goalkick	Rekick	Rekick
Rebounds into Play From Goal/Goalkeeper	Play Continues	Indirect FK	Rekick	Rekick
Saved & Held by Goalkeeper	Play Continues	Play Continues	Rekick	Rekick
Deflected Out-of-Bounds By Goalkeeper	Corner Kick	Indirect FK	Rekick	Rekick

**PENALTY (Articles 2 and 3):** Infringement by the defending team is not penalized if the goal is scored. If a goal is not scored on the penalty kick, it is retaken. If there is an encroachment by the attacking team and the ball enters the goal, the goal does not count and the kick shall be retaken. If there is an infringement by the attacking team and the ball does not go into the goal, there is no rekick. If the ball rebounds into play or is deflected out of bounds by the goalkeeper, the game shall be stopped and restarted with an indirect free kick for the defending team at the location of the encroachment. If the ball is saved and held by the goalkeeper, play shall continue. In cases where players from both teams are guilty of infringements, the kick shall be retaken regardless of the outcome of the kick.

**ART. 4 . . .** The ball shall be kicked while it is stationary on the ground from the spot or any place on the penalty mark. To be in play, the ball shall be moved forward. Once the kicker starts his/her approach toward the ball, he/she may not interrupt his/her movement. Failure to kick the ball as specified shall result in a rekick.

**ART. 5 . . .** After the penalty kick is properly taken, the ball may be played by any player except the one who executed the penalty kick. The kicker may not play the ball until it has been touched or

played by another player on either team.

**PENALTY: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponents from the spot of the foul.**

**ART. 6 . . .** If the ball touches the goalkeeper before passing between the goal posts, when a penalty kick is taken at or after the expiration of time, it does not nullify any goal. If necessary, play may be extended so that the penalty kick may be taken. If a penalty kick is taken after the expiration of time ([7-1-4 Exception](#)), (a) only the kicker may play the ball and he/she may only play the ball once; (b) the ball is in play until its momentum is spent, it goes out of bounds, or is retouched by the kicker.

**ART. 7 . . .** After the penalty kick is properly taken, if there is an unusual situation that causes a temporary suspension in play before the ball is played or touched by another player, or before the ball hits the goalpost or crossbar, the penalty kick shall be retaken.

# **RULE 14, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULINGS**

**14.1.2 SITUATION:** Team A has been awarded a penalty kick. As the players are lining up for the kick, the referee notices a player from Team B lined up five yards from the goal line. The referee delays the taking of the kick and moves the player back behind the penalty mark. **RULING:** Correct procedure.

**14.1.4 SITUATION A:** A2, taking a penalty kick, miskicks the ball forward, but a teammate rushes up and kicks it into the goal. **RULING:** Legal.

**14.1.4 SITUATION B:** A2, taking a penalty kick, approaches the ball and then stops abruptly. He/she then kicks the ball and scores. **RULING:** Retake the kick.

**14.1.6 SITUATION:** Player A2 takes a penalty kick in (a) tie-breaking kicks from the penalty mark; (b) after time has expired. The goalkeeper attempts a save, and the ball continues to bounce or roll into the goal. **RULING:** It is a goal in both (a) and (b) because the ball is in play until its momentum has been spent, it goes out of bounds, or it is retouched by the kicker.

**14.1.7 SITUATION:** Player A2 takes a penalty kick, but before the ball touches another player, or before the ball hits the crossbar or goalpost; (a) a dog runs on the field and stops the ball; (b) the ball bursts; (c) a spectator throws an object that stops or deflects the ball. **RULING:** In all situations (a), (b) and (c), retake the kick regardless of the outcome of the kick.

# Rule 15 ThrowIn

## SECTION 1 THROWIN FROM THE TOUCHLINE

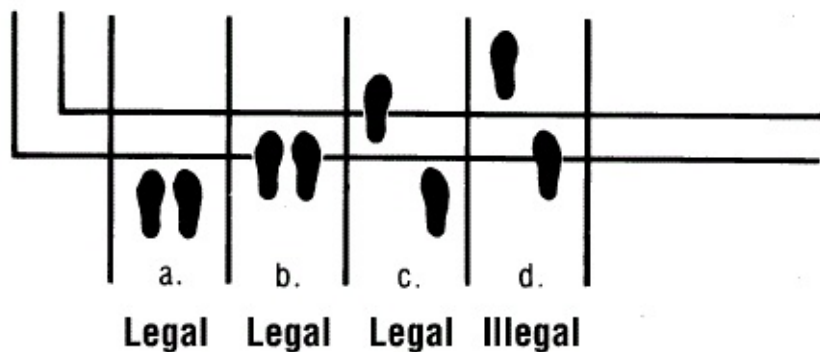
**ART. 1 . . .** A throwin shall be awarded to a team when the ball last touched a member of the opposing team before the entire ball passes beyond the touchline either in the air or on the ground. A goal may not be scored directly from a throwin.

**ART. 2 . . .** The ball shall be thrown in any direction from the point where it crossed the touchline by a player who is facing the field of play and has both feet on the ground on or behind the touchline. The thrower shall use both hands (unless a physical impairment would limit use to one hand) and shall deliver the ball from behind and over the head in one continuous movement.

**PENALTY: Throwin awarded to the opponent from the spot of the foul.**

**ART. 3 . . .** While a throwin is being taken, an opponent shall neither interfere with nor in any way impede the actions of the thrower, and shall stand at least two yards from the point at which the throwin is being taken.

**PENALTY: An official shall administer a caution for unsporting conduct.**



**ART. 4 . . .** On a throwin, the ball is playable when it has left the hands of the thrower and any part of it breaks the plane of the touchline. After the throwin, the ball may be played by either team. The thrower may not play the ball until it has been touched or played by another player.

**PENALTY: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent from the spot of the infraction.**

**ART. 5 . . .** If, on the throwin, the ball fails to enter the field of play before it touches the ground, the ball is awarded to the opponent at the spot of the infraction.

## **RULE 15, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULINGS**

**15.1.2 SITUATION:** During the throwin, the following happens: (a) A2 lifts the back foot from the ground while throwing the ball; (b) A2 takes a run up to the touchline and releases the ball with both feet on the ground; (c) A2 has one foot off the playing field and one foot on the touchline during the throwin; (d) A2 throws to a teammate only three feet away. **RULING:** (a) Illegal; award a throwin to Team B; (b) legal; (c) legal; (d) legal.

**15.1.3 SITUATION:** As player A2 begins to take a throw in, Player B2 rushes to get directly on the touchline at the point where the throwin will be made. **RULING:** Illegal. A player may not interfere with or impede the actions of a thrower and cannot be within two yards of the thrower. Player B2 shall be issued a caution by the referee for unsporting conduct.

**15.1.4 SITUATION:** A throwin by Player A2 (a) hits the touchline and bounces into the field of play; or (b) hits or breaks the plane of the touchline and goes out of the field of play; or (c) lands outside the touchline and bounces into the field of play; or (d) does not hit or break the plane of the touchline but remains outside. **RULING:** In (a) a legal throw; play continues; in (b) legal; award throwin to Team B; in (c) and (d) illegal; award throwin to Team B.

# Rule 16 Goal Kick

## SECTION 1 GOAL KICK

**ART. 1 . . .** A goal kick shall be awarded to the defending team when the entire ball crosses the goal line, excluding that portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar, either in the air or on the ground, having last been touched or played by the attacking team. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team.

**ART. 2 . . .** Players opposing the kicker shall remain outside the penalty area until the ball has cleared the penalty area.

**ART. 3 . . .** Once spotted, the ball shall be kicked from the ground from any point within the goal area by a player of the defending team. A goal kick shall clear the penalty area and enter the field of play. If the ball is not kicked beyond the penalty area, the goal kick shall be repeated.

**ART. 4 . . .** After the goal kick leaves the penalty area, the ball may be played by any player except the one who executes the goal kick. The kicker may not play the ball until it has been touched by another player.

**PENALTY: Indirect free kick awarded to the opponents from the spot of the foul.**

**ART. 5 . . .** The goalkeeper shall not pick up the ball to put it into play.

## **RULE 16, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULING**

**16.1.3 SITUATION:** A4's shot misses wide right and crosses the goal line. **RULING:** Goal kick may be taken anywhere in the goal area. Once the ball is placed, the ball cannot be moved from one spot to another.



# Rule 17 Corner Kick

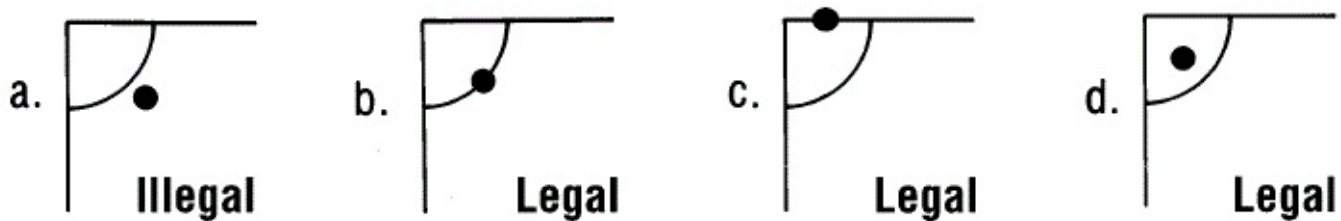
## SECTION 1 CORNER KICK

**ART. 1 . . .** A corner kick shall be awarded to the attacking team when the entire ball passes over the goal line, excluding that portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar, either in the air or on the ground, having last been touched or played by the defending team. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team.

**EXCEPTION:** A corner kick shall be awarded to the opposing team when a free kick taken from outside the penalty area goes untouched into a team's own goal.

**ART. 2 . . .** Players of the defending team shall be at least 10 yards from the ball until it has been kicked.

**ART. 3 . . .** The ball shall be kicked from the ground within the quarter circle, including on the lines, nearest where the ball left the field of play. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. Failure to kick the ball as specified shall result in a rekick.



**ART. 4 . . .** An offensive player who is not offside during the corner kick may be put in an offside position during a subsequent play.

**ART. 5 . . .** After the corner kick, the ball may be played by any player except the one who executed the corner kick. The kicker may not play the ball until it has been touched or played by another player.

**PENALTY:** Indirect free kick awarded to the opponent from the spot of the foul.

## **RULE 17, SECTION 1 — PLAY RULING**

**17.1.5 SITUATION:** A2 takes a corner kick, which hits the goal post and rebounds. A2 plays it again before it has been touched by another player. **RULING:** Illegal; indirect free kick to the opponent.

# Rule 18 Definitions

## SECTION 1 DEFINITIONS OF PLAYING TERMS

**ART. 1 . . .** Alphabetical list of definitions:

- a. **ADVANTAGE** – A discretionary judgment which allows an official to permit play to continue rather than stopping play to administer the foul. This concept is based on the premise that the foul did not put the offended team at a disadvantage, or the foul, if called, may take away a favorable opportunity for the offended team. The foul may be subsequently called if the advantage does not materialize.
- b. **BENCH PERSONNEL** – Anyone within the team area.
- c. **CAUTIONED PLAYER** – A player notified by an official that his/her activities are not in the best interest of the contest. Such player must be shown a yellow card and shall leave the field and may be replaced.
- d. **CHARGE** – An act by a defensive player employing body contact to cause an offensive player to lose or give up possession of the ball. A fair charge must have all the elements present which are set down in the rules. An unfair charge has one or more of those elements absent.
- e. **DEAD BALL** – A term used to indicate a time when the ball is out-of-play. A goal can never be scored while the ball is dead. A restart can never be changed due to what occurs during a dead ball.
- f. **DEFENSE (DEFENDING TEAM)** – Team not in possession of the ball. A team remains on defense until it establishes possession of the ball.
- g. **DELIBERATE FOUL** – A purposely planned act done to disrupt the game and to gain an advantage through the unfair act.
- h. **DISQUALIFIED PLAYER** – A player barred from further participation in the game. Such player shall be shown a red card and shall not be replaced during the game.
- i. **DRIBBLER** – A player in control of the ball who attempts to move the ball by periodic touches with the feet.
- j. **DROP BALL** – A method by which a dead ball becomes alive. An official drops the ball to the ground. When the ball strikes the ground, it becomes alive and may be played by anyone.
- k. **ENCROACHMENT** – The act, by one or more defenders, of advancing within 10 yards of the ball prior to the taking of a free kick.
- l. **FORFEIT** – The loss of a game because of termination under Rule [3-1-2](#) or for other reason as determined by the proper authority.

- m. FOUL – A rule infraction by a player on the field of play during play, for which a free kick is awarded to the player’s opponents.
- n. FREE KICK – A method by which a dead ball becomes alive. The ball is placed on the ground and, while motionless, it is kicked unchallenged in any direction prior to being touched by another player. The ball is in play when it has been kicked and moves. Simply taping the top of the ball with the foot or stepping on the ball are not sufficient. There are two types of free kicks – “direct” from which a goal may be scored against an opponent without a second player touching the ball and “indirect” in which a goal may not be scored unless the ball is touched or played by another player of either team.
- o. GOAL LINE – Shorter boundary lines. The entire line is within the field of play.
- p. GOALKEEPER – The only designated player of each team who may handle the ball within his/her own penalty area.
- q. HANDLING – Deliberately playing the ball with one’s hand or arm. The hand or arm must move toward the ball or the hand or arm must be carried in an unnatural position before an infraction of the rule can be charged.
- r. ILLEGALLY EQUIPPED – A player not wearing equipment required by rule or wearing an item/items not allowed by rule.
- s. IMPROPERLY EQUIPPED – A player wearing legal equipment that is being worn incorrectly or becomes illegal during play.
- t. KICKER – A player who attempts to, or does, kick the ball.
- u. LIVE BALL – A term which indicates that the ball has been legally kicked or thrown by a player, or dropped by an official and is in play.
- v. MISCONDUCT – Any of the actions by players, substitutes and bench personnel that results in yellow or red cards being issued.
- w. OBSTRUCTION – The deliberate act by a player of running between an opponent and the ball, or using the body as an obstacle when not in possession of the ball, or not attempting to play the ball.
- x. OFFENSE (ATTACKING TEAM) – Team which is in possession of the ball.
- y. OFFSIDE – An infraction which occurs when an official judges a player in an offside position to be involved in active play by interfering with play or with an opponent, or gaining an advantage by being in an offside position.
- z. PARRYING – The deliberate attempt by the goalkeeper to control and/or deflect the ball down or out with the hands or arms.
- aa. PASS – The movement of the ball from one player to another by foot, head or other portion of the body (other than the hand).

bb. PENALTY KICK – A kick awarded to a team because an opponent was charged with a direct free kick offense within his/her own penalty area.

cc. PLAYER – A team member who occupies a position on the field of play during the actual playing time limits of the game, beginning with the opening kickoff and ending with the conclusion of the game, excluding intervals between periods. A substitute becomes a player when he/she is beckoned onto the field of play by an official, at which point the replaced individual is no longer a player.

dd. PLAYING DISTANCE – The distance between the player and the ball which the official judges to be adequate to control the ball. It will seldom exceed two steps (six feet).

ee. POSSESSION – A live ball controlled by a team, player or a goalkeeper. A controlled ball is one which may be passed, thrown, dribbled or shot on goal by a player.

ff. RECKLESS PLAY – A player has acted with disregard of the danger to, or consequences for, the opponent. A player who displays reckless play shall be cautioned.

gg. SCISSORS-KICK – A maneuver in which a kicker's feet leave the ground with the feet usually at a higher elevation than the head. The ball may be kicked over the kicker's head in a single motion.

hh. SHIELDING – Movement by a player in control of the ball (within playing distance) designed to prevent an opponent from gaining possession or prevent him/her from tackling the ball.

ii. SLIDING TACKLE – A maneuver in which one or both feet slide on the ground in an attempt to tackle the ball which is in possession of an opponent.

jj. SUBSTITUTE – A team member who has properly reported to enter the game. A substitute becomes a player when he/she is beckoned onto the field of play by an official.

kk. SUBSTITUTION – The replacement of at least one player by a substitute.

ll. SUSPENDED – A term which indicates that a game has been interrupted by the referee because of conditions which make it impossible to continue play but are not the fault of the participants or spectators. Examples of such conditions include inclement weather, power failure, or other emergency affecting playing conditions.

mm. TACKLE – The use of the feet to take a ball away from a player in control.

nn. TERMINATED – A term which indicates that a game has been ended by the referee for action of the participants or spectators such as refusal to play or disorder. The status of the game, which may include forfeiture, shall be determined by proper authority.

oo. THROW-IN – A method by which a dead ball becomes alive. A player throws the ball using both hands (unless a physical impairment would limit use to one hand). The ball must be delivered from behind and over the head in one continuous movement, while both feet are on the ground on or behind the touchline and the player must be facing the field.

pp. TOUCHLINE – Longer boundary lines. The entire line is within the field of play.

qq. VIOLENT CONDUCT – The commission of a violent act against an opponent, an official, a spectator, teammate or other individuals when the ball is in or out of play.

rr. WARNING – A verbal admonition to a coach or player for conduct not in the best interest of the game. Repeat warning(s) necessitates an official caution.

# STATE ASSOCIATION ADOPTIONS

1. Players may wear caps in inclement weather. ([4-2-1h Exception 3](#))
2. Artificial limbs. ([4-2-5](#))
3. Systems of officiating. ([5-1-1](#))
4. Officials' shirt color. ([5-1-3](#))
5. Time kept on the field. ([6-2-1](#))
6. Score kept by referee. ([6-3-1](#))
7. Fourth official as scorer. ([6-3-3](#))
8. Four equal quarters rather than halves. ([7-1-1](#))
9. Shortened periods. ([7-1-2](#))
10. Suspended games. ([7-1-3](#))
11. Goal differential. ([7-1-5](#))
12. Overtime procedure. ([7-3-1](#))
13. Disqualified player barred from competition. ([12-8-3 Note](#))
14. Sample tie breaking procedure.
15. Incidental use of vulgar or profane language. ([12-8-1d](#))
16. Sample fourth official/duties.

# POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- 1) **Sportsmanship** – Players, coaches, game officials and spectators must use appropriate language and refrain from insulting, offensive and/or abusive language and gestures.
- 2) **Communication** – Game officials are encouraged to effectively communicate with one another as well as with players and coaches throughout the game.
- 3) **Concussion Management** – The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee recommends that no athlete return to play or practice on the same day after suffering a concussion. No athlete should return to sport or other at-risk participation when symptoms of concussion are present and recovery is ongoing. Please see the “NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports” at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org) for further information.
- 4) **Penalty Kick** – Once the approach to the ball has started, the kicker’s movement may not be interrupted. A continuous forward motion throughout the approach is necessary. If continuous forward motion does not occur, the restart is a retake of the penalty kick regardless of whether a goal is scored or not.
- 5) **Goalkeepers** – Goalkeepers can wear the same colored socks as their teammates but not their opponents. Goalkeepers must have a number on the front of their jerseys or shorts/pants and on the back of their jerseys.



# COMMENTS ON THE RULES

**3-3-2(b)2:** Risk minimization is one of the major tenets of NFHS sports and the rules-writing process. The committee wanted to make sure that players who were apparently injured were evaluated by a coach or an appropriate health-care professional. The overriding concern is the safety of all players. Previously, the goalkeeper was not required to leave the game when the referee stopped the clock. This new rule requires the field player and goalkeeper to receive equal protection.

**5-1-2:** The jurisdiction of the officials shall begin on their arrival at the field of play and its immediate surroundings, which shall be no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the game. Previously, the jurisdiction of the officials began 15 minutes prior to the start of the game. The original intent was to establish a minimum arrival time for the officiating crew and not to place a limit on the start of their jurisdiction. Jurisdiction now begins at the time of their arrival.

# Comparison of NFHS and NCAA Rules and FIFA Laws

TOPIC	NFHS	NCAA-NISOA	FIFA-USSF
Terminology - (It is important to use the proper terminology, especially in writing game reports if required)	Rules Disqualification Drop Ball Game Overtime Penalty Coaching and Team Area Terminated Game 4 <sup>th</sup> Official Obstruction	Rules Ejection Drop Ball Game Overtime Penalty Coaching and Team Area Terminated Game Alternate Official (AO) Obstruction	Laws Send Off Dropped Ball Match Extra Time Sanction Technical Area Abandoned Match 4 <sup>th</sup> Official Impedes progress of Opponent
Where the Rules or Laws are Employed	Most public high and intermediate schools and some private schools.	NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA, NIRSA and NCCAA	International matches, professional leagues, most club and semi-pro matches, and some private schools.
Interpretations	Play rulings in the Rules book are interpretations approved by the NFHS Soccer Rules Committee. Member state associations of the NFHS independently make decisions regarding compliance with or modification of the playing rules for the student athletes in their respective states. The Rules describe 3 possible systems of mechanics that may be used; the Dual Officiating System, the Diagonal System and the Double-Dual System.	Approved Rulings (A.R.) appearing in the Rule book are official decisions of the NCAA. The Secretary Rules Editor can be contacted for interpretations. Generally it is preferable to first go through the NISOA Rules Interpreter. The NCAA Rules Book does NOT contain the description of standardized procedures for the allowed System of Mechanics. NISOA describes the Diagonal System of control (DSC) for its members in other publications.	Decisions of the Int'l F.A. Board are official interpretations. Additional Interpretations in the U.S. can be obtained initially through the State Director of Instruction (SDI). The USSF Advice to Referees and Questions and Answers on the Laws of the Game are also official sources in the U.S. The diagonal system of control (DSC) is described in other FIFA and USSF publications.
<b>FIELD OF PLAY</b>	<b>RULE 1</b>	<b>RULE 1</b>	<b>LAW 1</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
11 Yd. Encroachment Hash Mark	Optional	Mandatory - <i>Correction should occur before match begins, if not game shall begin and report filed.</i>	Optional
Penalty Kick Mark	2 foot line or 9" diameter spot	Same as NFHS	Penalty mark (no fixed size)
Goal Nets	Mandatory	Same as NFHS	Not mandatory (may be used)
Coaching and Team Area	20 yds. long and 10' from touchline Caution to coach who leaves this area R1, Sec. 5. Should be on same side of field - if not, benches should be diagonally opposed from each other.	Same size as NFHS. Caution to coach who leaves the area <u>after</u> a first verbal warning and IFK where ball was if game stopped. Ejection for 3 <sup>rd</sup> offence. R 1, Sec. 12. Coach may use electronic tablet or white board.	Not specified in the Laws, but mentioned in the Additional Instructions for Referees, ARs and 4 <sup>th</sup> Officials (Pg. 61).
Padded Goal Posts	A white commercially made pad at least 72" in height and a max. of 1" thick may be placed on the vertical posts.	Not Sanctioned	Not Sanctioned
Goal Post Placement	Rear of each goal post shall be on the <u>outer</u> edge of the goal line. R 1, Sec. 4, Art 1	Goal lines must be the same width as the goal posts and crossbars.	Same as NCAA
Field Conditions for play to start and	Prior to start of game, host institution representative determines; thereafter	Determination is made by the referee.	Same as NCAA

continue	determination is made by referee.		
Games played indoors	No provision	Match may be played indoors if field is proper size.	No provision
Turf Fields	No restriction	No restriction	Permitted - must be green in color
<b>THE BALL</b>	<b>RULE 2</b>	<b>RULE 2</b>	<b>LAW 2</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
Number of Balls	3 or more of similar quality. Must have NFHS logo displayed, supplied by home team or referee can select from visitor if unavailable. At least 2 ball holders.	Five or more identical. Recommended that at least 4 ball persons at least 10 yrs. old. Use manufacturers suggested pressure. Recommended to wear colored vests.	1 required, others may be used if available. For major international matches - FIFA marking required; USSF - up to 6 suggested.
<b>PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES</b>	<b>RULE 3</b>	<b>RULE 3</b>	<b>LAW 3</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
Team Roster	REQUIRED to be presented to referee 5 mins. before game time. Names may be added to roster after the start of play. May be given by coach or player Player numbers required on roster.	REQUIRED to be presented to referee, scorekeeper and other coach 15 mins. prior to game time. Copy given to referee should not show total cautions and ejections. Forfeit if roster not provided.	Names of subs given to referee prior to match. No other roster requirement. No more than 6 subs in National A Team matches.
Substitutions When?	<u>Either team</u> : Unlimited at end of period; goal; goal kick (players must have already reported to scorer); caution (player must go out); injury <i>If referee stops clock, player must go out incl. GK</i> ; disqualification (but not for disqualified player); blood on player or uniform; or sign of concussion-all unlimited in number. Unlimited number of subs from <u>bench</u> on goal, end of period, injured player removed from field. Player, must be removed until cleared by health care professional. On goal kick or injury, sub must wait until beckoned. All subs must be beckoned by referee, except at start of a period.  <u>Team in possession</u> : Throw-in or corner kick (if sub, other team may also sub). Players must have reported to scorer prior to the time ball went out of play).	<u>Either team</u> : End of period; goal; goal kick; player instructed to leave for equipment change (other team may sub equal number); injury or caution (only players involved - other team may sub like number); Bleeding injury, blood on uniform or signs of concussion - player <u>must</u> be subbed but can return at any stoppage with medical approval. Not charged with reentry.  <u>Team in possession</u> : throw-in or corner kick (if sub, other team may also sub. Players must have reported to scorer prior to time ball went out of play); Goal keeper ejected (team plays short but may put in a goal keeper) - no sub allowed for other team.	At any stoppage with permission of referee. (many local leagues have set times for subs).
When substitute becomes a player of record	When beckoned onto the field by the referee.	When beckoned on by the referee during the first 85 mins. of game. During last 5 mins., when referee signals the clock to stop if leading team substitutes.	When substitute actually enters the field (must be at the halfway line).
Withdrawing a reported sub	Once beckoned onto field by referee, player must enter.	Player not required to enter, but is charged with one reentry.	No similar rule.
Restrictions on substitutions	A player substituted for may reenter an unlimited number of times.	During first half and in each overtime period-no reentry. One reentry in second half. (R3 Sec. 5). GK is allowed one reentry each period and each OT. Injured player may reenter without being charged if card is issued to player causing the injury.	Player replaced may not return to the match. (This Law differs in many local competitions and youth matches.)
Changing Goal Keeper with field	Whenever clock is stopped or at a substitution time after notifying	During any stoppage after notifying referee. <u>Verbal warning</u> to the players at	During any stoppage after notifying referee. <u>Caution</u> both players for

player	referee. <u>Warning</u> to both players for a violation.	next stoppage. No sub from bench for GK during penalty kick.	violation when ball is out of play
Minimum No. of Players	7 to start and play - forfeit if less.	7 to start and play.	Same as NCAA
<b>PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>RULE 4</b>	<b>RULE 4</b>	<b>LAW 4</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
Casts, Facemasks and Ankle Braces Monitoring devices and headscarves	Hard casts or splints must be padded with closed cell foam at least 1/2 inch thick. Facemask may be worn by player with facial injury. It must be molded to the face with no protrusions; player must have a medical release at the game site signed by a physician for use of a face mask. Ankle braces of metal must be inside stockings - non-metal may be worn outside.	Casts permitted if covered and not considered dangerous by referee. Facemasks permitted if not considered dangerous by referee. <i>Monitoring devices permitted and may be used during match.</i>	Referee's discretion - check for safety and require padding if cast is hard or dangerous. Soft facemask permitted if approved by referee. Headscarves for women permitted.
Uniform numbers	6" number on back of jersey <u>including</u> GK and 4" number on front of jersey or shorts.	8" number on back of jersey and 4" number on front of jersey, <u>including</u> Goal Keeper.	Nothing specified in the Laws.
Visible apparel under uniform and stockings	If worn under shorts, all on team must be alike and of similar length and solid color. If under jersey, all alike, similar length and of a solid color. Both socks must be of a single dominant color. If tape is applied over sock, it must be same color as that part of sock.	Visible apparel worn under shirt or shorts should be a solid color that matches the dominant color of the garment (recommended R4.2.4).	Any visible undergarment (shirt or shorts) must be same main color as the uniform shirt or shorts. Shirts must have sleeves. Tape applied over sock must be same color as that part of sock.
Uniform Colors	Home team - white or light jerseys and stockings; visitors, dark jerseys and stockings.	Home team has responsibility to ensure that their uniforms contrast to those of the visitors.	Nothing specified, but no political, religious or personal statements allowed.
Shirts tucked in	Mandatory	Not specified - generally required	Same as NCAA
Goal Keeper's Jersey and Color	Must differ from all other players except can be same color as other Goal Keeper.	Jersey must differ from all field players and socks must differ from opponents.	Must differ from all other players and the officials.
Jewelry, etc.	Not permitted - Except for medical or religious medals which must be taped under uniform. Medical alert bracelet must be taped and visible. <i>Colored mouth protectors allowed.</i>	Not permitted - Except "Medic Alert" bracelets or necklaces, if taped to body. Penalty-clock stopped, player leaves field (no sub allowed) until next sub opportunity. Electronic data monitoring devices may be worn.	Not permitted
Shinguards	NOCSAE approved. Marked on outside with seal and height range of player.	Same as NFHS but no marking requirement specified.	Shinguards required - no standard specified.
<b>THE REFEREE</b>	<b>RULE 5</b>	<b>RULE 5</b>	<b>LAW 5</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
Referee System	DSC, Dual (2 referee) or Double Dual (3 referee)	Diagonal System of Control (DSC) shall be used. If 1 official does not appear, the dual system may be used.	DSC only. May use club linesmen if necessary.
Forfeit or Terminate	Forfeit if less than 7 players; however, if below 7 due to equip. problem, minor injury or blood, wait for treatment or correction. Can <u>terminate</u> if team refuses to play, no cross bar, etc.	Power to forfeit if coach will not end discussion or leave field, or team refuses to return to field within 3 mins.; ejected or ineligible player enters game. If team not on field within 15 mins. of game time it is declared "no contest". Ref, can suspend game. If terminated less than 70 mins. into game, - it is declared - "no	Referee has no power to declare forfeit but may suspend or terminate a match.

		contest". Forfeit if team does not supply roster prior to beginning of match.	
Authority Begins and Ends	<i>Begins when referee enters field or surroundings and at least 15 min. prior to start of game and ends when officials leave the field and its immediate surroundings.</i>	<i>Begins when referee arrives at game site and referee should arrive at least 30 min. before scheduled game time and authority ends when officials leave the game site after signing the score book.</i>	Not specified but by custom begins when officials enter the field area and ends when they leave the area.
Referee Uniform	As set by the State Associations, usually the same shirt as USSF. Black shorts or long trousers, black stockings with white top stripes. In some states black and white striped shirts are worn. Solid black cap may be worn. Must differ from the field players, but not necessarily the goal keepers.	Gold, orange, blue, <i>green</i> or black in a, checked grid pattern. Socks - black with 3 top bands of white, gold, orange or blue. All dressed alike. Cap permissible but not commonly worn. shoes should be mainly black. Except for a watch, Referee should wear no jewelry. electronic aids and field marking spray are permitted.	USSF - Shirts - Gold, black, red, green or blue, all with thin vertical stripping. Socks - black with three white top bands. Caps not specified, but generally permitted if conditions warrant in club matches, not usually worn in top level matches.
Whistles and hand signals	Whistle used for kickoff, penalty kicks, and to signal play stoppage such as fouls, injuries, substitutions and to signal restart after substitutions, injuries and time stoppage. Also when a card is given and on encroachment. Discretionary and if needed when ball goes out of play. Signals same as NCAA plus windup motion to start clock.	Whistles, same as NFHS, other whistles discretionary. The only recognized hand signals are for advantage, indirect and direct free kicks, throw-in direction, clock stopped, goal and corner kicks and penalty kicks, all by pointing to the spot and giving direction.	Whistle used for kickoff, penalty kick, restarts and stoppages as necessary. Signals are the same as NCAA except no clock stop signal.
Time Keeping	Referee keeps time only by agreement of the coaches or state association - otherwise home team controls clock. Timer counts down last 10 seconds.	Backup to home team clock which is official unless there is a malfunction. Match ends when timekeeper's signal <i>sounds or clock shows 0:00</i> . Timer counts down last 10 seconds to zero.	Referee keeps official time.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Caution Mechanics for Displaying Cards	Display yellow and then sequentially the red card.	Same as NFHS	Same as NFHS
Pre-game Conference	Head coach presence required with captains - Address sportsmanship and inquire of coach if players are properly and legally equipped.	Nothing specified at coin toss	Same as NCAA
Post-game score verification	Head referee must verify score.	All officials must sign the score sheet. Thereafter, all statistics are final. Once score sheet is signed , coaches, players and other personnel bear burden of the infractions. Protest may be filed up to 48 hrs. after match.	Nothing specified. Rules of competition may require verification of score.
Articles worn by officials	Officials should not wear anything that is not allowed to be worn or carried by players (watches and caps excepted).	Same as NFHS	Same as NFHS, however, in senior and professional leagues, caps are not usually worn.
<b>THE A.R. and OTHER OFFICIALS</b>	<b>RULE 6</b>	<b>RULE 6</b>	<b>LAW 6</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
	No significant difference between the three sets of Rules and Laws. Timekeeper and scorekeeper are listed. A <i>4<sup>th</sup> official</i> may be used. At least 2 ball persons from home team.	A scorer and timer are required and Alternate Official (AO) may be used. At least 4 ball persons over 10 years old. (Recommended)	A 4 <sup>th</sup> Official may be used as well as additional assistant referees (AAR) behind goal line.
AR Signal to Referee	Nothing specified	AR moves smartly to corner.	AR holds flag horizontally at waist

that foul by defender was inside penalty area			level across body.
<b>DURATION OF GAME</b>	<b>RULE 7</b>	<b>RULE 7</b>	<b>LAW 7</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
Length of Periods	2-40 min. periods or 4-20 min. quarters. Overtime allowed by state assoc., up to 20 mins. max. Sudden victory may be permitted by state.	2-45 min. periods. In regular season, 2-10 min. sudden victory overtimes. For post-season tournaments see R. 7.1.2 which includes kicks from the penalty mark after the overtime periods.	2-45 min. periods plus allowance for time lost due to subs, injury, time wasting, etc. Local rules of competition allow for 2 full overtime periods not to exceed 15 mins. each, as well as, kicks from the penalty mark. No "golden goal".
Official Game	Official game if one half has been played. If suspended during the first half, state assoc. determines if game is to be rescheduled from the beginning or from the point of suspension.	A suspended game of less than 70 mins. is declared "no contest". If at least 70 mins. have been played the governing authority may declare it official.	If less than full time is played, the match must be replayed in its entirety, unless the local rules of competition state otherwise.
Halftime and Overtime (OT) Intervals	10 mins. for half time unless otherwise agreed by the coaches. Between end of game and first OT period - 5 mins. Between OT periods - 2 mins.	15 mins. for half time (may be extended in post-season play). May be lessened by prior consent of coaches and officials. OT - same as NFHS.	Players are entitled to a halftime interval if desired, not exceeding 15 mins.
Clock Stops	Goal, Penalty kick, yellow and red cards, and at discretion of referee (to assess possible injury, time wasting, etc.).	Same as NFHS. Plus when subs are made in the last 5 mins. of match by team that is leading. Player shows signs of concussion. Also, TV timeouts as specified in R 7.1. During last 5 minutes of regulation play, stopping clock for a caution to a player on the losing team is discretionary with referee.	Referee discretion, e.g. serious injury, time wasting, substitutions. Clock does not stop but time is "added on".
<b>START OF PLAY</b>	<b>RULE 8</b>	<b>RULE 8</b>	<b>LAW 8</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
Coin toss - winner	Choice of goal or kick off. Same procedure for 1st overtime.	Same as NFHS	Must choose goal to attack. Loser of toss always kicks off.
Drop Ball	Where ball was when play stopped and 5 yds. from touchline if simultaneous touched out by opposing players. If in goal area, drop on 6 yd. line nearest to location of stoppage. <u>Must</u> be dropped between 2 opposing players.	Same as NFHS but does not require 2 opposing players and need not be 5 yds. from touchline.	Same as NCAA
<b>BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY</b>	<b>RULE 9</b>	<b>RULE 9</b>	<b>LAW 9</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
Restart after injury, inadvertent whistle, etc.	In one team is in clear possession, indirect free kick, otherwise drop ball. Goal can be scored from a drop ball.	Same as FIFA except if stoppage and GK has possession of ball when play stopped - then IFK to GK's team at place of GK possession or if in goal area, on 6 yd. line.	Dropped ball where play was stopped by referee. Goal <u>cannot</u> be scored directly from a dropped ball.
Ball strikes overhead wire or tree extending into field	Local ground rule - to be discussed prior to game. No set rule.	Considered as an outside agent. Ball dropped at nearest point where ball landed.	Considered part of field. Ball remains in play. (Advise to Referees - 1.8c and 1.8d)
<b>SCORING</b>	<b>RULE 10</b>	<b>RULE 10</b>	<b>LAW 10</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
	No differences between the three		



sets of Rules/Laws.

OFFSIDE	RULE 11	RULE 11	LAW 11
TOPIC	NFHS	NCAA-NISOA	FIFA-USSF
	No difference in the three systems.		
VIOLATIONS AND MISCONDUCT	RULE 12	RULE 12	LAW 12
TOPIC	NFHS	NCAA-NISOA	FIFA-USSF
Caution-Reasons (Yellow Card)	Entering or leaving field w/o referee permission; persistent infringement of rules; dissent; incidental profane language; unsporting conduct; delays restart; encroachment on free kicks and corner kicks; coach and bench personnel CAN be carded (yellow or red); using electronic devices to communicate with players; use of tobacco at game site. Unsporting conduct includes coaching outside of box, faking injury, simulating a foul. Cautioned player must go off, if subbed for, may return at next opportunity to sub. Coach may be cautioned for team or bench misconduct that cannot be attributed to a specific player. Coach cautioned if player enters illegally equipped - thereafter player w/ illegal equipment is cautioned. Hand ball or foul to prevent goal and ball goes into goal. Delayed or excessive acts to focus attention on player or prohibits timely restart.	Entering or leaving field w/o referee permission; persistent infringement of rules; dissent; incidental profane language; unsporting conduct (includes taunting, excessive celebration, exaggerating an injury); delays restart; encroachment of free kicks and corner kicks; coach can be cautioned for 2 <sup>nd</sup> infraction of coaching outside of team area.	Unsporting behavior (includes removing jersey when celebrating a goal and simulating any action to deceive referee), dissent, persistent infringement of laws, delays restart, encroachment on free kicks and corner kicks, enters, reenters or leaves the field without referee permission. Coach and bench personnel CANNOT be carded, but can be sent off without show of card.
Disqualification-Reasons (Red Card)	2 <sup>nd</sup> caution (cannot be replaced); violent conduct; taunting; serious foul play; hand ball to prevent goal if ball does not go into goal; foul against an opponent who is moving toward goal with an obvious opportunity to score; spitting at an opponent, teammate or official; using offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures; leaves bench when a fight is taking place. Coach and bench may be carded.	Serious foul play; violent behavior; fighting; spits at anyone; denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by handling or any offense punishable by a free kick; uses abusive, threatening or obscene language, behavior or conduct; receives a 2 <sup>d</sup> caution. 3 <sup>rd</sup> occurrence of coaching outside of team area. Coach and bench may be carded.	Serious foul play (includes any tackle which endangers safety of opponent); violent conduct; spits at anyone; denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by handling or any offense punishable by a free kick; uses offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures; receives a 2 <sup>nd</sup> caution. Red card <u>cannot</u> be shown to coach or non-player but they may be sent off. Some youth leagues differ.
Charging Goalkeeper	Keeper cannot be charged in his penalty area unless dribbling ball with his feet or obstructing.	May not be charged or interfered with while in possession of ball within his penalty area.	May be fairly charged if going for the ball other than with his/her hands. May not be charged while holding ball or having possession of the same.
Player on field at end of period is ejected during the interval	Team not required to play short in next period 12.8.2 F.	Team plays short in next period.	Same as NCAA
Addressing Referee Between periods	Only team captain should address referee.	Not permitted between periods except for captain unless summoned by referee. 1 <sup>st</sup> occurrence - verbal warning; 2 <sup>nd</sup> occurrence - caution; 3 <sup>rd</sup> - ejection.	No provision
FREE KICKS	RULE 13	RULE 13	LAW 13
TOPIC	NFHS	NCAA-NISOA	FIFA-USSF

Direct free kick Offenses	Spitting, kicking or attempt to kick, striking or attempt, tripping or attempt, jumping at, handling ball, holding, pushing, charging violently, violently fouling goalkeeper while in possession of ball in the penalty area, all against an opponent. Specifies charging an opponent while the opponent in the act of playing the ball, has both feet off of the ground.	Basically the same as HS Federation, but does not specifically mention charging an opponent while the opponent in the act of playing the ball, has both feet off of the ground; also, assaulting an official and using blood to assault anyone.	Basically the same as NCAA, but specifies also tackling an opponent in a manner deemed careless, reckless or with excessive force.
Indirect free kick Offenses	Playing ball a 2 <sup>nd</sup> time before it is played or touched by another player at kickoff, throw-in, free kick, corner kick, goal kick or penalty kick; GK holds ball more than 6 secs.; sub at improper time or without being beckoned by referee; persons other than players and ARs entering field without referee permission; dissent; unsporting behavior or inappropriate language; dangerous play against opponent or teammate; offside; charging when ball not within playing distance; interfering with goalkeeper before release of ball; illegal obstruction; leaving field without referee permission; goalkeeper receives ball in the hands deliberately kicked or thrown by teammate; goalkeeper handles ball after relinquishing possession; use of tobacco; when game is stopped for injury or unusual situation and one team has clear possession of the ball. If game is stopped for misconduct of player, coach or bench and no other restart takes precedence, an IFK is awarded. Spitting at team mate or game official taken from spot of offense if committed on field. If off field, from spot where ball was when play stopped.	Same as NFHS additionally, improper coaching from the touchline after verbal warning. But dangerous play must involve an opponent, not team mate. IFK for stoppage only when GK is in possession of the ball; (in all other cases of injury and inadvertent whistle - drop ball), assault on official, team mate or non-player.	Dangerous play involving an opponent, impedes progress of opponent, prevents goalkeeper from releasing ball, commits any offense not sanctioned by a direct free kick for which play is stopped to caution or send off a player; goalkeeper takes more than 6 secs. before releasing ball; touches ball again with hands after releasing goalkeeper touches ball with hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by team mate, or handles the ball on a throw in to him by team mate, offside, assault of official, team mate or non-player.
<b>PENALTY KICKS</b>	<b>RULE 14</b>	<b>RULE 14</b>	<b>LAW 14</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
Ball Placement	On the 9" spot or 2 foot line.	Same as NFHS	On the penalty spot.
Stutter, stepping or faking by the kicker	Not permitted - Retake.	Same as FIFA. Kicker cannot stop completely.	Permitted - no infraction if during the run-up. Cannot stop completely.
Player taking kick infringes or team mate encroaches and ball does <b>not</b> go into goal	Goal kick if ball goes directly over goal line. If deflected out by goalkeeper or ball bounces into play - indirect free kick to defenders. If saved by keeper-play continues.	An indirect free kick is given to defenders at point of infraction unless ball goes out of play over the goal line even if deflected out by GK, then goal kick.	An indirect free kick is given to defenders at point of infraction.
After kick is taken, but before being touched by another player or hits the goal, necessitating a stoppage in play (i.e. outside against, burst ball)	Kick is retaken.	Same as NFHS	Same as NFHS



Kicks from Penalty mark/spot (tiebreaker)	No player reduction if other team is playing short. Coach and all non-kicker players must remain in team area, coach selects first 5 kickers, if tied, another 5 kickers are selected. any players on the roster may kick.	Same as NFHS but coach not allowed in center circle. 10 players to be designated from the roster, need not have been on field at end of match. <i>If more kicks required, need not be taken in same order.</i> Referee determines goal to be used.	In one team is playing short, other team must reduce number to equalize. Coach not permitted on the field. Each team must have same number of kickers. Only players on the field at end of match may participate.
<b>THROW-IN</b>	<b>RULE 15</b>	<b>RULE 15</b>	<b>LAW 15</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
Position of Defenders	All must stand no less than 2 yards from the point of the throw-in and may not jump about or distract thrower.	No restriction on position, but cannot move to interfere once in position.	Same as NFHS
Ball never enters field	Throw-in awarded to opponent.	Same as HS Federation	Retake throw-in.
Throw-in by impaired player using only one hand	Legal - One-handed throw-in allowed in such cases.	No provision	Same as NFHS. See USSF Advice to Referees - 15.3
<b>GOAL KICK</b>	<b>RULE 16</b>	<b>RULE 16</b>	<b>LAW 16</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
Moving ball in goal area after it is spotted	Once spotted, ball may not be moved to another part of goal area.	No prohibition unless considered as time wasting.	Same as NCAA
<b>CORNER KICK</b>	<b>RULE 17</b>	<b>RULE 17</b>	<b>LAW 17</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
	No significant differences in the three sets of Rules and Laws.		
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>			
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>NFHS</b>	<b>NCAA-NISOA</b>	<b>FIFA-USSF</b>
Foul indicated by Assistant Referee	Flag held vertically overhead until referee acknowledges and then a slight circular wave of the flag is made and point in direction of restart.	Flag held vertically overhead with a slight circular wave.	Same as NCAA after eye contact made with referee.
Future Requirements	None presently known.	Rule Book published every other year. New book issued in 2014.	Experimenting with use of additional officials behind goal lines. Goal line technology to be used in World cup.
Restart After Delays	No provision	No contest may be started or restarted or resumed that has not been restarted before an additional 90 minutes after the end of a regulation 90 minute game.	No provision
Game Reports	As required by the State Association.	All required reports (fighting, ejections), report electronically within 24 hours. Forms are found at <a href="http://www.NCAAsoccer.arbitersports.com">www.NCAAsoccer.arbitersports.com</a> .	Determined by the local or national association.
Protest by Coach	No provision	May be filed up to <i>forty eight</i> hours after match. ( <i>Certain restrictions - Rule 12.16</i> )	No provision
Coach conveying Tactical Information to team and Coach restrictions	Coach may give instructions during injury, otherwise cannot leave team area. May use electronic communication devices on sideline only cannot communicate with field players.	No restriction but cannot leave coaching or team area. Coach may use electronic tablet or dry-erase board. No player or coach may approach or speak to referee between periods, except captain, unless summoned. <i>Coaches on roster and on site can communicate with each other electronically.</i>	Only one person at a time is allowed to convey tactical instructions from the technical area.
Ball in play on free kicks	Ball must be touched and <u>visibly moved</u> .	Ball must be played or touched.	Same as NFHS

Comparison information provided by the National Intercollegiate Soccer Officials Association (NISOA). \*This guide is current as of the date of publication of the Rules Book and may not include changes in the NCAA rules or FIFA Laws.

# SAMPLE TIE-BREAKING PROCEDURE

Individual state high school associations may adopt this or other tie-breaking procedures. Unless otherwise stated, the rules of the game apply.

## A. TIE GAME PROCEDURE.

When the score is tied at the end of regulation time, the referee will instruct both teams to return to their respective team areas. There will be five minutes during which both teams may confer with their coaches, and the head referee will instruct both teams as to proper procedure.

1. There shall be two, full 10-minute overtime periods (note — not sudden victory),
  - a. A coin toss shall be held as in Rule [5-2-2\(d\)](#).
  - b. At the end of the first 10-minute overtime period, teams shall change ends.
  - c. There shall be a two-minute interval between periods.
2. If, at the conclusion of the two 10-minute overtime periods, a tie still exists, there shall be two five-minute, sudden-victory overtime periods.
  - a. A coin toss shall be held as in Rule [5-2-2\(d\)](#).
  - b. At the end of the first sudden-victory period, teams shall change ends.
  - c. There shall be a two-minute interval between periods.
3. If the score still remains tied, all coaches, officials and team captains shall assemble at the halfway line to review the procedure as outlined below:
  - a. The head referee shall choose the goal at which all of the kicks from the penalty mark shall be taken.
  - b. Each coach will select any five players, including the goalkeeper, on or off the field (except those who may have been disqualified) to take the kicks.
  - c. A coin toss shall be held as in Rule [5-2-2\(d\)](#). The team winning the toss shall have the choice of kicking first or second.
  - d. Teams will alternate kickers. There is no follow-up on the kick.
  - e. The defending team may change the goalkeeper prior to each penalty kick.
  - f. Following five kicks for each team, the team scoring on the greatest number of these kicks shall

be declared the winner.

g. Add one goal to the winning team score and credit the team with a victory. An asterisk (\*) may be placed by the team advancing to indicate the advancement was the result of a tie breaker system.

4. If the score remains tied after each team has had five kicks:

a. Each coach will select five different players than the first five who already have kicked to take the kicks in a sudden-victory situation, wherein if one team scores and the other team does not score, the game is ended without more kicks being taken. If a team has fewer than ten available players at the end of the first set of kicks from the penalty mark due to either injuries or disqualification, the coach must use all players who have not participated in the first five kicks. The coach may choose additional players from the first five kickers to ensure that five different players participate in the second set of kicks.

b. If the score remains tied, continue the sudden-victory kicks with the coach selecting any five players to take the next set of alternating kicks. If a tie still remains, repeat 4-a.

5. During all tie-breaker penalty kicks, the ball remains alive until its momentum is spent, it goes out of bounds, or it is retouched by the kicker.

6. For the final game, co-champions may be declared if a tie still exists at the end of regulation time, two 10-minute periods, and two five-minute sudden victory overtime periods.

7. Unless participating in the kicks as a kicker or goalkeeper, team members, coaches and other bench personnel shall remain in a designated area as determined by the state association.

**NOTE:** In tournament situations, a game may be rescheduled from the start, or restarted from the point of the suspension according to state association adoption.

## **B. MISCONDUCT PROCEDURES:**

1. Cautioned Players

a. One of the five players listed to take a kick is cautioned after he/she takes the kick. That player is not eligible to kick again until one complete set of five kicks has been completed beyond the set of kicks in which the caution was issued.

(1) Player “X” is one of the first five kickers, and is cautioned after taking his/her kick. Player “X” is not eligible to kick again until the set beginning with the 11th kick.

(2) Player “Y” is one of the second set of five kickers and is cautioned after taking his/her kick. Player “Y” is not eligible to kick again until the set beginning with the 16th kick.

b. One of the five players listed to take a kick is cautioned before he/she takes the kick. That player is not eligible to kick until the next set of five kicks. Another eligible player not listed in

that set of kicks must take the cautioned player's original turn.

c. When a goalkeeper is issued a caution during any set of five kicks, he/she cannot re-enter until the next opponent completes his/her kick. A substitution is permitted for the cautioned goalkeeper.

## 2. Disqualified Players

a. Any player, including the goalkeeper, who is disqualified may not participate any further. If his/her kick is not already completed, an eligible substitute is permitted.

# DUAL-OFFICIATING SYSTEM

## OBJECTIVE:

This material is meant to serve as an introduction to the dual system of officiating. Fundamentals of mechanics are presented so those unfamiliar with them will be motivated to study other material dealing with the subject.

Topics discussed within this material on the mechanics of the dual-officiating system include:

1. the necessity of a thorough pregame conference;
2. the positions and duties of officials on:
  - kickoffs;
  - goal kicks;
  - corner kicks;
  - penalty kicks;
  - free kicks;
  - throw-ins;
3. coordinating the use of the whistle in releasing the ball for play between the lead official (L) and the trail official (T);
4. the proper technique in making a call, and the importance of signaling;
5. handling substitutions.
6. post-game duties

## PREGAME CONFERENCE:

Essential to competent officiating of any game is the pregame conference between the two officials. This is the time when an understanding is developed and difficult rule interpretations are discussed.

The head referee is responsible for conducting the conference and is responsible for the overall management of the game. The head referee conducts the pregame instructions with the timer, scorer, coaches, ball holders and team captains, and also handles the coin toss. The head referee will be assisted in these duties by the referee. The head referee and the referee should inspect the field together, with the referee calling any irregularities to the attention of the head referee. The head referee will request the game management to make any necessary corrections. The referee is specifically responsible in instructing the ball holders and in carrying out other duties directed by the

head referee. The head referee will speak with both team captains and coaches prior to the game about good sportsmanship.

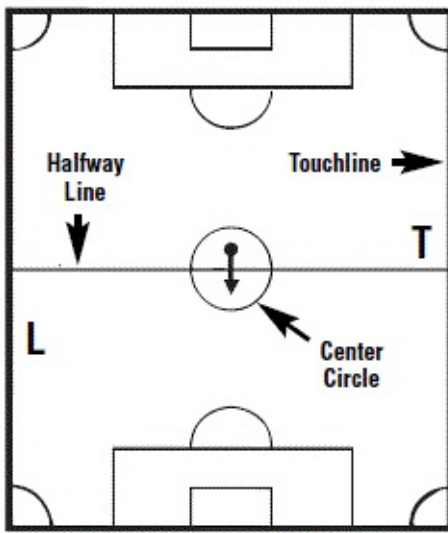
A very important responsibility of the head referee is to make decisions on any points not specifically covered in the rules. The head referee is the final authority on any rules interpretations necessary during the course of the game. Another important responsibility is ruling on legality of player equipment. Particular attention should be given to casts, bandages and padding protecting injuries.

The head referee and the referee have equal responsibility and authority in calling fouls. The judgment or decisions by either official cannot be questioned or set aside by the other, but joint counsel is often helpful when conducted by the two referees away from everyone.

**NOTE:** A fourth official may be assigned to a tournament in order to assure game officiating continuity in the event one of the assigned officials is unable to officiate as assigned. When a fourth official is assigned, the tournament authority will clearly state the officiating position to be assumed by the fourth official in the event a head referee or referee is unable to officiate. The fourth official is under the jurisdiction of the head referee and performs those duties assigned by the head referee. The fourth official's normal station is at the table inside the officials' area during play.

## **KICKOFFS:**

To start each period and after goals, the position of the officials should be as shown in Diagram 1 (below). With the ball moving in the direction indicated, the trail official (T) should be near the touchline and standing on the halfway line (with all players on the halfway line in front of him/her to rule on encroachment of the halfway line and the center circle). The lead official (L) shall be positioned 10 to 20 yards from the halfway line and inside the touchline in the defensive team's half of the field. Before the lead official indicates being prepared for the kickoff, he/she shall check with both team captains, scorer and timer (if they are on his/her touch line) to obtain a "ready" sign from them. Having obtained these "ready" signs, the lead official shall signal to the trail official everything is set. The signal is an extended arm parallel to the ground pointing in the direction the kick will be taken. The trail official, after receiving the "ready" signal from the lead official, will sound the whistle to declare the ball is "ready-for-play" and signal "start the clock."



**Diagram 1**  
**Positions for Kickoff**

Should the timer and scorer be located on the trail official's touchline, he/she will check with them before releasing the ball for play.

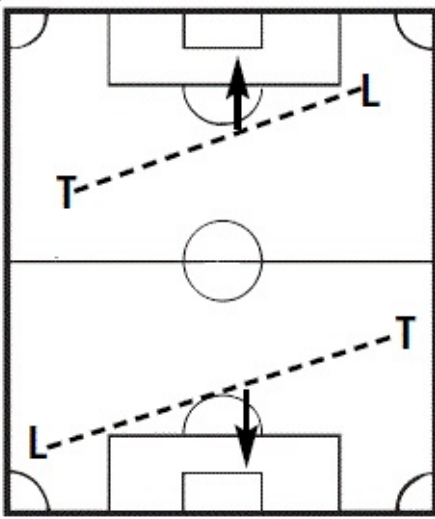
### **MOVEMENT PATTERNS:**

In the dual system, there is always a lead official (L) and a trail official (T). One should be able to draw a diagonal line between the two officials through the ball at anytime.

The lead official normally is ahead of the ball on plays to his/her right. He/she is responsible for covering the touch line and nearer goal line. In addition, the lead official must be in position to rule on offside. This means the lead official must assume a position to know the position of the most advanced offensive player relative to the deepest two defenders at the same time the ball is played in the attacking half of the field.

The trail official will normally be behind the ball on plays to his/her left. Attention will be directed to play around the ball. The penetration of the trail official will depend on the type of game being played (kick and run vs. ball control) and the physical ability of the official.





**Diagram 2**  
**General Movement of**  
**Officials During Play**

Penetration of 20-30 yards by an official will help “box” the play and preclude any guessing or missed calls from the touchline. At some time, the trail official will become the lead official and will have to rule on goal line plays to the right. Of course, the position of the ball will dictate which official will be responsible for off-the-ball coverage. Alert off-the-ball coverage is the hallmark of the dual system. In games played in halves, officials should exchange field sides at halftime and “lead” to their left starting the second half, assuming they were leading to their right in the first half.

## **MAKING THE CALL:**

A. When a foul is observed that is to be penalized, an official will:

1. give a short, sharp blast of the whistle;
2. visually indicate the direction and type of free kick (direct or indirect) or the direction and spot of the throw-in;
3. when required, the lead official should give a sharp blast of the whistle declaring the ball “ready-for-play.” Do not wait for the defense to set up.

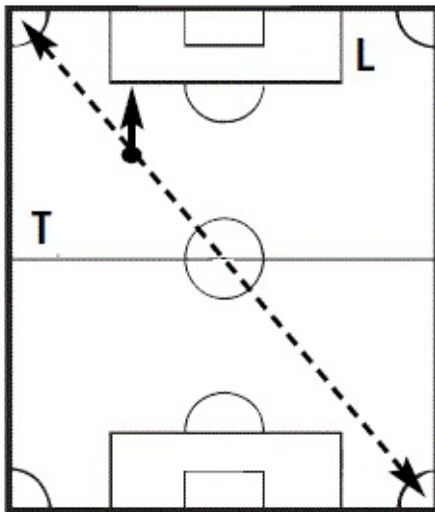
B. Official’s procedural guidelines to issue a card:

1. stop play;
2. stop the clock;
3. hold a yellow, red card or sequentially as the situation warrants with arm fully extended above the official’s head;
4. indicate player(s);
5. record player’s name and jersey number;

6. inform player of the reason for the caution or disqualification;
7. inform the scorekeeper, both coaches, and his/her partner;
8. restart game promptly.

### **FREE KICKS:**

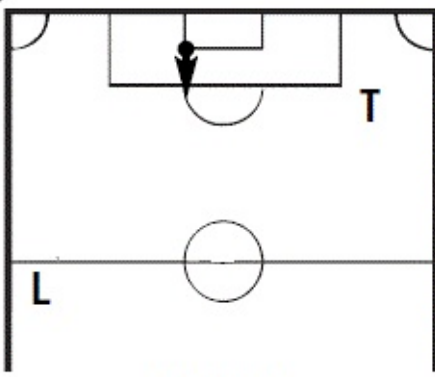
When the ball has been properly placed, the trail official shall signal to the lead official. It is suggested the trail official indicate the ball is “ready-for-play” by giving the appropriate free-kick signal.



**Diagram 3**  
**Position on Free Kicks**

### **GOAL KICKS:**

The trail official is responsible for declaring the ball “ready-for-play.” The position is near the top of the penalty area approximately halfway between the touchline and the penalty area. See Diagram 4 (below). He/she is responsible “to see the kick clears” the penalty area before it is played a second time.



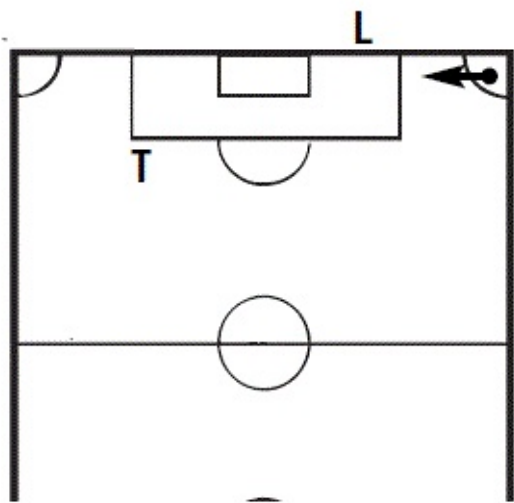
**Diagram 4**  
**Position for Goal Kicks**

The lead official should be approximately at the halfway line near the touchline. The position will be determined by the kicker and wind conditions. The main observation will be the players around where the ball will be kicked, watching mainly for illegal pushing.

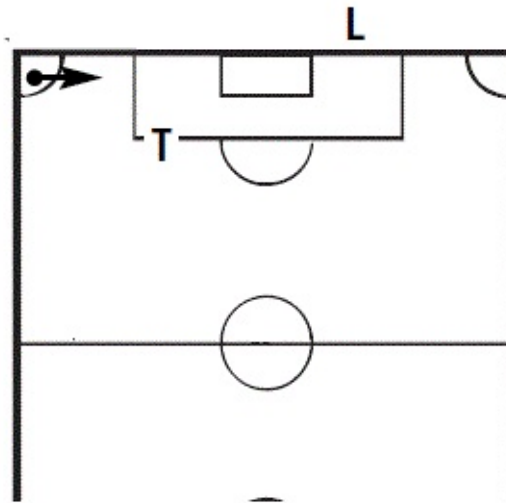
If the ball should be kicked to the goalkeeper's right, perpendicular to the touchline, the lead official should see that the ball clears the penalty area before it is played a second time.

### **CORNER KICKS:**

The lead official is responsible for declaring the ball "ready-for-play" on all corner kicks, if a second whistle is required. The position will be approximately the same whether the kick is taken from the right side or the left side. See Diagrams 5 and 6 (below). Also, he/she is responsible for the flight of the ball from the right or the left. The lead official will be positioned on the goal line near the goal post between the post and the outer edge of the penalty area. When the ball is kicked from the right, the lead official will pivot after the ball has been kicked to observe play while continuing to observe the ball to determine where it will land. As soon as the official knows the ball will land in the field of play, he/she should direct his/her attention to the players around where the ball will land. The trail official will be positioned near the top of the penalty area on his/her side of the field regardless of whether the kick is taken from the right or left. On kicks taken from the right, the trail official should observe action on the goalkeeper and play around the goal area. The trail official shall assume a position that does not interfere with play, but allows observing fouls in the goal area.



**Diagram 5**  
Position for Corner Kicks from the Right



**Diagram 6**  
Position for Corner Kicks from the Left

When the kick is taken from the left side, the responsibilities are slightly different. The placement of the ball on kicks taken from the left is the responsibility of the trail official. When it is properly placed, the trail official will give a signal. After the ball is kicked, the lead official observes action on the goalkeeper as well as follows the flight of the ball to rule on the ball over the touchline. The trail official observes action in the penalty area, giving special attention to play in the goal area. If a second whistle is required to begin play, the lead official should delay slightly before declaring the ball “ready-for-play” to give the trail official an opportunity to assume proper position. This is another clear case of “looking off the ball.”

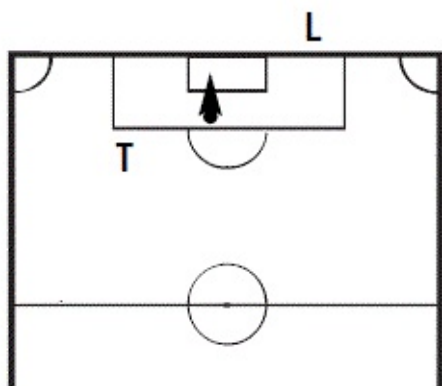
### **THROW-IN:**

The official responsible for the touchline from which the throw-in is made will be primarily responsible for judging if the throw-in is performed correctly. If the attack is coming toward the official, he/she must be positioned to be the lead official and must anticipate development of play. When the attack is away from the official, that official need only rule on the legality of the throw-in. The official on the opposite touchline will observe players in the general area around the throw-in, watching for holding, pushing, *etc.*

### **PENALTY KICKS:**

The lead official shall be positioned near the goal post on his/her side of the field and is responsible for declaring the ball “ready-for-play” after it has been placed by the kicker. The main responsibilities of the lead official are to act as goal judge and to see that the goalkeeper stands on the goal line and does not move off the goal line before the ball has been kicked. The trail official shall be positioned near the top corner of the penalty area opposite the lead official. See Diagram 7 (below). His/her responsibility is primarily to watch for infringements of the penalty area and quarter arc by members of either team and infractions by the kicker. As soon as a penalty kick is indicated, the

official closer to the ball shall pick up the ball and take it to the penalty mark. Both officials will assist the players in assuming positions for the kick.



**Diagram 7**  
**Positions for Penalty Kick**

The lead official will hand the ball to the kicker and instruct the player to place the ball and then walk to the goalkeeper making sure the goalkeeper is ready and understands that the ball will be released by the whistle.

### **Handling Substitutions:**

The official responsible on the side of the field where substitutes will be entering will beckon the players onto the field. The official responsible for the restart will sound the whistle.

### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECLARING THE BALL “READY-FOR-PLAY”**

#### **WHEN A RESTART WHISTLE IS REQUIRED:**

Situation	Official
Start of each half	Trail
Kickoff after goal	Trail
Drop Ball	Trail
Goal Kick	Trail
Corner Kick	Lead
Penalty Kick	Lead
Free Kick	Lead
Throw-in	Official responsible for ruling on the legality of the throw.

### **POST GAME DUTIES:**

1. After verifying the score, leave the field together immediately.
2. Do not seek out coaches, players or anyone else nor allow anyone in the dressing room.
3. Do not make statements to the media or anyone else.
4. File necessary game reports immediately.

# DIAGONAL-OFFICIATING SYSTEM

The diagonal system utilizes one referee and two qualified assistant referees. Referee's duties prior to and during the game are as written for the head referee in the dual-officiating system within this rules book.

It is important that the three officials meet before each game. The head referee must indicate clearly how each assistant referee may best help. The referee is required to meet with timer, scorer, coaches, ball holders and team captains to remind them of their responsibilities and answer questions. The referee will speak with both team captains and coaches prior to the game about good sportsmanship.

The assistant referees are assistants to the referee, their duties (subject to the decision of the referee) shall be to indicate when players are to be penalized for being offside, the ball is out-of-play and which team is entitled to the throw-in, corner kick or goal kick. They shall also assist the referee in controlling the game in accordance with the rules. The assistant referees shall be equipped with flags and should normally remain outside the field of play.

**NOTE:** A fourth official may be assigned to a game in order to assist the referee and two assistant referees and to ensure continuity in case one of the officials is not able to continue. Recommended duties of the fourth official can be found at the end of this eBook under "Sample Fourth Official Duties". When a fourth official is assigned, the tournament authority will clearly state the officiating position to be assumed by the fourth official in the event a referee or assistant referee is unable to officiate. The fourth official is under the jurisdiction of the referee and performs those duties assigned by the referee. The fourth official's normal station is at the table inside the officials' area during play.

The referee is to use the imaginary diagonal line as drawn on the field in Diagram 1 (below) as a base for positioning.

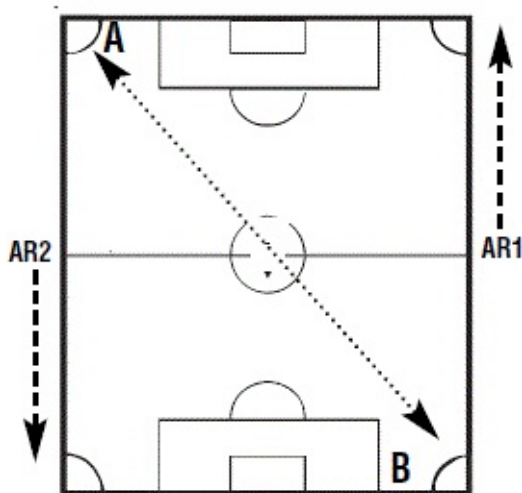


Diagram 1

## Start of Game:



Diagram 2

Position of referee at kickoff – R  
Position of assistant referees (AR1) and (AR2)  
Players – • (defense) X (offense)  
Diagonal followed by referee A – B  
The referee moves to diagonal along line according to play.

## Development of Play

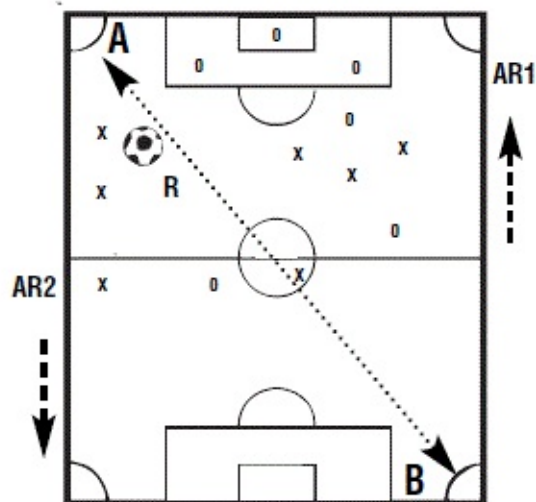


Diagram 3

Ball – •  
Ball moves out to left touchline;  
Referee (R) moves slightly off diagonal to be near play;  
Assistant referee (AR1) moves even with the second to last defender;  
Assistant referee (AR2) moves in position for clearance of the ball and possible counter-attack (even with second to last defender).

The assistant referees should keep in line with the second to last defender on his/her half of the field or the ball, whichever is most forward. Assistant referees have the responsibility for the touchline they are on and the goal line they are moving towards. The positions in Diagram 1 (above) may be just the opposite if preferred by the referee.

## Corner Kick

The referee (R) moves along the line shown; assistant referee (AR1) position will vary depending on whether the kick is taken from the assistant referee or referee corner. On a kick taken from the referee corner, the assistant referee will take a position in line with the goal line and behind the flag to observe if the kick goes over the goal line. On kicks taken from the assistant referee side, the assistant referee will take a position in line with the goal line and several yards behind the flag to make sure the ball is properly played and that opposing players are 10 yards from the ball. Once the kick is taken, move to stay in line with the next to last defender. AR2 will stay in line with the next to last defender and be ready for ball clearance and possible counter attack.



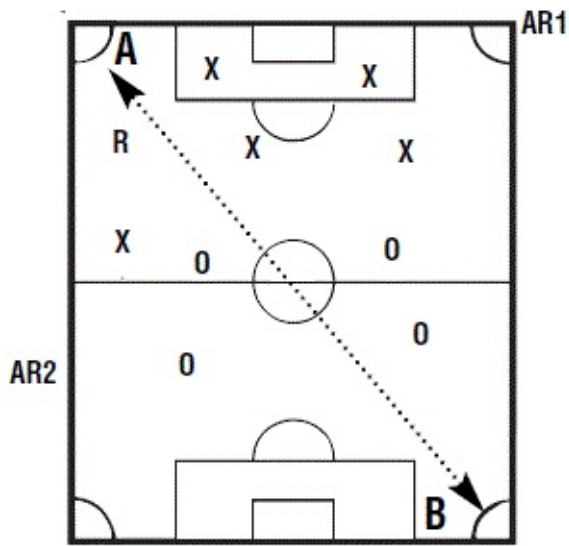


Diagram 4

**The Counterattack:** (Following a corner kick)

The referee (R) moves to regain correct position along the diagonal path

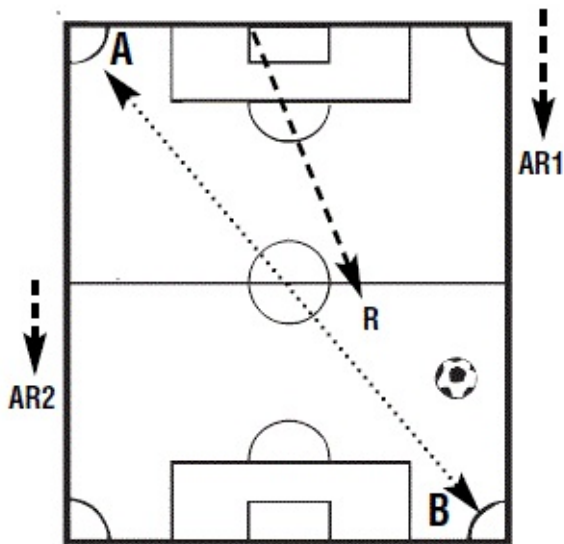


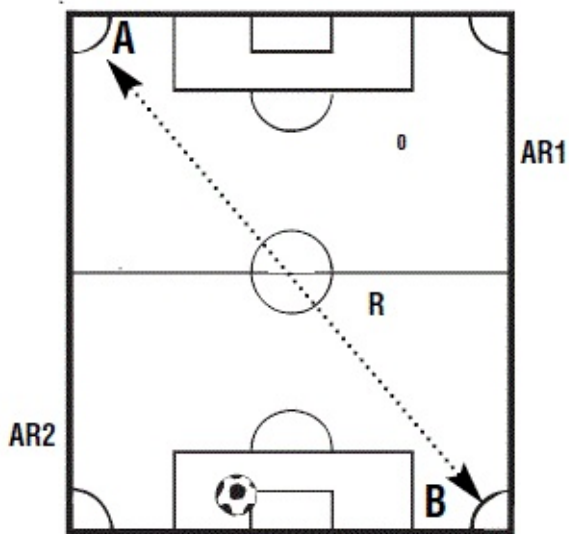
Diagram 5

If the corner kick was taken on the Assistant referee (AR1) end, the referee (R) moves to regain the correct position along the diagonal path. Assistant referee (AR1) regains position with the next to last defender. Assistant Referee (AR2) maintains position with the next to last defender and watches for

infringements and to indicate decisions until the referee regains the proper position.

### **Goal Kick:**

The referee (R) is in midfield adjacent to the central point of field.



**Diagram 6**

Assistant referee (AR2) exercises watch over the goal kick, positioned in line with the penalty area after checking the placement of the ball. He/she shall see that the ball leaves the penalty area before it is played a second time. Assistant referee (AR1) moves in a position in line with the second to last defender pending a possible attack by the team taking the goal kick.

### **Free Kick at the Halfway Line:**

Players line up for the kick, O (defense) and X (offense).

The referee (R) and assistant referee (AR1) move in respective diagonal positions, even with players and able to judge accurately any offside or foul play.

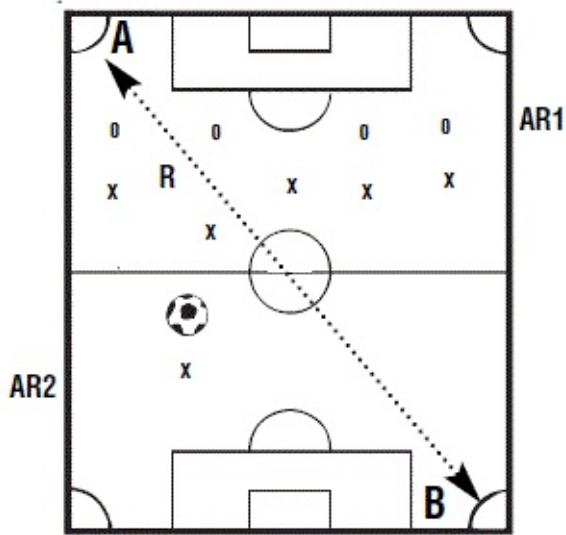


Diagram 7

Assistant referee (AR2) sees that the kick is taken from the correct position and is also in position for a possible counterattack.

### Free Kick Near Goal:

Players line up, X (offense) and O (defense) for the free kick. The referee (R) takes position just off the diagonal being placed accurately to judge offside.

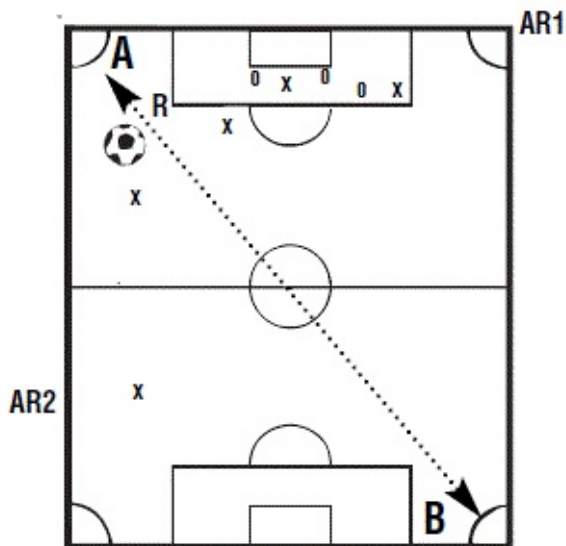


Diagram 8

Assistant referee (AR1) is more advanced but can still watch for offside and fouls and is also in a position to see if the whole ball crosses the goal line in the event of a direct shot. At the discretion of the referee, the positions of the referee (R) and the assistant referee (AR) may be reversed.

### Penalty Kick:

Players line up, X (offense) and • (defense) except for the goalkeeper and the kicker as shown outside the penalty area, behind the penalty mark, and at least 10 yards from the ball - the goalkeeper is on the goal line. The referee (R) is in a position to see that the kick is properly taken, encroachment doesn't take place and the goalkeeper doesn't come off the line by stepping or lunging forward before the kick. Assistant referee (AR1) moves in position so as to be able to note if the goalkeeper comes off the line by stepping or lunging forward before the kick, and the whole ball crosses the goal line. Assistant referee (AR2) is in a position should the goalkeeper save a goal and start a counterattack.

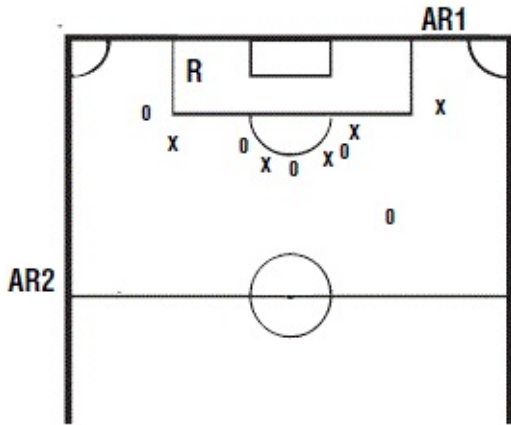


Diagram 9

### Throw-In:

The referee (R) crosses from the diagonal to the center of the field, or further, in order to be closer to play. Assistant referee (AR1) takes a position in line with the second to last defender. Assistant referee (AR2) takes a position in line with the second to last defender for possible counterattack.

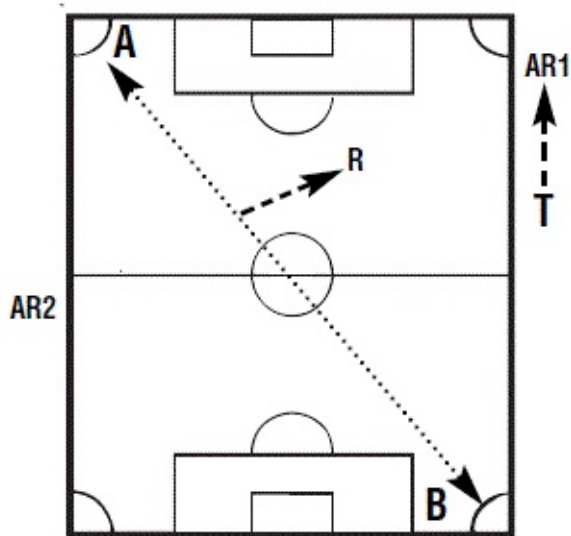


Diagram 10

# DOUBLE-DUAL SYSTEM (DDS)

(A Three-Referee, Three-Whistle System)\*

1. Three qualified referees work together as a team to manage the game.
2. All three function on the field:
  - (a). Can move on and off the field, as needed
  - (b). Stay close to play and players
3. Equally share in control:
  - (a). A decision by any one is valid
  - (b). All record misconduct to assure completeness
4. Concentrate attention in specific areas:
  - (a). Where patterns make observation most effective
  - (b). All responsible for any violations

A fourth official may be assigned to a game in order to assist the referee and two side referees and to ensure continuity in case one of the officials is not able to continue. Recommended duties of the fourth official can be found at the end of this eBook under "Sample Fourth Official Duties". When a fourth official is assigned, the tournament authority will clearly state the officiating position to be assumed by the fourth official in the event that one of the three referees is unable to officiate. The fourth official is under the jurisdiction of the center referee and performs those duties assigned by the center referee. The fourth official's normal station is at the table inside the official's area during play.

## Referee Responsible for Managing Restart and Second Whistle When Required

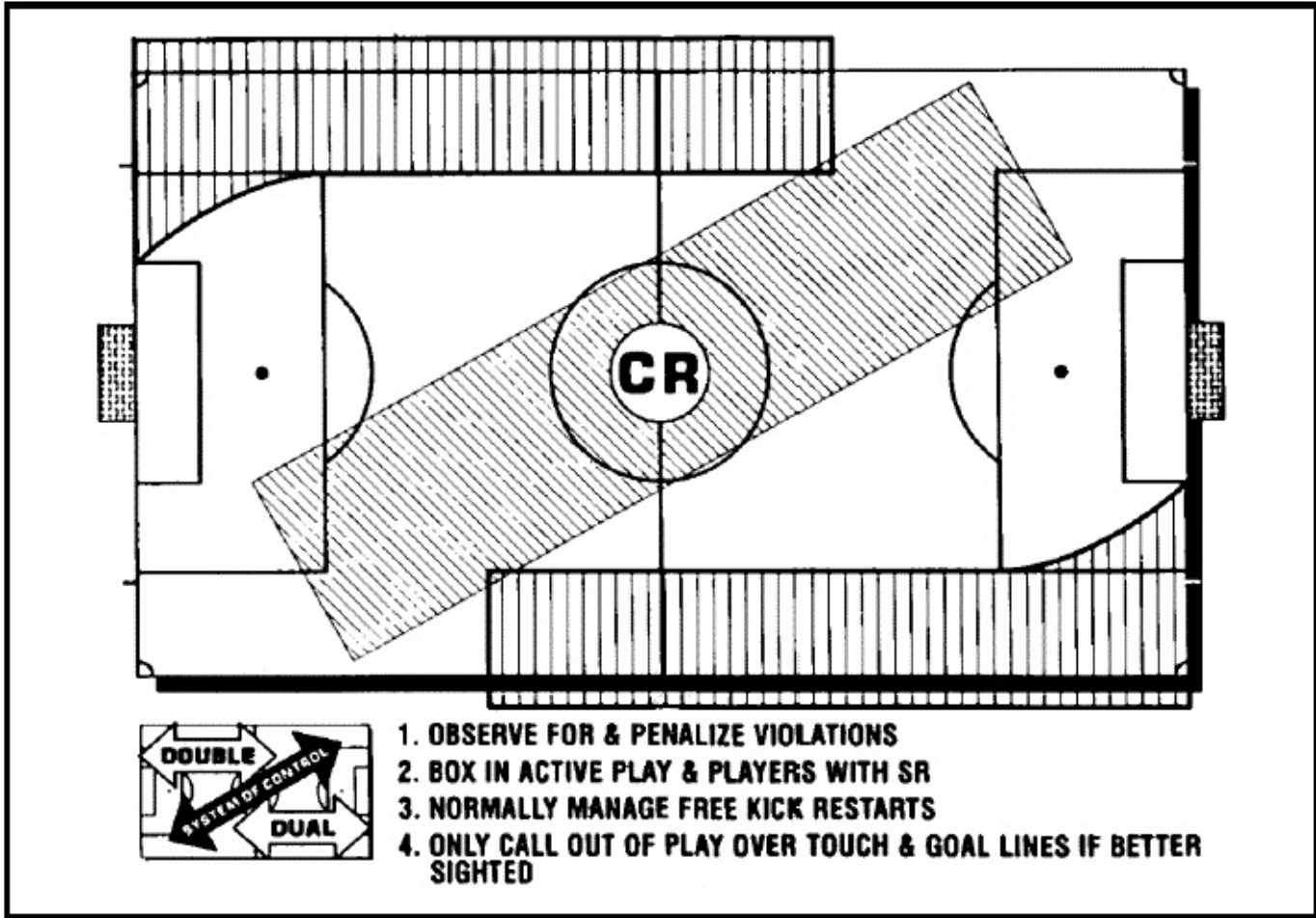
### Restart

### Referee

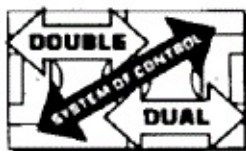
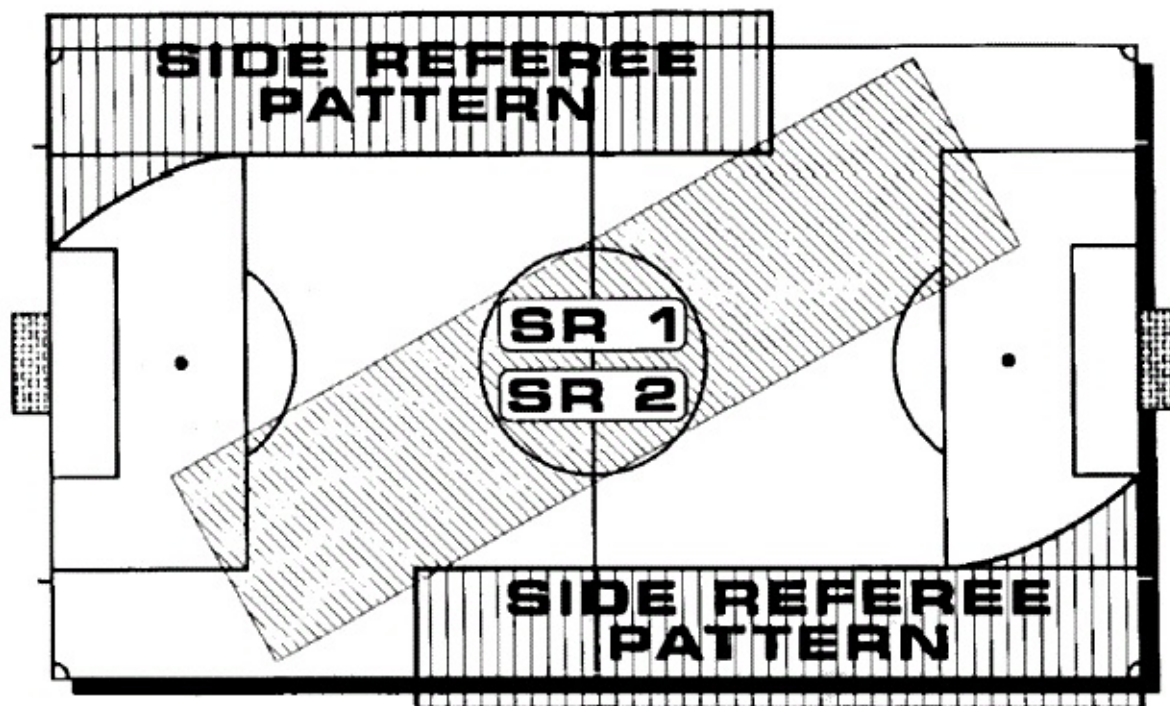
- |                      |                                                                                             |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. The Start of Play | 1. Center Referee                                                                           |
| 2. Free Kicks        | 2. Center Referee,<br><i>except if deep within<br/>defensive end, then<br/>Side Referee</i> |

- 3. Offside                    3. Center Referee
- 4. Substitution            4. As Per Stoppage
- 5. Corner Kick            5. Side Referee (*Near Corner*)  
Center Referee (*Far Corner*)
- 6. Goal Kick              6. Center Referee
- 7. Penalty Kick          7. Center Referee
- 8. Throw In                8. Side Referee
- 9. Drop Ball               9. Center Referee

\* In 1973, Harris and Harris, in the book "Fair or Foul" indicates that Joe Bonchonsky of Torrance, California devised the "three whistle" system of officiating to minimize misconducts in a tournament. Walter F. Ersing, Ph.D. coined the term in the Fall 1996 issue of the NFHS Officials' Quarterly. Diagrams and information about Double-Dual System is being reprinted with the permission of National Intercollegiate Soccer Officials Association (NISOA)



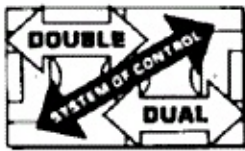
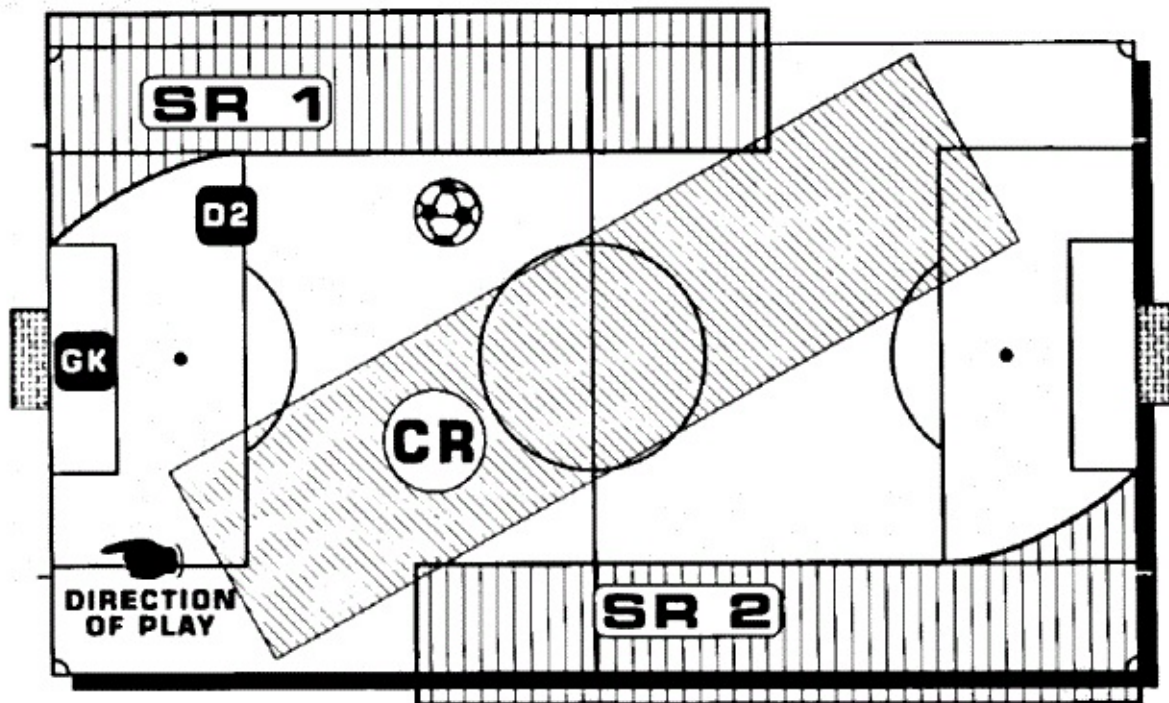




1. BOX IN PLAY & PLAYERS WITH OTHER SR
2. BOX IN ACTIVE PLAY & PLAYERS WITH CR
3. DETERMINE OFFSIDE VIOLATIONS
4. PENALIZE FOULS & VIOLATIONS
5. AWARD RESTARTS FOR OUT OF PLAY OVER TOUCH & GOAL LINES

## **SET POSITIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. **MANAGING FREE KICKS**
2. **OFFSIDE**
3. **THE SCORING OF A GOAL**
4. **SUBSTITUTION**
5. **THE CORNER KICK**
6. **THE GOAL KICK**
7. **THE PENALTY KICK**
8. **THE THROW IN**



## MANAGING FREE KICKS

**CR**

1. MOVE IN LINE WITH BALL
2. OVERSEE KICK
3. MOVE OFF PATTERN, IF NEEDED

**SR 1**

**SR 2**

1. MOVE AHEAD OF BALL
2. COVER ATTACK, OFFSIDE, VIOLATIONS
3. MOVE OFF PATTERN, IF NEEDED

## FREE KICKS NEAR GOAL

1. DISCUSS & AGREE AREAS AT PREGAME BRIEFING

**SR 2**

2. MOVE QUICKLY TO GOAL LINE POSITION
3. OBSERVE FOR GOAL, BALL OVER LINE, VIOLATIONS

**CR**

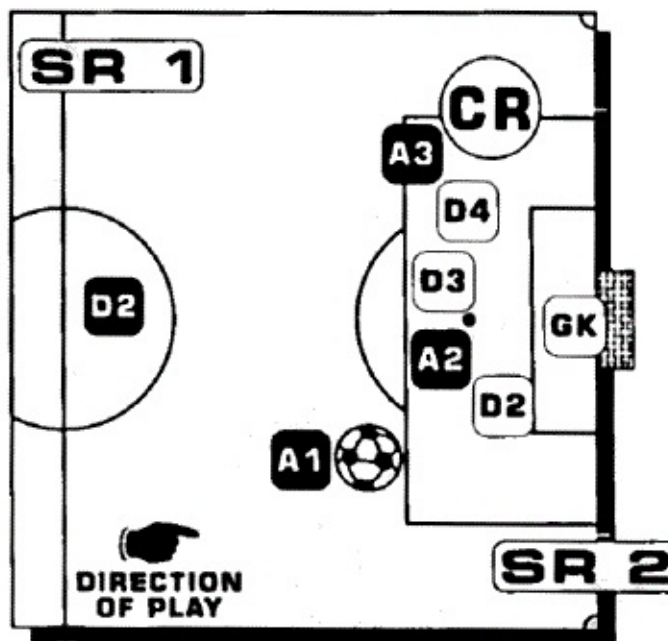
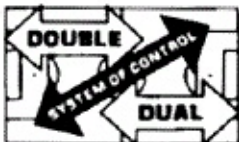
4. OBSERVE FOR OFFSIDE, VIOLATIONS

**SR 1**

5. OBSERVE FOR VIOLATIONS & WATCH FOR QUICK COUNTER ATTACK

**ALL**

6. RECOVER POSITION QUICKLY IF PLAY MOVES BACK UP FIELD





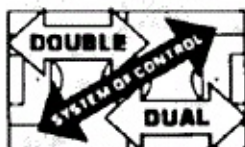
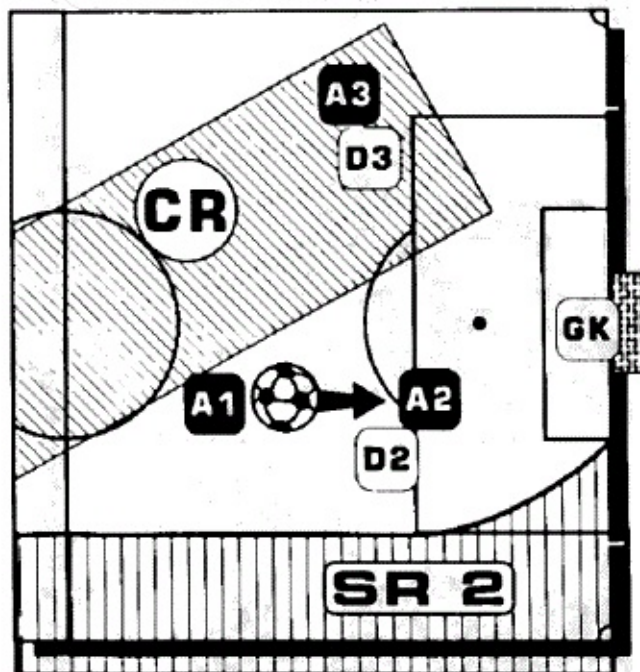
# OFFSIDE

**SR**

1. STOP MOVING - EMPHASISE PROPER POSITION
2. WHISTLE FOR VIOLATION, SIGNAL
3. INDICATE POSITION FOR RESTART
4. MOVE QUICKLY TO POSITION FOR RESTART

**CR**

5. MANAGE THE RESTART, AS NEEDED



# SCORING OF A GOAL

**BR 1**

1. EYE CONTACT WITH CR TO QUICKLY CONFIRM GOAL
2. SIGNAL FOR CLOCK TO STOP
3. INDICATE FOR GOAL BY MOVING TO KICKOFF POSITION

**CR**

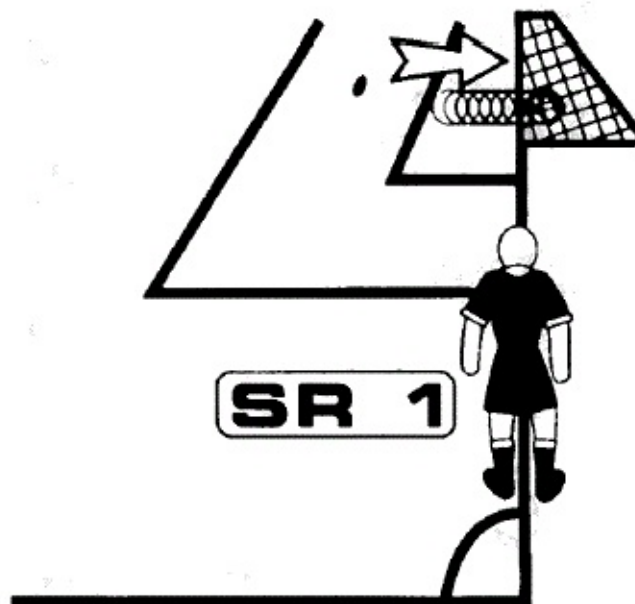
4. CONFIRM GOAL BY MOVING TO KICKOFF POSITION
5. RECORD GOAL SCORER

**BR 2**

6. RECORD GOAL

**NEAREST REFEREE**

7. NOTIFY SCORKEEPER



# SUBSTITUTION

## OFFICIAL TIMER SIGNALS FOR SUBSTITUTION OR

IF TIME IS KEPT ON THE FIELD

### CR, SR1, SR2

1. DISCUSS AT PREGAME BRIEFING
2. NOTIFY COACHES HOW TO REQUEST SUBSTITUTION

### SR NEAREST BENCH

3. SIGNAL FOR STOPPAGE
4. WHISTLE FOR RESTART WHEN COMPLETED

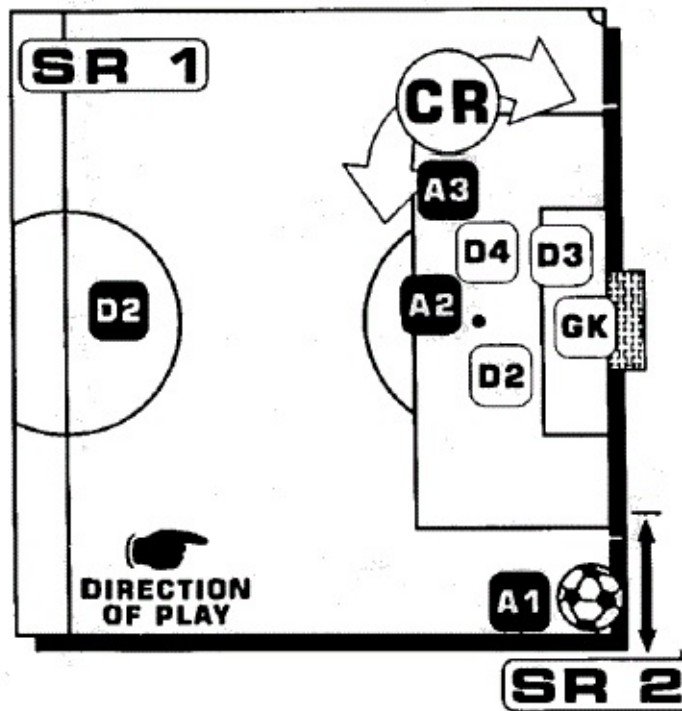
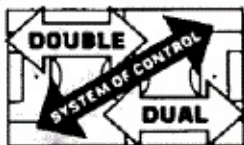
# THE CORNER KICK

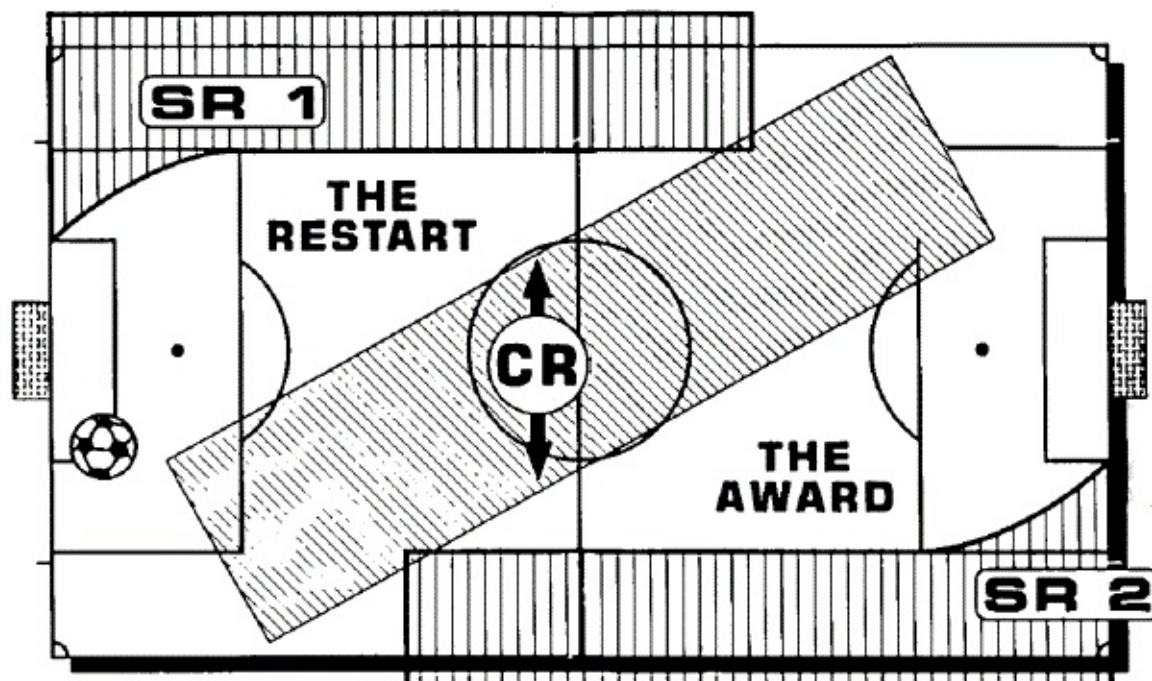
**CR SR 2**  
1. INDICATE & AWARD (USUALLY SR)

**SR 2**  
2. MOVE TO CORNER (FLEXIBLE POSITION)

**CR**  
3. MOVE TO END OF PATTERN (FLEXIBLE)

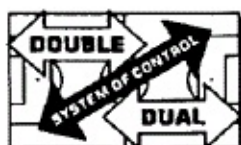
**SR 1**  
4. WATCH WHOLE FIELD & PREPARE FOR QUICK COUNTER ATTACK





## THE GOAL KICK

1. SR USUALLY INDICATES
2. CR INDICATES IF BETTER SIGHTED
3. ONE REFEREE INDICATES, OTHER CONFIRMS
4. EYE CONTACT IMPORTANT
5. CR WHISTLES, IF NEEDED



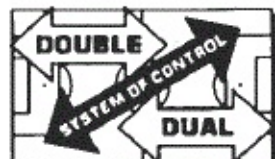
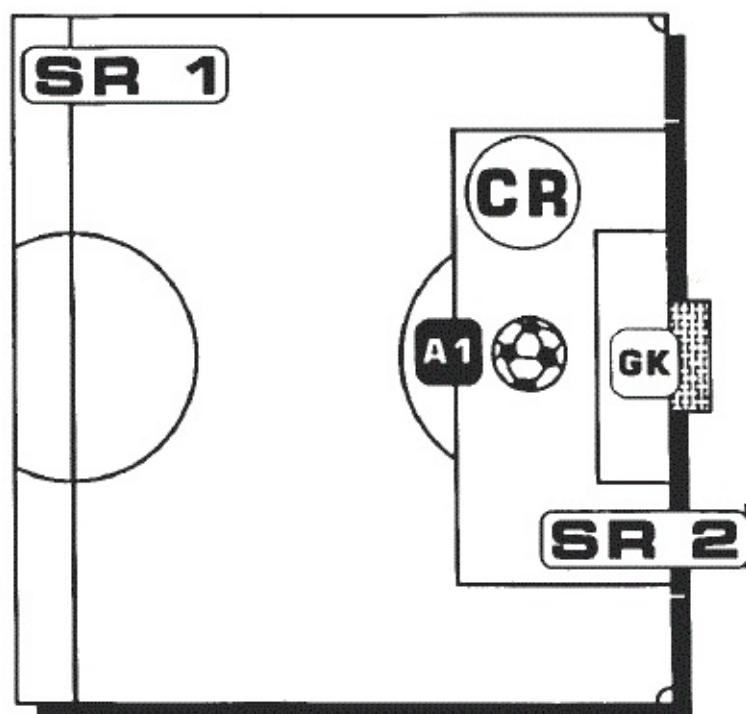
## THE PENALTY KICK

### THE AWARD

1. REFEREE WHO OBSERVES WHISTLES
2. SIGNALS TO STOP THE CLOCK
3. QUICKLY TO POSITION

### THE RESTART

4. CR WHISTLES
5. CR OBSERVES KICKER, ENCROACHMENT, GOALKEEPER MOVEMENT
6. SR 2 OBSERVES FOR GOAL, GOALKEEPER MOVEMENT, ENCROACHMENT
7. SR 1 OBSERVES WHOLE FIELD & PREPARES FOR QUICK COUNTER ATTACK IN THE EVENT OF A SAVE BY THE GOALKEEPER





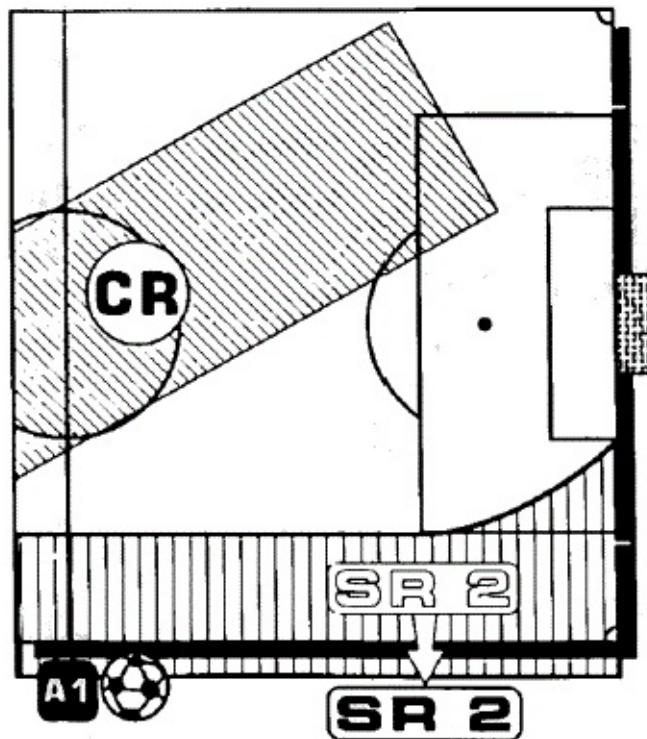
# THROW - IN

## THE AWARD

1. SR NORMALLY INDICATES

## THE RESTART

2. CR & SR IN NORMAL PATTERNS
3. IF PROBLEM, NEAREST REFEREE ATTENDS
4. CR OBSERVES FOR CORRECT SPOT, HAND FAULTS
5. SR OBSERVES FOR FOOT FAULTS, BALL ENTERING PLAY
6. SR WHISTLES, IF NEEDED



# **SAMPLE FOURTH OFFICIAL DUTIES**

Individual state high school associations may adopt this or other fourth official duties. Unless otherwise stated, the rules of the game apply.

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **General**

1. Is under the jurisdiction of the referee and performs any duties which the referee requests which do not detract from the responsibility of the referee.
2. Serves as a point of contact between the referee, team and game or tournament personnel other than players, substitutes, and team officials.
3. Resolves matters in the team and official areas and only requests the referee's assistance for final resolution of any situation.
4. Employs less intrusive actions when a problem situation may be resolved without creating greater tension, conflict and confusion.
5. Involves coach and/or team officials in identifying and preventing unacceptable behavior within the team areas and solicits assistance when necessary to correct problem situations.

### **Pre-game**

1. Participates in the pre-game conference with the other officials.
2. Obtains game balls and assists the referee in checking the balls.
3. Assists referee in the pre-game conference with scorer, timer and ball holders.
4. Prepared to serve as assistant or side referee as needed and in accordance with the Rules of the Game.
5. Performs final check of team and official areas, equipment and supplies and the presence of authorized individuals on the team roster.
6. Responds to eye contact with the referee to indicate that the official area, team area, substitutes and

team officials are in order.

7. Stands in front of the scorer's table if used or several yards behind the mid-line.

### **During the game**

1. Remains at the designated location unless performing a specific duty.
2. Remains standing throughout the match unless directed otherwise by the referee during the pre-game conference.
3. Maintains record of substitutions, goals scored, cards displayed for misconduct, injuries and incidents outside the vision of the referee and assistant referees.
4. Substitutions
  - a. Confirms substitute is listed on the official roster.
  - b. Checks to make certain that each substitute is legally and properly equipped.
  - c. Stands at halfway line with substitute slightly behind and on team area side. If both teams are substituting, keeps the substitutes on their respective team area sides.
  - d. Keeps substitute from entering field until beckoned by the referee or after a goal, between periods, or when a player is injured and removed from the field.
  - e. Records time and number of player entering and leaving the field of play.
5. Notifies the referee or assistant referee if a player or substitute:
  - a. Has been cautioned or disqualified based on an incorrect identification.
  - b. Was not disqualified after receiving a second caution.
  - c. Committed violent conduct out of view for the referee and assistant referees.
6. Keeps both team areas under observation
7. Observes when a coach or other team official leaves the team area to give tactical instructions. Politely informs the coach to return to the team area.
8. Brings to attention of the coach of any instances of improper behavior by team officials in the team

area or substitutes.

9. Monitors and prevents the throwing of water containers onto the field or to players.
10. Observes the behavior of ball handlers and ensures that they follow pre-game instructions.
11. Monitors substitutes warming up to make sure that they do not interfere with official activities.
12. Timing

- a. Assist as the referee in keeping time of half time break.
- b. Informs the referee of any irregularities in the starting and stopping of the timing device.

### 13. Injuries

- a. Prevents team officials and others in team area from entering the field until beckoned by the referee.
- b. Monitors general behavior of persons in team areas to assist with match control.
- c. Is aware of referee instructing a player to leave the field due to bleeding or blood on the uniform. Does not permit player to return to the field until the referee's instructions have been completed and the blood on uniform corrected. Follows pre-game conference to notify the referee that the problem has been corrected and the player is ready to return, with the consent of the referee, at the next stoppage of play.

### 14. Goal Scored

- a. Records the time and any circumstances of all goals
- b. Checks both bench areas to ensure that non-players are not entering the field to participate in celebration.

### 15. Fouls

- a. Monitors team officials and substitutes on the bench in critical situations where they may attempt to enter the field.
- b. Observes for misconduct and makes eye contact with the referee and, when misconduct is observed and the referee seeks advice, assist as in indicating either a yellow card by placing

the hand over the badge or a red card by placing a hand on a back pocket of the shorts.

## 16. Penalty kick

- a. Records pertinent details of the event related to the penalty kick.
- b. Monitors team officials and substitutes on the bench in critical situations.

## 17. Misconduct

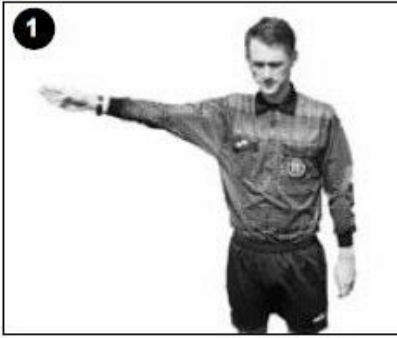
- a. Records pertinent information for any card displayed or for a team official.
- b. If a player is disqualified, ensures that the player conforms to the requirements of the Misconduct Penalty Chart, Utilizes home management to control a disqualified player if needed.
- c. Records information for cards issued for misconduct or for actions by the referee regarding irresponsible behavior by team officials.
- d. Records information on violent conduct not seen by the referee or assistant referees and brings this to the attention of the referee.



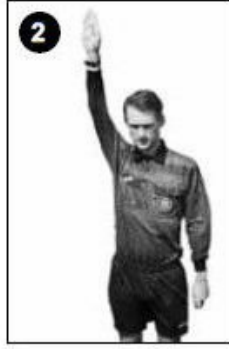
# NFHS Official Soccer Signals



NFHS Official Soccer Signals



**1**  
Direct free kick  
(points in direction of kick)



**2**  
Indirect free kick



**3-1**  
Play On



**4**  
Timeout



**5**  
(Wind-up to start clock)



**6**  
Penalty Kick  
(point to spot),  
Goal Kick  
(point to goal area)



**7**  
Caution/  
ejection



**8**  
Corner Kick  
(point to corner)



**9**  
Goal



# Assistant Referee Signals



## Throw-in

The flag should not be brought across the body. Appropriately, the flag should be switched to the appropriate hand.



## Substitution

Hold flag above head as shown until acknowledged by the referee, then return the flag to the side.



## Foul

1. Hold flag vertically until acknowledged by the referee; 2. wave flag; and 3. point the flag in the direction where the free kick will take place.



## Corner Kick

Assistant referee should point to the nearest corner.



## Goal Kick

Assistant referee should point to the goal area.



## Stop Play – Offside

Assistant referee should indicate he/she has seen an offside with the right arm.



## Offside Free Kick

When referee stops play, assistant referee indicates position on far side of the field.



## Offside Free Kick

When referee stops play, assistant referee indicates position near center of the field.



## Offside Free Kick

When referee stops play, assistant referee indicates position on near side of the field.

# Mission Statement

The National Federation of State High School Associations serves its members, related professional organizations and students by providing leadership for the administration of education-based interscholastic activities, which support academic achievement, good citizenship and equitable opportunity.

## We Believe

Participation in education-based interscholastic athletics and performing arts programs:

- Enriches each student's educational experience.
- Promotes student academic achievement.
- Develops good citizenship and healthy lifestyles.
- Fosters involvement of a diverse population.
- Promotes positive school/community relations.
- Is a privilege.

## The NFHS:

- Promotes and protects the defining values of education-based interscholastic activity programs in collaboration with its member state associations.
- Serves as the recognized national authority on education-based interscholastic activity programs.
- Serves as the pre-eminent authority on competition rules for education-based interscholastic activity programs.
- Promotes fair play and seeks to minimize risk for student participants through the adoption of national competition rules and delivery of programs and services.
- Delivers quality educational programs to serve the changing needs of state associations, school administrators, coaches, officials, students and parents.
- Provides professional development for NFHS member state association staff believing that cooperation among state associations advances their individual and collective well-being.

# Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness (be “knocked out”) to have suffered a concussion.

## Common Signs and Symptoms of Concussion Include:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall
- Headaches or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right" or is "feeling down"

## Suggested Concussion Management:

1. No athlete should return to play (RTP) or practice on the same day of a concussion.
2. Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional that day.
3. Any athlete with a concussion should be medically cleared by an appropriate health-care professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.
4. After medical clearance, RTP should follow a step-wise protocol with provisions for delayed RTP based upon return of any signs or symptoms at rest, while doing school work or with physical activity.

For further details please see the “NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion” at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

Revised and Approved October 2013



# Equipment Guidelines

1. Each NFHS sports rules committee is responsible for recommending the official playing rules to the NFHS Board of Directors for adoption. The committee is not responsible for testing or approving playing equipment for use in interscholastic sports. Equipment manufacturers have undertaken the responsibility for the development of playing equipment that meets the specifications established by the committee. The NFHS urges manufacturers to work with the various independent testing agencies to ensure the production of safe products. Neither the NFHS nor the applicable NFHS sport rules committee certifies the safety of any sport equipment. Only equipment that meets the dimensions and specifications in the NFHS sport rules may be used in interscholastic competition. While the committee does not regulate the development of new equipment and does not set technical or scientific standards for testing equipment, the committee may, from time to time, provide manufacturers with guidance as to the equipment-performance levels it considers consistent with the integrity of the game. The committee reserves the right to intercede to protect and maintain that integrity.

2. Each NFHS sport rules committee suggests that manufacturers planning innovative changes in sports equipment submit the equipment to the applicable NFHS sport rules committee for review before production.

# General Guidelines for Sports Hygiene, Skin Infections and Communicable Diseases

Proper precautions are needed to minimize the potential risk of the spread of communicable disease and skin infections during athletic competition. These conditions include skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment. The transmission of infections such as Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and Herpes Gladiatorum, blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis B, and other infectious diseases such as Influenza can often be greatly reduced through proper hygiene. The NFHS SMAC has outlined and listed below some general guidelines for the prevention of the spread of these diseases.

## Universal Hygiene Protocol for All Sports

- Shower immediately after every competition and practice.
- Wash all workout clothing after each practice.
- Wash personal gear (knee pads and braces) weekly.
- Do not share towels or personal hygiene products (razors) with others.
- Refrain from full body (chest, arms, abdomen) cosmetic shaving.

## Infectious Skin Diseases

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these infectious agents include:

- Athletes must be told to notify a parent or guardian, athletic trainer and coach of any skin lesion prior to any competition or practice. An appropriate health-care professional should evaluate any skin lesion before returning to competition.
- If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, all team members should be evaluated to help prevent the potential spread of the infection.
- Coaches, officials and appropriate health-care professionals must follow NFHS or state/local guidelines on “time until return to competition.” Participation with a covered lesion may be considered if in accordance with NFHS, state or local guidelines and the lesion is no longer contagious.

## Blood-Borne Infectious Diseases

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these agents include following Universal Precautions

such as:

- An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the activity (game or practice) until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to activity.
- Athletic trainers or other caregivers need to wear gloves and take other precautions to prevent blood or body fluid-splash from contaminating themselves or others.
- In the event of a blood or body fluid-splash, immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water.
- Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves when cleaning.
- Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and immediately evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.

## **Other Communicable Diseases**

Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include:

- Appropriate vaccination of athletes, coaches and staff as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
- During times of outbreaks, follow the guidelines set forth by the CDC as well as State and local Health Departments.

For more detailed information, refer to the “Blood-Borne Pathogens,” “Infectious Mononucleosis” and “Skin Conditions and Infections” sections contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

**Revised and Approved in October 2012**



# NFHS Guidelines on Handling Practices and Contests During Lightning or Thunder Disturbances

These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible or sharing duties for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school activities association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

## Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safe areas.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
  - a. When thunder within 30 seconds of a visible lightning strike, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for thirty minutes and take shelter immediately.
  - b. Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
  - c. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
4. Review annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel.
5. Inform student athletes of the lightning policy at start of season.

For more detailed information, refer to the "Lightning and Thunder Safety" section contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

**Revised and Approved January 2014**





National Federation of State  
High School Associations



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