The time has come...once again, in our continuing effort to 'go green', the traditional “Pre-Season Manual” is now posted ONLINE. Those taking the required State Rules Meeting online will be provided instructions and a direct link to download the manual to their computer. Those attending face-to-face meetings will be given instructions for downloading. This is also met with an attempt to separate the materials that are relevant to coaches from the information that is relevant strictly to officials.

Though our normal complement of ‘face to face meetings’ for officials exists, COACHES are required to complete the rules meeting strictly online. It is imperative they all receive the same consistent message across the board. This can best be accomplished by requiring all coaches to take the exact same meeting with the exact same presentation.

Our office continues to emphasize the need to keep the lines of communication open between coaches and officials. A major ‘plus’ of having joint meetings was certainly the interaction between officials and coaches at these meetings. Since coaches are required to conduct pre-season player/parent meetings at their schools, I encourage them to invite an official from their local association to address parents and players regarding the rules in an attempt to ‘see the game through an official’s eyes’. I encourage officials to do the same; invite a coach to speak at your local association meeting and help officials in your association see and understand the game ‘through the coaches’ eyes’. One thing remains constant – it takes everyone working together to continue the improvement of soccer in Ohio.

Emphasis with school administrators and coaches this year stresses the importance of Administrative Responsibility at contests. Though administrative attendance is not required for soccer (only football and basketball require an administrator’s presence), someone from the school MUST be the administrative oversight at a contest that oversees the safety of officials, takes responsibility for crowd actions and handles all weather and crisis situations. In many cases, especially at sub-varsity contests, that person may often be the coach himself/herself. This is being stressed to coaches and Athletic Directors.

Keep in mind that all questions surrounding officiating should be handled through Don Muenz, our Director of Development. I strongly encourage before you pick up the phone and dial up the OHSAA for a question to be answered, you do 3 things:

1. Consult the subject areas in this manual
2. Consult with your local association secretary
3. Check the Officiating Handbook, Rule Book or other materials provided by the NFHS and the Officiating page at www.ohsaa.org

All rules governing OHSAA soccer stem from the National Federation (NFHS) and the OHSAA. The NFHS Rules are specific to the playing rules while OHSAA Sports Regulations (and Bylaws) govern specific administrative rules to Ohio. No coach, administrator, or official has the authority to modify or set aside these rules. This includes such things as ‘game ending procedures’ detailed in this manual.

This is wishing each of you a successful soccer season. I commend you for your time and effort working with the student-athletes in Ohio to support the great sport of soccer.

Respectfully,

[Signature]

Kathleen Coughlin, CAA
Director of Sport Management

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**The OHSAA’s Mission Statement**

The Ohio High School Athletic Association’s mission is to regulate and administer interscholastic athletic competition in a fair and equitable manner while promoting the values of participation in interscholastic athletics as an integral part of a student's educational experience. The OHSAA represents its member schools by recognizing and promoting academics, the safety of participants, good citizenship and lifelong values as the foundation of interscholastic athletics.
**Communicating with the OHSAA**

It is understandable with 820+ schools in Ohio and the number of soccer teams in Ohio from Junior High to High School, the volume of calls and emails coming into the office is quite high and nearly impossible to answer at peak times. Most questions can and should be answered by the Athletic Director at your school. To make our communication as efficient as possible, we ask school ADMINISTRATORS (including your Athletic Director) to communicate directly with us…therefore our policy of not answering calls by parents and community members. One can only imagine the impossibility of that.

Additionally, every effort is being made to provide useful information via our website. I encourage you to check the website (both the main page and soccer specific page) and additional information is provided in this manual regarding weekly informational items (Ohio Soccer Weekly) that should prove beneficial for coaches at all levels.

The Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association is also an excellent resource for coaches. I encourage your membership in that organization to help strengthen the great sport of soccer in Ohio.

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**Important Soccer Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1</td>
<td>Coaching &amp; Tryouts Begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2</td>
<td>Previews Permitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 16</td>
<td>First game permitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 6</td>
<td>Tournament Seed/Draw Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys: 2:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls: 3:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 7</td>
<td>Non-interscholastic Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 14–19</td>
<td>Sectional Tournaments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 21–26</td>
<td>District Tournaments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 29—Nov. 2</td>
<td>Regional Tournaments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 5–9</td>
<td>State Semi-Finals &amp; Finals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 9</td>
<td>Last date for Games</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**OHSAA Soccer Contact Information**

Kathleen Coughlin  Director of Sport Management  kcoughlin@ohsaa.org
Administers the sport of soccer and oversees tournament, writes Soccer Sports' Regulations, Soccer Tournament Regulations

Don Muenz  Director of Soccer Official Development  butsir@columbus.rr.com
Responsible for overseeing soccer officials in Ohio. Serves as liaison with NFHS and oversees the education and recruitment of soccer officials in Ohio.
Mandatory Rules Interpretation Meeting

Rules Interpretation Meeting are MANDATORY for all Officials and Head Coaches. If you are a coach and have an OHSAA Officials license, you will be required to complete both since the content is specific to each group.

How to Complete the Rules Interpretation Meeting Online

Coaches should access the online version by navigating to the OHSAA’s OFFICIATING web page (http://www.ohsaa.org/officials/default.htm). You will need your OFFICIALS PERMIT NUMBER to receive credit. Please note that all screens of the presentation must be viewed and any quizzes or surveys must be completed for attendance credit to be provided.

The ONLINE Rules Meeting link will be live on WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.

The last day for completion of the online version is 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 15 at 11:59 PM. On Friday, August 16, a $50.00 late fee is charged for access to the online version. The last day you can complete the online state meeting with a late fee is Tuesday, October 1 at 11:59 PM.

After completion:

1. Your Official’s myOHSAA profile will be updated to reflect your attendance.
2. Please do not call the OHSAA office for verification. Attendance WILL be reflected in the profile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7/23/2019</td>
<td>7:15</td>
<td>Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy (CVCA), Auditorium</td>
<td>Roy Miller, IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4687 Wyoga Lake Road, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44224</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/29/2019</td>
<td>7:15</td>
<td>Sylvania Southview High School, Commons</td>
<td>Barbara Nye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7225 Sylvania Avenue, Sylvania, OH 43560</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/31/2019</td>
<td>7:15</td>
<td>Cuyahoga Community College, Western Campus, Room G4 A/B</td>
<td>George Balasko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11000 West Pleasant Valley Road, Parma, OH 44130</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/1/2019</td>
<td>7:15</td>
<td>Ohio University—Zanesville Campus</td>
<td>Junior McCutcheon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elson Hall Auditorium, 1425 Newark Rd., Zanesville 43701</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/2/2019</td>
<td>7:15</td>
<td>Youngstown St. Univ., Beeghly Ctr., Rooms 114-115, One Univ. Plaza, Youngstown, OH 44555</td>
<td>Martin Milush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/5/2019</td>
<td>7:15</td>
<td>West Chester Lakota West High School</td>
<td>Michael Schuler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Auditorium, 8940 Union Center Blvd., West Chester, OH 45069</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/6/2019</td>
<td>7:15</td>
<td>Dublin Scioto High School, Performing Arts Center</td>
<td>Russell Annis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4000 Hard Road, Dublin, OH 43016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/7/2019</td>
<td>7:15</td>
<td>Lorain County Community College, Room HS-101</td>
<td>John Hunter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1005 N. Abbe Road, Elyria, OH 44035</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


By Don Muenz, Director of Soccer Officiating Development

Good day, everyone.
Following is a summary of major rules changes for the upcoming season along with Comments on the Rules and, hopefully) helpful examples.
New 3.4.3: “The clock shall be stopped when a substitute by the team in the lead is beckoned on the field in the final five minutes of the second period only.”

New 7.4.3: “The clock shall be stopped when a substitute by the team in the lead is beckoned onto the field in the final five minutes of the second period only.”

The new rules apply only to second half of regulation play, because our postseason overtimes are sudden victory.

When the leading team subs, the clock is stopped when the subs are beckoned on, and the clock restarts only after all subs are completed, a second whistle is given and the ball is properly put into play, 9.1.3.

The clock is stopped where the leading team and the trailing team both sub.

Examples:
A.) In the last five minutes of the second half, only the trailing team subs. The clock does not stop.
B.) In the last five minutes of the second half, only the leading team subs. The clock is stopped when the referee beckons on the sub and the clock restarts after the subs are completed, the referee gives a second whistle and the ball is properly put into play.
C.) In the last five minutes of the second half, both the leading team and the trailing team sub. The clock is stopped when the referee beckons on the sub and the clock restarts after all of the subs are completed, the referee gives a second whistle and the ball is properly put into play.

Because this new stoppage rule is part of “regular” timing, the Ohio Mercy Rule, 2019 OHSAA Soccer Regulation 10(A)(1.7), overrides it.

“Goal Differential/Running Clock – During any regular season or tournament contest, any time the score differential reaches 6 goals or more AFTER the first half of the contest, a running clock shall be used. After the 6-goal differential has been met but the score drops below 6 goals, the clock reverts to regular timing. The clock shall be stopped only for an injured player on the field or when there is any unusual delay deemed necessary by the officials.”

Where the Ohio Mercy Rule applies, there is no stoppage for subs in the final five minutes of the second half.

Amended 4.1.1(h): New for this year. The numbers of all players shall be of a solid, color contrasting with the jersey (or shorts or pants) and clearly visible.

Amended 4.2.2 Situation A: This play ruling has been amended to permit use of knotted prewrap for hair control or sweat prevention.
4.2.2 Situation A(c): “During pregame warm-up, the referee observes that (e) A6 is wearing knotted prewrap around the head. RULING: Legal in … (e) if worn to control the player’s hair or prevent sweat on the face.”

Amended 4.3 Improperly Equipped Players (18-1-1u)
“Cautions will not be issued for improperly equipped player(s).
If not immediately correctable, improperly equipped player(s) shall be instructed to leave the field of play when the ball next ceases to be in play. The player(s) may be replaced. The removed player(s), if not replaced, may re-enter at the next dead ball only after reporting to an official, who shall be satisfied the player’s equipment and uniform are in order. 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.”
18.1.1(t) “ILLEGALLY EQUIPPED – A player not wearing equipment required by rule or wearing an item/items not allowed by rule.”
18.1.1(u) “IMPROPERLY EQUIPPED – A player wearing legal equipment that is being worn incorrectly or becomes illegal during play.”
Explanation: Amendments expressly permit improperly equipped players to fix the defect on the field and remain in the match or to be replaced by a substitute from the bench or a substitute who has already reported in. A team with an improperly equipped player does not have to play shorthanded. It may elect to do so. Before an improperly equipped player returns to play, the player must be inspected by an official to confirm that the improper condition has been rectified.
Remember, no one is cautioned for improper equipment.

Amended 5.3.1(d): Referees may now use one or both hands in signaling advantage. This adopts the FIFA Law Amendment of a couple of years ago.
Amended 6.2.3(f): “The official timer shall: (f) signal the last two minutes of any period when applicable.”

**Explanation:** The official timer is to state OVER THE PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM that there are two minutes remaining in any half of regulation or overtime play. This is to be done vocally, NOT with a horn, whistle, or other noise-making device.

Amended 6.2.3(g): “The official timer shall: (g) signal the last two minutes before the end of the interval between the periods.”

**Explanation:** The official timer is to state OVER THE PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM that there are two minutes remaining in the interval. This is to be done vocally, NOT with a horn, whistle, or other noise-making device. This new requirement applies to the interval between halves of regulation play and the interval between the end of regulation play and the first half of overtime during the postseason tournament. It cannot apply to the interval between overtime periods, which is only two minutes long, or the interval between the end of the second overtime and kicks from the penalty mark, which is also two minutes.

**Rule 9 has undergone substantial change, resulting in its being closer to, but not quite the same as, FiFA’s Law VIII.2.**

- It is expected that players and coaches, going forward, will continue to exercise the highest degree of sporting behavior to which our high school game has long become accustomed.
- Let's look at it, piece by piece.

| 9-2-1 | 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; |
|       | c. following temporary suspension of play for an injury or unusual situation and a goalkeeper is not in possession of the ball |
|       | d. when simultaneous fouls of the same degree occur by opponents. |

**Rationale:** This rule changes the awarding of a free kick to a drop ball thereby possibly creating a scoring opportunity for a team underserving.

NEW 13.2.3(b) also comes into play. “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 13.1.4) … (b) for temporary suspension of play for an injury or unusual situation and the goalkeeper has possession of the ball (9.3); … ”

**Amended 9.3 is also pertinent:**

| 9-3 | In case of a temporary suspension due to injury or any unusual situation the game shall be started by a drop ball at the point where the ball was when the play was suspended (except as noted in 14-1-7), provided the ball was not in the goal area and not in the possession of the goalkeeper. 12-8-2 |
2019 Comments on the Rules: 9.2.1: “In situations where the play is temporarily suspended for an injury, play will now be resumed with a drop ball unless the goalkeeper was in possession of the ball at the time of the stoppage. This change eliminates the awarding of an indirect free kick to a team and prevents an otherwise undeserved potential goal-scoring opportunity.”

2019 Comments on the Rules: 9.3: “Consistent with changes made in Rule 9.2, this change eliminates the awarding of an indirect free kick when play is temporarily suspended due to an injury or other unusual situation. The only exception to this is when the goalkeeper is in possession of the ball at the time of the stoppage.”

Where the referee is required to stop play for an injury or any unusual situation, an indirect free kick will no longer be given to the team in possession, unless the goalkeeper possesses the ball with hands or like a field player, WITHIN THE GOALKEEPER’S OWN DEFENSIVE PENALTY AREA. Absent goalkeeper possession, there would be a dropped ball.

The goal of these amendments is to prevent the award of an “undeserved potential goal-scoring opportunity.” Limiting the award of an indirect free kick to the goalkeeper when in possession within their own defensive penalty area achieves that goal. Whether the goalkeeper possesses the ball as a goalkeeper or as a field player, both possessions within the penalty area are treated consistently and equally. Equal treatment prevents giving the goalkeeper’s team an indirect free kick outside of that penalty area, when the goalkeeper has pushed up on the attack or left her own penalty area. This interpretation also prevents award of a potentially contested dropped ball, an underserved potential goal-scoring opportunity for the attackers, where the goalkeeper possesses the ball as a field player within his own penalty area and play is stopped for an injury or other unusual situation. This latter instance becomes more important as goalkeepers’ foot skills continue to improve and their teammates increasingly pass the ball to them to avoid the high-pressure tactics of their opponents.

Okay, what is goalkeeper possession?

**With the hands:** 12.4.2(a) states in pertinent part: “Possession or control of the ball includes any time 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.” I would add that if the goalkeeper has the ball trapped with one or both hands against his/her body or that of a teammate (i.e., not a teammate’s body area subject to handling), the ground, the goal, or a referee, would also be possession. Trapping the ball against an opponent would not be possession.

**As a field player possesses the ball:** 18.1.1(ii): “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.” 18.1.1: “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).”

**Examples:**

(A) B5 kicks the ball back to her goalkeeper, who is within her own defensive goal area. While the ball is at the goalkeeper’s feet, ready for her to play it, the referee whistles play dead for a serious injury to A6, who is lying on the ground near the halfway line. Restart: Indirect free kick to the goalkeeper’s team from any spot on the lines describing the goal area or wholly within the goal area, 13.1.3.

(B) B5 shoots on goal and the goalkeeper catches the ball, holding it in his hands just outside of his own goal area. The referee whistles play dead for a serious injury to B6, who is lying on the ground near the halfway line. Restart: Indirect free kick for the goalkeeper’s team from the spot where the ball was when the whistle stopped play.

(C) B5 kicks the ball back to her goalkeeper, who is within her own defensive penalty area. The goalkeeper then dribbles beyond her penalty area. While the ball is at the goalkeeper’s feet, ready for her to play it, the referee whistles play dead for a serious injury to A6, who is lying on the ground near the halfway line. Restart: Indirect free kick for the goalkeeper’s team from the spot where the ball was when the whistle stopped play. Rationale: Though in possession of the ball, the goalkeeper was outside of her defensive penalty area.

(D) The ball is in Team A’s goal area, but no one is in possession when the referee stops play for an injury. Restart: A dropped ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line, nearest where the ball was when play was stopped. The goalkeeper may participate in the dropped ball.

(E) The ball is in Team B’s defensive penalty area (not the goal area). Team A is in possession when the referee stops play for a serious injury. Restart: A dropped ball from the spot where the ball was when play was whistled dead.

Summing up, where the goalkeeper, within his/her own defensive penalty area, is in possession of the ball, either as goalkeeper or as a field player, at the time that play is stopped for an injury or unusual situation, the goalkeeper’s team will be awarded an indirect free kick. At any other such stoppage, there will be a dropped ball.

**Amended 9.2.3 Number of participants at a dropped ball**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9-2-3</th>
<th>The ball is dropped by an official from waist level to the ground. Any number of players may contest a dropped ball (including the keepers); a referee cannot decide who may contest a dropped ball or its outcome.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Rationale:</strong> This addition helps to provide clarity in the application of this rule.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any number, from one to twenty-two, may participate, but may not interfere with, the dropped ball process. The referee may not decide who takes part in the dropped ball or determine the outcome of a dropped ball.
2019 Comments on the Rules: 9.2.3: “This change clarifies the procedure followed when resuming play through a dropped ball. It allows any number of players to take part in the dropped ball (including only one player) and specifically states the referee cannot decide who may take part in the dropped ball.”

**New 9.2.6:** a dropped ball is an indirect restart and must be touched by two players before a goal can be scored.

**NEW**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9-2-6</th>
<th>ART. 6 . . . If a dropped ball enters the goal without touching at least two players, play is restarted with a goal kick if it enters the opponent’s goal or a corner kick if it enters the team’s own goal.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Rationale:** This addition helps to avoid confusion and allow the rule to be more equitable under the circumstances.

**NEW 10.1.3:** “A goal MAY NOT be scored directly from a/an: … (g) dropped ball.”

The new rule mirrors FIFA Law VIII.2.

**Examples:**

(A) A9 and B4 participate in a dropped ball. A9 dribbles twice and kicks the ball directly into Team B’s defensive goal. Restart: Goal kick. Two players did not touch the ball.

(B) A9 and B4 participate in a dropped ball. B4 touches the ball. A9 then kicks the ball directly into Team B’s defensive goal. Restart: Kickoff for Team B. The goal counts because two players touched the ball.

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**2019-20 NFHS SOCCER RULES CHANGES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-4-3 NEW</th>
<th>The clock shall be stopped when a substitute by the team in the lead is beckoned on the field in the final five minutes of the second period only. <strong>Rationale:</strong> Rule affected by change in 7-4-3.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-3</td>
<td>Improperly Equipped Players (18-1-1u) Cautions will not be issued for improperly equipped player(s). If not immediately correctable, improperly equipped player(s) shall be instructed to leave the field of play when the ball next ceases to be in play. The player(s) may be replaced. The removed player(s), if not replaced, may re-enter at the next dead ball only after reporting to an official, who shall be satisfied the player's equipment and uniform are in order. 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. <strong>Rationale:</strong> The change corrects an injustice. For the far more serious infringement of illegal equipment, the offending team does not play shorthanded. For the less serious offense of improper equipment, they are required to play shorthanded. The change addresses this inequity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-3-1d</td>
<td>The officials shall: (d) call out &quot;play on&quot; and, with an underswing of one or both arms, indicate a foul which was observed but shall go unpunaled 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. <strong>Rationale:</strong> This change permits the use of one arm to signal advantage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-4-3 NEW</td>
<td>The clock shall be stopped when a substitute by the team in the lead is beckoned onto the field in the final five minutes of the second period only. <strong>Rationale:</strong> Coaches in the lead will make multiple substitutions in the later stages of the match. This tactic is being used as a time-wasting ploy. Adding this rule will help the game to be decided by the players and not a coach who is wasting time when in the lead. These substitutes...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
are usually players from the far side of the field that take more time off the clock. This addition would stop this practice.

9-2-1 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;
c. following temporary suspension of play for an injury or unusual situation and a goalkeeper is not in possession of the ball
d. when simultaneous fouls of the same degree occur by opponents.
**Rationale:** This rule changes the awarding of a free kick to a drop ball thereby possibly creating a scoring opportunity for a team underserving.

9-2-3 The ball is dropped by an official from waist level to the ground. Any number of players may contest a dropped ball (including the goalkeepers); a referee cannot decide who may contest a dropped ball or its outcome.
**Rationale:** This addition helps to provide clarity in the application of this rule.

9-2-5 **NEW** ART. 5 . . . The ball shall be dropped again if it touches a player before it touches the ground or leaves the field of play after it touches the ground without touching a player.
**Rationale:** This addition helps to avoid confusion and allow the rule to be more equitable under the circumstances.

9-2-6 **NEW** ART. 6 . . . If a dropped ball enters the goal without touching at least two players, play is restarted with a goal kick if it enters the opponent’s goal or a corner kick if it enters the team’s own goal.
**Rationale:** This addition helps to avoid confusion and allow the rule to be more equitable under the circumstances.

9-3 In case of a temporary suspension due to injury or any unusual situation the game shall be started by a drop ball at the point where the ball was when the play was suspended (except as noted in 14-1-7), provided the ball was not in the goal area and not in the possession of the goalkeeper. 12-8-2
**Rationale:** This change will eliminate free kick opportunities that often create scoring opportunities that are not deserved.

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**2019-20 NFHS Comments on the Rules and Points of Emphasis**

**Soccer Comments on the Rules - 2019-20**

By NFHS on June 18, 2019

3-4-3 – The procedure for substitution change was necessary because of the change made to 7-4-3 when substitutes are made in the last five minutes of the contest.

4-3 – In the case of Improper Equipment, the offending player was previously required to leave the field and could not be replaced. Further, he could not come back onto the field of play until the next opportunity to substitute. With this change, the offending player now has the opportunity to immediately correct the issue without having to leave the field. If this is not possible, that player must still leave the field, but may be replaced. If the team chooses to play short (instead of replacing), the offending player may re-enter the game at the next stoppage so long as they have reported to an official who will ensure the issue has been corrected.
5-3-1-d – This rule change allows officials to use either one arm or both to signal advantage during the game.

7-4-3 – This change helps prevent potential time wasting tactics utilized at the end of the game. The clock will now be stopped in the last five minutes of the game any time the team in the lead makes a substitution.

9-2-1 – In situations where play is temporarily suspended for an injury or unusual situation, play will now be resumed with a drop ball unless the goalkeeper was in possession of the ball at the time of the stoppage. This change eliminates the awarding of an indirect free kick to a team and prevents an otherwise undeserved potential goal scoring opportunity.

9-2-3 – This change clarifies the procedure followed when resuming play through a dropped ball. It allows any number of players to take part in the dropped ball (including only one player) and specifically states the referee cannot decide who may take part in the dropped ball.

9-2 (5,6) – A goal may no longer be scored directly from a dropped ball until at least two players touch the ball. This change helps ensure equity when resuming play through the use of a dropped ball.

9-3 – Consistent with changes made in 9-2, this change eliminates the awarding of an indirect free kick when play is temporarily suspended due to an injury or other unusual situation. The only exception to this is when the goalkeeper is in possession of the ball at the time of the stoppage.

Soccer Points of Emphasis - 2019-20

By NFHS on June 18, 2019 soccer

1. Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) Injury Prevention: Injuries to the Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) are devastating to athletes at all levels of competition. An ACL tear requires surgery and results in 6 to 12 months of rehabilitation before return to sports. It also increases the risk of future knee osteoarthritis. The majority of ACL tears are noncontact injuries, occurring while cutting, pivoting, or landing from a jump. The remainder of the injuries result from a direct blow to the knee or leg.

ACL injuries are more common in girls’ soccer than any other high school sport. In soccer, girls are 3 times more likely to tear their ACL than boys. Boys’ soccer has the highest rate of ACL injuries of all non-collision boys’ sports. Given the significant short-term and long-term consequences of ACL injuries, a great deal of research has focused on strategies for injury prevention. Protective bracing does not minimize the risk of injury. In fact, we have no studies showing that “contact” ACL injuries can be prevented. However, we do know that noncontact injuries, the ones that result from cutting, pivoting, or jumping, can be minimized through the use of specific neuromuscular training programs.
The goal of such training programs is to teach athletes proper body mechanics in jumping, landing, and running. Through a series of warm-up drills, athletes can improve physical skills and decrease the risk of a noncontact ACL injury. The NFHS is now offering a free online course on "ACL Injury Prevention" on NFHSLearn at The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) strongly supports the implementation of this course in high school and middle school soccer programs in effort to decrease the risk of serious knee injuries.

2. Pre-game communication between the school administration and game officials: An authorized representative of the host school shall greet the officials upon their arrival. The host school principal, principal's designee or game administrator must indicate to the head official or center referee his/her location should a situation develop where his/her assistance is needed during a contest. The contest coaches should not serve as the principal's designee or game administrator. The expectation is that the principal’s designee or game administrator will take positive action to maintain an atmosphere of good sportsmanship within the spectator seating area.

3. Official’s communicating misconduct with coaches: NFHS Rule 5-3 states that game officials shall communicate the nature of misconduct to coaches, the scorer and other officials when a yellow/red card has been issued. This communication is a notification and not an explanation. It is not intended to be an opportunity for the coach to discuss or dissent the call. It is, however, an educational opportunity for the coach to address and/or correct the behavior of the carded individual. It is important to note that interscholastic athletics are an extension of the classroom and the behavior of all involved should reflect as such. Coaches and officials are expected to model good sportsmanship and to uphold the honor and dignity of their profession. This includes all interactions with student-athletes, other coaches and officials, school administration and spectators.

2019-20 NFHS RULES ERRATA

There were no errata for the “2019-20 NFHS/Referee/OHSAA Preseason Guide.”

Legend:
Bracketed, underlined and italicized material added by me.

p. 14, NF 2.2.4 [The following is the recently amended (June of 2019) version of the rule, not the rule contained in your 2019-20 NFHS Rules Book.] “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 number of 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 any number of opposing players subject to the provisions of Rule 9.2.2.”

Within NF 2.2.4, there are two references to dropping the ball between two opposing players, NF 3.43. and NF 7.4.3. The NFHS removed “two” from the rule in a correction included in their 2019-20 NFHS Rules PowerPoint. They left “opposing” in this rule, which is erroneous. It should read, among any number of players, as is set forth in the seminal rule, NF 9.2.3 and in NF 18.1.1(k), defining a “Drop Ball.”

p. 16, NF 3.3.3(b)(3) The rule is erroneous in view of Ohio Law and the OHSAA Concussion Regulation. Follow Ohio Law and the OHSAA Concussion Regulation.
If a player is removed for showing a “danger sign” [2019-20 NFHS Soccer Rules Book, p. 106.] or a sign, symptom or behavior consistent with concussion, that player may not return to play on the same day. Period.

p. 18, 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.” [The restart is correct, NF 9.2.1(c) and NF 9.3.]

Remove “No attendants are beckoned and,” because it is confusing. The beckoning or non-beckoning of attendants onto the field does not affect the goalkeeper’s or other players’ having to leave the field in this situation, NF 3.3.2(b)(2) and NF 3.3.2 SITUATION C. The beckoning hearkens to an earlier version of this rule no longer in force.

p. 18 NF 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 that same day until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.”

The ruling is erroneous in view of Ohio Law and the OHSAA Concussion Regulation. Follow Ohio Law and the OHSAA Concussion Regulation.

If a player is removed for showing a “danger sign” [2019-20 NFHS Soccer Rules Book, p. 106.] or a sign, symptom or behavior consistent with concussion, that player may not return to play on the same day. Period.

p. 18, NF 3.3.2 SITUATION G: “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.”

In this SITUATION, the reason that A2 must leave the field is that the referee had to stop the clock in order to beckon on assistance, not the fact that assistance was beckoned. NF 3.3.2(b)(1) and NF 3.3.2(b)(2).

p. 18 NF 3.3.2 SITUATION J: “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: Illegal. 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 not been met. COMMENT: An injured player leaving the field under his/her own power would not be considered a violation of 12.8.1(a).”

In the RULING, everything after “Illegal” is a non sequitur and should be disregarded. This was not a legal substitution opportunity for Team A. A2 could have returned during the next dead ball, NF 3.3.7. The COMMENT is valid, NF 9.1.1(e).

p. 20 NF 3.4.3: [The following is the recently amended (June of 2019) version of the rule, not the rule contained in your 2019-20 NFHS Rules Book.] “The clock shall be stopped when a substitute by the team in the lead is beckoned onto the field in the final five minutes of the
second period, in the fourth quarter (if the game is played in quarters) and in the second period of the overtime."

We play halves, not quarters, in Ohio, so the rule does not apply to “quarters,” only to “halves.” Ohio does not play regular season overtime. Because we play golden goal in our post-season tournament overtimes, the rule cannot apply to overtimes.

**p. 21 NF 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 kick awarded to the new goalkeeper’s team.”

The RULING’s restart is correct, provided that the goalkeeper had possession within his/her own defensive penalty area at the time of the whistle, rendering this SITUATION consistent with NF 9.2.1(c) and NF 9.3.

**p. 28, NF 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.”

“Head protector” has been removed from the rules. Instead, goalkeepers, like field players, may wear soft-padded headgear, NF 4.2.9. Substitute “soft-padded headgear” for “head protector” throughout this SITUATION. The RULINGS are otherwise correct.

**p. 34, NF 5.3.1 SITUATION B:** “Near the end of the first half, the visiting coach is cautioned by a referee for unsportsmanlike conduct [should be “unsporting” 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)”

Under the NFHS rules and 2019 OHSAA Gen. Sports Reg. 14.2, the match would be terminated. Under 2019 OHSAA Gen. Sports Reg. 14.2, the coach’s team would also forfeit, should the coach violate the ejection regulation. Additionally, under 2019 OHSAA Gen. Sports Reg. “If a coach is ejected/disqualified from a contest and no other coach or a person authorized by the Board of Education from that school is present (Bylaw 3-2-1), the contest shall be forfeited.”

Each forfeiture determination is that of OHSAA, not the referee, so just terminate the match for any violation of the above regulation and file a Game Report with all of the facts.

**p. 34 NF 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.”

The rationale for the ruling in (c) is faulty. The reason that the penalty kick is awarded is because the new foul was committed after the advantage was realized. The advantage was over and the “new” foul was committed.

p. 35, NF 6.2.3(a): “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.”

The rule should also include, specifically, “when a substitute by the team in the lead is beckoned onto the field in the final five minutes of the second period, in the fourth quarter (if the game is played in quarters) and in the second period of the overtime.” This renders NF 6.2.3(a) consistent with NF 3.4.3 and NF 7.4.3.

p. 36, NF 6.3.2(c): “The scorer shall: (c) record the number and reason for all players cautioned and disqualified;”

The official scorer should also record cautions and disqualifications for coaches and bench personnel, NF 12.8.1; NF 12.8.2 and NF 12.8.3.

p. 37, NF 7.1.4 SITUATION A: “A penalty kick had 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 goal by a teammate of the kicker. RULING: No goal is scored in (a), since the try [Are we really playing rugby here?] ends when the kick is taken, the ball does 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)” [See, also NF 7.1.4].

In (a), it is logically impossible that the penalty kick end as soon as it is taken, so that phrase must be ignored. In (a), the penalty kick can end when the ball goes out of bounds, its momentum is spent, or, after has been kicked, it is touched by any player other than the goalkeeper who is defending the penalty kick.

p. 38, NF 7.4.3: [The following is the recently amended (June of 2019) version of the rule, not the rule contained in your 2019-20 NFHS Rules Book.] “The clock shall be stopped when a substitute by the team in the lead is beckoned onto the field in the final five minutes of the second period, in the fourth quarter (if the game is played in quarters) and in the second period of the overtime.”

We play halves, not quarters, in Ohio, so the rule does not apply to “quarters,” only to “halves.” Ohio does not play regular season overtime. Because we play golden goal in our post-season tournament overtimes, the rule cannot apply to overtimes.

p. 40, NF 9.2.1(c): “The game is restarted with a drop ball: (c) following a temporary suspension of play for an injury or unusual situation and a goalkeeper is not in possession of the ball [within his/her own penalty area]; . . . .”

To be consistent with the rest of the rule and SITUATIONS, add “within his/her own penalty area” right after “of the ball.”

p. 41, 9.2.3 SITUATION: “The referee inadvertently sounds the whistle with the ball in the penalty area. To restart play, the referee drops the ball to the goalkeeper [who was in
possession when the whistle stopped play]. RULING: Legal. Any number of players may contest the dropped ball (including the goalkeeper). (9.2.3)”

**p. 41, NF 9.3:** “In case of a temporary suspension due to an injury or any unusual situation the game shall be restarted by a dropped ball at the point where the ball was when play was suspended (except as noted in 14.1.7 [and NF 2.2.4]) provided the ball was not in the goal area and not in the possession of the goalkeeper (12.8.2) [If the ball is in possession of the goalkeeper, and indirect free kick shall be awarded to the goalkeeper’s team at the point of possession when play was stopped, subject to NF 13.1.3]. (NF 13.2.3(b)) Should there not be clear possession by the goalkeeper within his/her own defensive penalty area 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.”

Several items here. The “(except as noted in 14.1.7)” language should also include NF 2.2.4, as that rule provides for a dropped ball at the spot where it was last played, NOT where the ball was when play was stopped. Imagine a shot on goal where the ball deflates on the way to goal. NF 2.2.4 requires a dropped ball where the shot was taken, while NF 9.3 would require a dropped ball where the ball was when the whistle stopped play. Next, the citation of “(12.8.2)” is inapposite. The citation should be “(12.4.2).” As to the final sentence of the rule, I have struck through improper language and added language (underlined) consistent with the rest of Rule 9.

**p. 41, NF 10.1.1:** “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 10.1.3(g)).”

The reference should be to NF 10.1.2(f), which permits a goal to be scored from a goalkeeper’s throw.

**p. 42, NF 11.1.4:** “Player is offside and penalized if, at the time the ball touches or is played by a teammate, the player in an offside position becomes involved in active play through: (a) interfering with play or with an opponent; or (b) seeking to gain an advantage by being in that position.”

The rule, as written, is incorrect. How about this? “A player, who is in an offside position when a teammate touches the ball, becomes offside by becoming involved in the active play by (a) interfering with play or with an opponent; or (b) gaining an advantage by being in the offside position.”

**p.43, NF 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 of the field. Therefore, A2 is not offside.”

Okay, let’s clean this one up. The Team B defender is not cautioned, because he/she left the field during the normal movement of play. See NF 12.3 Note, p. 58. Such a defender is deemed to still be on the field of play on that part of the boundary line where he/she left the field of play, here, the goal line. Therefore, A2 still had two defenders between herself and the goal and was in an onside position.

**p. 43, NF 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.”

The RULING should read, in pertinent part: “an offside foul and possible misconduct by the offside position player.” NF 12.8.1(f); NF 12.8.1(f)(4); NF 12.8.1(f)(7).

**p. 43, NF 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 [i.e., the halfway line] 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 A2 should *interfere with play or with an opponent or gain an advantage by being in the offside position*, then offside would be called.” This is how the RULING should read.

**p. 43, NF 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 to dribble through the defense and scores.” RULING: The players in the offside position did not *interfere with play or with an opponent and did not gain an advantage by being in the offside position*. The goal counts. This is how the RULING should read.

**p. 47, Diagram 5:** A1 crosses the ball forward from outside the penalty area. A2 runs from Position 1 and collects the ball as it lands at Position 2. A2 is offside since, at the moment the ball was played by A1, he/she was nearer to his/her opponents’ goal line *and the ball* than at least two of his/her opponents and *interfered with play.*

This is not an instance of “gaining an advantage by being in the offside position.” This is interfering with play.

**p. 50, Diagram 11:** This was a deliberate save by the goalkeeper.
p. 51, Diagram 14: A3 interfered with play by touching the ball.

p. 53, Diagram 17: [A player cannot be in offside position in his/her own defensive half of the field.]
This is **Diagram 21, p. 55**.

[A1 was in offside position in her attacking half when A2 played the ball. She completed the foul of offside in her own defensive half by interfering with play. See, also, Diagram 21, p. 55, below, and NF 11.1.4 SITUATION F, p. 44.]

p. 44, NF 11.1.4 SITUATION F: “A player in an offside position returns to his/her half of the field and receives the ball directly from his/her teammate. RULING: Offside.”
p. 59 NF, 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,” as Player B2 was not within playing distance of the ball at the time of the foul.

p. 60, NF 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 touching 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.” [The goalkeeper can never be given a handling foul within his/her own defensive penalty area, NF 12.2 Exception, p. 56. See, also, NF 12.7.3 SITUATION B, p. 61, and NF 12.7.4 SITUATION, p. 61]

p. 62, NF 12.8.1(g): “A player, coach or bench personnel shall be cautioned (yellow card) for: (g) Use of any tobacco products or electronic cigarettes at the game site during the period of the jurisdiction of the officials.”

2019 OHSAA Tobacco Reg. requires a disqualification, i.e., a straight red card: “TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL DRUGS AND STEROIDS

1. Tobacco

School participants (coaches, players, trainers, managers, statisticians, scorekeepers, cheerleaders, etc.) and contest officials in an athletic contest are prohibited from using any form of tobacco at the playing site of an interscholastic contest. Penalty for violation by school participants is disqualification from that contest. Violations by contest officials shall be reported to the OHSAA.”

p. 63, NF 12.8.3(c): “Coach responsibility: (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.”

Under NFHS rules and OHSAA General Sports Regulations, the match would be terminated. Under 2019 OHSAA General Sports Regulation 14.2, the coach’s team would also forfeit, but this is an OHSAA determination, not that of the referees. The head referee must file a Game Report.

p. 63, NF 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 [i.e., deliberate verbal tactics, NF 12.8.1(f)(4)] and restart with an indirect free kick by Team A at the spot of the infraction [misconduct].”

p. 64, NF 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.” [(a) = NF 12.8.1(f)(10); (b) = NF 12.8.1(f)(11) and (c) = NF 12.8.1(f)(12).]

p. 64, NF 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.” [In your Game Report, also note that this occurred during DOGSO.]

*The restart is wrong.* Take a look at Rule 13. NF 13.2.3(a) does not apply, as the goalkeeper left the field of play without permission and **did interfere** with play. NF 13.2.3(b) does not apply, as the goalkeeper was not in possession of the ball at the time of the stoppage and this was not an injury or unusual situation. NF 13.2.3(c) does not apply, as the misconduct did not occur within the team and coaching area, but behind the goal. NF 13.2.1(j) applies, as the goalkeeper did leave the field without permission and did interfere with play. The problem is where is the restart? The NFHS is silent on this point. Should we go with where FIFA would have the restart? We have a similar problem with NF 13.2.2(l), which requires an indirect free kick restart from the “point of the infraction,” where the game is stopped for misconduct of a player and no other restart takes precedence. Because the misconduct of the goalkeeper involves interference with play via violent conduct, the restart should be a penalty kick, if the misconduct occurred within the width of the penalty area. There would be a direct free kick from the goal line, if the misconduct occurred outside of the width of the penalty area, but behind the goal line. If it occurred beyond a touchline, the direct free kick would be from the nearest spot on the touchline. It is not perfect, is it?

**p.64, NF 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 12.8.2(d)(1) or 12.8.2(d)(2) respectively.” [References should be as follows: (a): NF 12.8.2(d)(3); (b) and (c): NF 12.8.2(d)(2).]

**p. 65, NF 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.” [Reference NF 12.8.2(f) and NF 18.1.1(gg).]

**p. 65, NF 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.” [Reference NF 5.1.2 and 12.8.2(f).]

**p. 66, NF 13.2.1(j):** “Direct free kicks are awarded and taken from the point of the infraction (Except as in 13.1.3 and 14.1.1): (j) if a player, coach or bench personnel enters or leaves the field of play without permission of an official and interferes with play or an official (12.8.1).” See discussion and citations under NF 12.8.2 SITUATION B, p. 64, above.
Under NF 13.2.1(j), if a player, coach or bench personnel enters the field without permission and interferes with play or an official, the restart is a direct free kick from the point of the infraction.

Under NF 13.2.1(j), if a player, coach or bench personnel leaves the field and interferes with play or an official, the restart is a direct free kick, but the point of the infraction is off of the field. I suggest in this case that we use FIFA Laws for ball placement, as the NFHS has provided no guidelines. This offense is serious and does not fit within the language of the other provisions of NF 13.

p. 67, NF 13.2.2(l): “Indirect free kicks are awarded and taken from the point of the infraction (except as in 13.1.3 and 13.1.4): (l) if the game is stopped for misconduct of a player, and no other restart takes precedence (12.8.1; 12.8.2; 12.8.3); … .”

If a player commits misconduct only, on the field, an indirect free kick is awarded to the nonoffending team at the point of the infraction subject to NF 13.1.3 and NF 13.1.4.

This is subject to the exception of misconduct only, committed within the team and official area, NF 13.2.3(c), which results in an indirect free kick from the spot of the ball. If a player commits misconduct only, off of the field, an indirect free kick is awarded to the nonoffending team at the point of the infraction. Where is that? Again, I suggest using FIFA Laws in the absence of guidance from the NFHS: touchline, goal line or goal area line, as appropriate.

p. 67, NF 13.2.3(a): “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 13.1.4) (a) if a player, coach or bench personnel enters or leaves the field of play without permission of an official and does not interfere with play or an official (12.8.1); … .”

If a player, coach or bench personnel enters the field without permission, but does not interfere with play or an official, the indirect free kick is to be taken from the spot of the ball when play was stopped.

If a player, coach or bench personnel leaves the field without permission, but does not interfere with play or an official, the indirect free kick is to be taken from the spot of the ball when play was stopped.

p. 67, NF 13.2.3(b): “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 13.1.4) (b) for temporary suspension of play for an injury or unusual situation and the goalkeeper is in possession of the ball (9.3); … .”

This is not a misconduct stoppage. It is for injury or other unusual situation, such as weather or power outage, etc.

p. 67, NF 13.2.3(c): “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 13.1.4) (c) if the game is stopped because of misconduct by a person in the team and coaching area (12.8.1; 12.8.2; 12.8.3)”

Where a player, coach or bench personnel commits misconduct within the team and coaching area [actually, the team area, NF 1.5.1 and NF 1.5.3] the restart is an indirect free kick to the nonoffending team from the spot of the ball when play was stopped.

Where a player, coach or bench personnel commits misconduct outside of the team and official area [actually, the team area, NF 1.5.1 and NF 1.5.3] the restart is governed by NF 13.2.1(j); NF 13.2.2(l) or NF 13.2.3(a).
**p. 68, NF 13.2.1 SITUATION B:** “Player A1 is attacking in Team B’s half of the field when a bench player from Team B steps on the field and trips Player A1. **RULING:** Direct free kick from the spot of the infraction and caution the player from Team B.”

Why not a caution for entering the field without permission, NF 12.8.1(a), and a subsequent caution for the trip as unsporting conduct, NF 12.8.1(f) and NF 12.8.2(c)? This could also be a caution for entering the field without permission, NF 12.8.1(a) and a disqualification for violent conduct, NF 12.8.2(a).

**p. 69, NF 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 all 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. (b) Legal goal.”

If, while stepping on the ball, A1 also applies a kicking motion to the ball, the ball has properly been put into play and the goal counts in (a).

NF 18.1.1(o) “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 had been kicked and moves. Simply tapping the top of the ball with the foot or stepping on the ball are not sufficient.” [End of pertinent quotation of rule.]

**p.69, NF 14.1.4:** “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. The player taking the penalty kick is permitted to use a stutter-step or a hesitation move provided there is no stopping and there is continuous movement toward the ball. Failure to kick the ball as specified shall be considered a violation by the attacking team and the appropriate penalties shall apply. Stutter-stepping is not an interruption in movement.”

How can there be a “hesitation” move that does not result in stopping “continuous movement to the ball”?

**p. 73, NF 16.1.3:** “Once spotted, the ball shall be kicked from the ground from any point within the goal area by a player of the defending team.”

NF 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 point to another.”

For twenty-five years, the NFHS has given inconsistent rulings to this play situation. Here they are:

**2006 NF Rules Test Part II, #76:** “A player places the ball and then moves it to the other side of the goal area on a goal kick to waste time. The referee shall stop play and caution the player. True.” [Emphasis supplied.]

**2006 NF Rules Test Part I, #96:** “The goalkeeper, in taking a goal kick, moves the ball from the right side of the goal area to the left side of the goal area. *If this is deemed a time-wasting ploy*, the referee shall stop the clock and caution the goalkeeper. True.” [Emphasis supplied.]

**2002 NF Rules Test Part II, #2:** “A player moves the ball twice on a goal kick to waste time. The referee shall stop the clock and caution the player. Correct.”

**1998 NF Rules Test, Part II, #82.:** “The goalkeeper starts to spot the ball on the right side of the goal area to take a goal kick when she changes her mind and moves the ball to the left side.
The referee cautions the goalkeeper for wasting time and orders the goal kick to be taken without further delay. True. 16.1.3 Sit. A.”

1993 SITUATION #23: “A goal kick is awarded to Team A. The ball is spotted for the kick. A1 then moves the ball to another spot for the kick. RULING: Illegal. This is delay. The intent of the rule is to speed up play. (16.1.3, comments)"

The reason for the rule is to prevent time-wasting. Let’s do this: if there is a valid reason for a change of position of the ball, allow it. To preserve the integrity of the match, call timeout and put back on the clock any time which ran off while the change took place.

Concussion Legislation & Officiating

Concussion Legislation as it relates to Officiating
Implementation of State Law and NFHS Playing Rules Related to Concussion and Concussed Athletes and Return to Play Protocol

It is important for all individuals involved in interscholastic athletics to recognize the potential for catastrophic injury and even death from concussions. Thus it is extremely important that each coach, administrator, contest official and medical support personnel review their responsibilities in protecting students. Further both students and parents have responsibilities in this area as well.

Note: It has always been the ultimate responsibility of the coaching staff, in all sports, to ensure that students are only put into practice or contests if they are physically capable of performing. However, all individuals involved in the conduct of interscholastic competition have responsibilities in this endeavor.

In January 2011, the OHSAA Board of Directors adopted a sports regulation which incorporated the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) playing rules related to concussion recognition and management. On April 26, 2013, legislation adopted by Ohio’s General Assembly on concussion and head injuries in youth sports became effective. On February 14, 2013, the OHSAA Board of Directors mandated that these regulations become effective on April 26, 2013, for the remainder of the spring sports season and thereafter. This OHSAA regulation, as amended to incorporate this recent legislation, now reads:

Any student, while practicing for or competing in an interscholastic contest, who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest by either of the following:

1) The individual who is serving as the student’s coach during that practice or competition.
2) An individual who is serving as a contest official or referee during that practice or competition.

RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

If a student is removed from practice or competition due to a suspected concussion or head injury, the coach or referee who removes the student shall not permit the student, ON THE SAME DAY THE STUDENT IS REMOVED, to return to that practice or competition or to participate in any other practice or competition for which the coach or contest official is responsible. Thereafter, which means no earlier than the next day, the coach or contest officials shall not permit the student to return to practice or competition until both of the following conditions are satisfied:

1) The student’s condition is assessed by either of the following:
a. A physician, who is a person authorized under Chapter 4731 of the Ohio Revised Code (OCR) to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine or surgery (M.D. or D.O.)

b. Any other licensed health care provider that the school district board of education or other governing authority of a chartered or non-chartered nonpublic school, authorizes to assess the student who has been removed from practice or competition.

2) The student receives written authorization that it is safe for the student to return to practice or competition from a physician or other licensed health care provider authorized to grant the clearance. Go to the “Sports Medicine” Section of the OHSAA website (www.ohsaa.org) to retrieve the OHSAA’s Medical Authorization to Return To Play (RTP) form.

A school district board of education or governing authority of a chartered or non-chartered nonpublic school may authorize a licensed health care provider who is NOT a PHYSICIAN to make an assessment and grant authorization for a student to return to participation ONLY if the provider is acting in accordance with one of the following as applicable to the provider’s authority to practice in Ohio:

1) In consultation with a physician;
2) Pursuant to the referral of a physician;
3) In collaboration with a physician, or
4) Under the supervision of a physician.

Note: A physician or other licensed health care provider who makes an assessment or grants clearance for a student to return to participation may be a volunteer.

NEVER may a player who has been removed for a SUSPECTED concussion RE-ENTER a contest on the same day as an event.

COACHES REQUIREMENTS
All coaches, paid and volunteer, must possess a current Department of Education-issued Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit. When renewing this permit, the coach will be required to complete an online concussion education course as stipulated in the section entitled Approved Online Concussion Education Course. This course is valid for three years and expires at the time the Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit expires.

CONTEST OFFICIALS REQUIREMENTS
Legislation signed into law by the Governor provides that no school “shall permit” an individual to referee interscholastic athletic contests unless the individual holds a Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or has successfully completed within the last three years a training program in concussion recognition. Therefore, all OHSAA licensed officials shall possess either a current Department of Education issued Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or show evidence of completing an approved online concussion education course as stipulated in the section entitled Approved Online Concussion Education Courses. This course is valid for three years from the date of completion and must be entered on the official’s myOHSAA profile.

STUDENT AND PARENT REQUIREMENTS
All students and their parents or legal guardians shall review and sign the “Concussion Information Sheet” which has been developed by the Ohio Department of Health and which shall be distributed by OHSAA member schools to all students and their parents prior to each sports season. Students and parents shall review and sign this form each year and should keep a copy of the form. In addition, parents and students are encouraged to complete an approved concussion education course. The Concussion Information Sheet can be found here: https://www.odh.ohio.gov/-/media/ODH/ASSETS/Files/health/child-injury/Youth-Concussion/Attachment3-ODH-Concussion-Information-SheetFor-Interscholastic-Athletics.pdf?la=en
APPROVED ONLINE CONCUSSION EDUCATION COURSES
The following free online training courses have been approved by the Ohio Department of Health for coaches and contest officials:
National Federation of State High School Associations Concussion in Sports:
https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61064/concussion-in-sports This free online course is available through the NFHS. Click the “order here” button and complete a brief registration form to take the course. In addition:
1. When you have completed and passed the course, you have the option of printing a certificate of completion.
2. All Ohio Officials should select the option to print, retain a copy of the certificate and carry it with them to all contests.
National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS) Concussion Training: http://www.nays.org/additional-training/preview/concussion-training.cfm

PLEASE NOTE: All three courses offer a “certificate of completion” upon successful passage. The NFHS course allows individuals and organizations to search for and track coaches who have completed the course. The search function allows for searches by date, name, state, city or school.
The CDC course does not allow you to search for or track course completion. In order to print your certificate of completion, use the print button found within the training. You will not be able to print the certificate using your tool bar or keyboard, and will be unable to return later to search for your certificate.
NAYS chapters can track coaches who have completed the course and are members of the NYSCA. To find your own certificate of completion, log in to your free account again, click on the “Go to clinic” link for Concussion Training and select the “Access Your Certificate” link.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
1. What are the “signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion?” The National Federation rule lists some of the signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published the following list of signs, symptoms and behaviors that are consistent with a concussion:

SIGNS OBSERVED BY OTHERS
• Appears dazed or stunned
• Is confused about assignment
• Forgets plays
• Is unsure of game score or opponent
• Moves clumsily
• Answers questions slowly
• Loses consciousness
• Shows behavior or personality changes
• Cannot recall events prior to hit
• Cannot recall events after hit

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE
• Headache
• Nausea
• Balance problems or dizziness
• Double or fuzzy vision
• Sensitivity to light or noise
• Feeling sluggish
• Feeling foggy or groggy
• Concentration or memory problems
• Confusion
2. **Who is responsible for administering this rule?** All individuals who have responsibilities and duties in the interscholastic athletics environment are responsible: coaches, contest officials, administrators, students, parents and medical personnel.

3. **What is the role of coaches in administering this rule?**
   - Coaches are to review and know the signs and symptoms of concussion and to prohibit any athlete who displays these signs or symptoms from participating in a practice or a contest.
   - Coaches are not medical professionals and have no authority to determine whether or not a student has sustained a concussion. The coach is responsible for insuring that the student’s parents are notified and the student is referred to a medical professional.
   - Coaches shall be aware that any student removed from a practice or a contest due to a suspected concussion or head injury **shall not return to participation on the same day as the removal.**
   - Coaches shall possess a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit and shall take one of the approved online concussion courses upon renewal of the permit.

4. **What is the role of contest officials in administering the rule?**
   - Officials are to review and know the signs and symptoms of concussion and to direct immediate removal of any student who displays these signs or symptoms. When informing the head coach about removal of an athlete, the official shall be accompanied by another (second) official if possible.
   - An official **shall not permit the athlete who has been removed under this rule to return to competition that same day.**
   - If a contest official is aware that a student has been permitted to return to competition on the same day as removal, that official shall immediately stop play and remove that student from competition and report the incident to the OHSAA.
   - Note that officials are not medical professionals and have no authority to determine whether or not a student has sustained a concussion. The official is responsible for directing removal when he or she observes signs and symptoms that may indicate a student is concussed.
   - All Officials shall possess either a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or shall complete one of the online concussion courses which are valid for three years from the date of completion.
   - At initial licensure or renewal of the OHSAA officiating permit, the official shall indicate that he or she has either a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or has completed one of the approved online concussion courses.
   - All officials should carry with them evidence of completion of one of these options at all times while officiating a contest.
   - Officials are required to submit to the OHSAA the “OHSAA Concussion Report” within 48 hours whenever a student has been removed from a contest under this regulation.

5. **What are the expectations of student-athletes in concussion management?**
   - While all individuals involved in the interscholastic athletics program have a responsibility to recognize the potential for catastrophic injury and even death from concussions, it is also the responsibility of student-athletes to recognize the signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion.
   - Student-athletes who exhibit symptoms such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems, have the responsibility to report these immediately to their coach and/or health care professional. Teammates also share the responsibility to report these symptoms when they are exhibited by a fellow student-athlete.
   - Student-athletes shall review and sign, on an annual basis, along with their parents or legal guardians, the Ohio Department of Health’s Concussion Information Sheet found on the OHSAA website and at this link: https://www.odh.ohio.gov/-/media/ODH/ASSETS/Files/health/child-injury/Youth-Concussion/ Attachment-3-ODH-Concussion-Information-SheetFor-Interscholastic-Athletics.pdf?la=en

6. **Who decides if an athlete has not been concussed and/or who has recovered from a concussion?**
• Only an M.D. (Medical Doctor), D.O. (Doctor of Osteopathy), or another health care provider approved by the school’s Board of Education or other governing body who is acting in accordance with one of the following as applicable to the provider’s authority to practice in Ohio:
  1) In consultation with a physician;
  2) Pursuant to the referral of a physician;
  3) In collaboration with a physician;
  4) Under the supervision of a physician
is empowered to make the on-site determination that an athlete has not received a concussion. **Even if that determination has been made, however, the student may not return to practice or competition on the same day he/she has been removed from a practice or competition** (see No. 7 below).

• If any one of these physicians or authorized medical providers has answered that “yes” there has been a concussion, that decision is final.

7. **Can an athlete return to play on the same day as he/she has been removed from a practice or competition for a suspected concussion?**
   • No, under no circumstances can that athlete return to play that day.
   • No coach or contest official shall allow a student to return to practice or to competition on any day after the initial removal until that student has been assessed and cleared for return with **written authorization** by a physician or licensed health care provider authorized by the school.
   • If the event continues over multiple days, then the designated event physician has ultimate authority over return to play decisions.

8. **Once the day has concluded, who can issue authorization to return to practice/competition in the sport for a student who has diagnosed with a concussion?**
   • Once a concussion has been diagnosed by a physician or other approved health care provider, only a physician or approved provider can authorize subsequent Return To Play (RTP), and such authorization shall be in writing to the administration of the school. This written **RTP authorization shall be kept at the school indefinitely** as a part of that student’s permanent record. Go to the “Sports Medicine” section of the OHSAA website (www.ohsaa.org) to access the OHSAA “Medical Authorization to Return to Play” Form.
   • School administration shall then notify the coach as to the permission to return to practice or play.

9. **What should be done after the student is cleared by an appropriate health care professional?**
   • After a clearance has been issued, the student’s actual return to practice and play should follow a graduated protocol.
   • The National Federation of State High School Associations has included the following graduated protocol in its Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports: **(Note: This is simply a suggested protocol. The appropriate health care professional who issues the clearance may wish to establish a different graduated protocol.)**

**NFHS SUGGESTED MEDICAL CLEARANCE RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL**
  1. No exertional activity until asymptomatic.
  2. When the athlete appears clear, begin low-impact activity such as walking, stationary bike, etc.
  3. Initiate aerobic activity fundamental to specific sport such as running or skating and may also begin progressive strength training activities.
  4. Begin non-contact skill drills specific to sport such as dribbling, fielding, batting, etc.
  5. Full contact in practice setting.
  6. Game play/competition.
   • Athlete must remain asymptomatic to progress to the next level. (It is often suggested that an athlete not be allowed to progress more than one level per day.)
• If symptoms recur, athlete must return to previous level and should be reevaluated by an appropriate health care professional.
• Medical check should occur before contact. (Final written clearance from the medical professional shall be obtained before the athlete engages in any unrestricted or full contact activity.)

QUICK LINKS FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Ohio Department of Health Concussion Information Sheet –

Online Concussion Management Training –
https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61064/concussion-in-sports
https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/
http://www.nays.org/additional-training/preview/concussion-training.cfm

Ohio’s Return to Play Law: Frequently Asked Questions —

Ohio’s Return to Play Law: What Coaches and Referees Need to Know —

Ohio’s Return to Play Law: What Parent/Guardians Need to Know —

ADDITIONAL CONCUSSION RESOURCES
Nationwide Children’s Hospital – Concussion Information Toolkit — http://www.nationwidechildrens.org/concussion-toolkit

CDC Materials on Returning to School for Parents, School Nurses and Educators —
http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/schools.html
Ohio Legislative Service Commissioner HB 143 Bill Analysis — http://www.lsc.ohio.gov/analyses129/h0143-i-129.pdf
By rule, a soccer field shall be between 100 to 120 yards long and 55 to 80 yards wide. The following dimensions are recommended:

High School Fields (9-12): 110 yards long by 65 yards wide
Junior High Fields (7-8): 100 yards long by 55 yards wide
In cooperation with Officials, the Information below is also provided to Athletic Administrators and Coaches relative to game management.

**Placement of Teams:** The Board of Directors strongly recommends that *when possible*, team benches be placed on opposite sides of the field. This will be at the direction of the home Athletic Department. When teams are placed on opposite sides of the field, the team area shall extend 10 yards from the halfway line on each side of the field of play. The home team shall supply a person who is situated at a table at the halfway line on each side of the field to signal substitutions. If time is kept at field level, the official time shall be kept on the home side.

**Officials to Leave Immediately at End of Match:** All contest officials are to leave the field immediately at the conclusion of the match. Supervision of all post-match activities of any nature is not the responsibility of the match officials. Supervision of all post-match activities is the responsibility of the authorized institutional representatives of the participating schools.

**Administrator at Varsity Matches:** The Board of Directors strongly recommends that a school administrator be present at all varsity boys’ and girls’ soccer matches. Coaches should note (and be prepared) that when no school administrator is present at games, they should be prepared to deal with administrative issues such as Crisis Management Plans, etc.

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**Lightning and Inclement Weather**  
*(OHSAA Sports Regulation)*

Please review these carefully. Though all officials received these procedures in pre-season communication, it would be wise to review with them prior to the game. The Lightning and Inclement Weather Policy is relative to ALL OHSAA Sports and is contained within **Lightning and Inclement Weather Policy**.

**LIGHTNING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER**  
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 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 safer areas, and determine the amount of time needed to get everyone to the designated safer area:
   a.) A designated safer place is a substantial building with plumbing and wiring where people live or work, such as a school, gymnasium or library. An alternate safer place from the threat of lightning is a fully enclosed (not convertible or soft top) metal car or school bus.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
   a.) When thunder is heard or lightning is seen*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safer location immediately.
   b.) **30-minute rule.** Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or 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.
   d.) When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in making a decision to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event.
location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices and, thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning* should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning-detection device.  

*At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.  

4. Review the lightning safety policy annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel and train all personnel.  

5. Inform student-athletes and their parents of the lightning policy at the start of the season.

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**Suspended Games**

Every fall, Ohio weather brings attention to the **Official NFHS Rule** regarding Duration and Length of Games (Rule 7.1.3, page 36 of the 2019-20 NFHS Rules Book).

**NFHS 7.1.3 states:**  
...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 [18.1.1].

**Important Notes Regarding Rule 7.1.3:**
- Weather and lack of sufficient lighting are conditions that normally make it impossible to continue play.  
- ANY time a complete half is played and conditions make it impossible to continue play, the game is considered complete and the score is FINAL. FINAL.  
- Games that are unable to be completed and a complete half is played cannot be completed at a later date.  
- Games that are unable to be completed and a complete half has NOT been played: the game shall resume from the exact point of suspension. Coaches/game personnel should make note of time on clock, position of ball, etc. The game is NOT replayed from the opening kickoff.

The NFHS does **not** provide for ‘State Adoptions,’ here, so, League or Conference Rules may NOT override this NFHS Rule.

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**Noisemakers, Vuvuzelas…Pep Bands?**

Those in attendance at last season’s State Tournament witnessed the increased fan support for high school soccer in Ohio. Pep Bands **ARE PERMITTED** at soccer games. Horns that pep band members have are NOT considered as compressed air horns. The World Cup has made the ‘Vuvuzela’ popular and while many may consider them annoying, they **ARE** permitted at soccer games. There are several leagues/conferences that **HAVE** made regulations prohibiting various noisemakers and they **ARE** permitted to create and enforce that rule for league/conference contests.  

Compressed air horns and horns connected to outside power sources are **NOT permitted** at contests.
Wilson is the official game ball for the OHSAA and is used at all REGIONAL and STATE games. Other National Federation (NFHS) approved balls are able to be used for regular season play and for tournament play at the Sectional & District levels. The approved Wilson ball is the “Forte FYBrid II” Please note that ‘pink’ (or other commemorative colored) balls are not permitted to be used when playing games for ‘special occasions’ such as “Kick for the Cure”.

Friday Night Futbol!

This year, the OHSAA’s Board of Directors accepted a recommendation to change the start date of soccer contests to Friday, August 16 with the hope and encouragement that schools will participate in our “Friday Night Futbol” initiative. This initiative, which the Columbus Crew SC has become a partner, is simply an encouragement for schools to play a soccer game ‘under the lights’ where possible on the first Friday of the school year. High school football does not begin until the following week. Please note that for these games, we are permitting halftimes to be extended with the additional encouragement for high school bands to perform at halftime of their games. At the time of this printing, there are MANY schools that have chosen to participate and we anticipate great media coverage for the various contests around the state.

OHSAA’s General Sports Regulations

School teams, student-athletes and coaches are bound by regulations that are approved by the OHSAA’s Board of Directors on an annual basis. Such items as “number of contests”, “number of halves per day of participation”, etc. are examples of these regulations. These regulations are detailed for coaches in THEIR pre-season Coaches’ Guide and the basis for their Rules Interpretations. Which is the main reason we have separate rules meetings for Officials and Coaches.

It is NOT the responsibility of OHSAA Officials to enforce or interpret the OHSAA’s Sports Regulations
The Uniform Rules for Soccer

1. The SOLID WHITE RULE is for VISITORS’ JERSEYS and SOCKS only.
2. This is no requirement for the SHORTS to be all white (Uniform rules do not address color of shorts)

4.1.1(a) The visiting team shall wear solid white jerseys and solid white socks, and the home 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(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 a solid contrasting color to the jersey (or shorts) and clearly visible.

4.1.1(h)(2) Only those names, patches, emblems, logos or insignias referencing the school are permitted on the team jersey and/or shorts, as well as on visible undergarments and goalkeeper pants, except as in 4.1.1(e). The player’s name may also appear on the team uniform.

NONE of these jerseys meet the visitors’ current NFHS Uniform Rule Requirements:

OBVIOUSLY, the intent of any rule is to COMPLY with the rule.
In the event a team’s uniforms do not comply, officials in Ohio are instructed to:
1. PLAY THE GAME. PLAY THE GAME. PLAY THE GAME. Games should never be ‘cancelled' because the officials deem the uniforms unacceptable or noncompliant. PLAY THE GAME.
2. Submit a report to the OHSAA via the normal reporting system. The OHSAA will follow-up with the report and inquire as to the school’s uniform rotation, etc.
3. Officials should understand that the solid white jersey and socks apply only at the varsity level.

Tape, Straps & Stays on Socks
A common trend has already been noted to use tape, straps or stays on socks to create an ‘artificial’ stripe. By NFHS rule, any tape, strap or stay on the sock must also be similar in color to that part of the sock to which it is applied, NF 4.1.1(b). This was a Point of Emphasis way back in 2015!

TEAM Uniforms & “Special Event” Games

The OHSAA is certainly supportive of the many ‘special events’ coaches and teams assist with for local charities. “Kick for the Cure” has been one of several different ‘special events’ that teams across Ohio have become involved in. A few important notes for those participating in those events:

Special Uniforms
Requests often are received by schools to permit alternate uniforms for participating in games that have a charitable tie. The OHSAA’s policy as recommended by the NFHS is to permit such requests one time with number requirements still intact. Though the use of a pink jersey may be permitted for a home game, the “number requirements” outlined in Article 1 of Rule 4 must comply with NFHS
C. Required Uniform
i. Each soccer official is required to have the new, solid, U.S. Soccer yellow and green jerseys, both long and short sleeves. These are the required OHSAA jerseys.
ii. The referee crew, with the approval of the head referee, may wear the red, black or blue solid U.S. Soccer referee jerseys rather than the gold or green U.S. Soccer referee jersey, provided that all officials wear the same color and sleeve length and the jersey contrasts with all field players of both teams. All officials are to wear the same color and sleeve length.
iii. All-black shorts which may contain the U.S. Soccer logo.
iv. Black socks with two or three white rings.
v. Predominantly black shoes and laces.
vi. The OHSAA soccer official’s patch shall be worn on the left breast pocket. No other logos, patches, emblems or numbers are permitted on the uniform. Exception: An American Flag patch/emblem is optional and, if worn, shall be on the left sleeve approximately two inches below the shoulder with the star field facing to the front.
vii. Jewelry shall not be worn except for a wedding band and/or a medical alert necklace or bracelet. A religious medallion which is not visible is permitted. A watch is permitted only when an official has a duty for timing during the contest.

V. Officiating Code of Ethics

Schools have entrusted the OHSAA and sports officials to assist them in the education and development of their youth through athletics. The proper operation of such a process requires that officials be independent, impartial and responsible to people they serve. In recognition of these expectations there is hereby established a Code of Ethics for all officials. The purpose of the code is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all officials.

• An Official must devote time, thought and study to the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to carry out these rules so that one may render effective and creditable service in a fair and unbiased manner.

• An Official must work with fellow officials and the state association in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during debate of issues.

• An Official must resist every temptation and outside pressure to use one’s position as an official to benefit oneself. Under all circumstances, officials must avoid promoting the special interest of any person or group of persons other than the athletes we serve.
- An Official must constantly uphold the honor and dignity of the officiating industry in all personal conduct and relations with student-athletes, coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, colleagues, and the public, to be a worthy example to the athletes under one’s jurisdiction.

- An Official will be prepared both physically and mentally, dress according to expectations of sport standards, and maintain a proper appearance that is befitting the importance of the game.

- An Official shall avoid the use of tobacco and tobacco products at the contest site.

- An Official shall not consume alcohol (or any illegal/illicit drug or controlled substance) prior to or during the contest.

- An Official must remember and recognize that it is important to honor contracts regardless of possible inconvenience or financial loss. Every member of the officiating profession carries a responsibility to act in a manner becoming a professional person. The conduct of any official influences the attitude of the public toward the profession in general as well as toward the official in particular.

- An Official shall not delay the process of completing and returning paperwork provided by a site needed to process the game payments and will provide a W-9 when requested.

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Coaches’ Code of Ethics

From the NFHS Soccer Rules Book

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.

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**Important Sports’ Medical Information**

The safety of our student-athletes is of utmost concern at all times. Information regarding the following important topics can be found at the OHSAA’s "Healthy Lifestyles and Sports Medicine" webpage at [http://www.ohsaa.org/medicine/default.asp](http://www.ohsaa.org/medicine/default.asp). Additional information listed below relative to various equipment and rules relative to medical issues can be found in the following pages of this Officials’ Guide.

- Heat Stress and Athletic Participation
- Recommendations for Hydration to Prevent Heat Illness
- Suggested Guidelines for Management of Head Trauma in Sports
- Communicable Disease Procedures (can also be found on at the end of the NFHS 2013-14 Rules Book)
- Links to the following sites:
  - Joint Advisory Committee on Sports Medicine
  - Ohio Athletic Trainers Association
  - American Medical Society for Sports Medicine
  - Ohio Parents for Drug Free Youth
  - National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA)
  - Gatorade Sports Science Institute News

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**Communicable Disease Procedures**

Though most schools have a Certified Athletic Trainer present at Varsity contests and all coaches are required to maintain a valid Pupil Activity Certificate through the Ohio Department of Education that includes a Sports’ First Aid component, it is important to keep up to date on the remote risk that blood borne infectious diseases can be transmitted during basketball practice and contests. For example, Hepatitis B can be present in blood as well as other bodily fluids. Procedures for reducing the potential transmission of these infectious diseases should include, but should not be limited to the following:

1. The bleeding must be stopped, the open wound covered and if there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform, it must be changed before the athlete may participate.

2. Routine use of gloves or other precautions to prevent skin and mucous-membrane exposure when contact with blood and other body fluids is anticipated.

3. Immediately wash hands and other skin surfaces if contaminated (in contact) with blood or other body fluids. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.

4. Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with an appropriate disinfectant before competition resumes.
5. Practice proper disposal procedures to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels and other sharp instruments or devices.

6. Although saliva has not been implicated in HIV transmission, to minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, or other ventilation devices should be available for use.

7. Athletic trainers/coaches with bleeding or oozing skin conditions should refrain from all direct athletic care until the condition resolves.

8. Contaminated towels should be properly disposed of/disinfected.

9. Follow acceptable guidelines in the immediate control of bleeding and when handling dressings, mouthguards and other articles containing body fluids.

You are encouraged to log on to the OHSAA’s website at www.ohsaa.org and refer to the Sports’ Medicine dropdown menu for additional information.

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**H1N1 Influenza Policy**

The OHSAA’s Board of Directors approved the following policy with advice from the Ohio Department of Health and shall observe this policy at tournament time in the event of an H1N1 Influenza outbreak.

1. The Ohio Department of Health has advised that it will be the decision of each local health authority in Ohio as to whether or not to close a school or university due to an influenza outbreak; however, at this time the Centers for Disease Control are not recommending closures except in extreme circumstances.

2. In the event schools remain open, competitors and teams shall be expected to play tournament contests on the dates scheduled.

3. In the event schools are closed, the OHSAA, in conjunction with our District Athletic Boards and tournament personnel, shall reschedule the tournament contest for the schools thus affected.

4. Please watch the OHSAA web site home page at www.ohsaa.org and the specific sport page on the web site for more information.

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**Heat Stress & Athletic Participation**

**HEAT ACCLIMATIZATION AND EXERTIONAL HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION**

The following information should be reviewed with coaching and sports medicine staff prior to any interscholastic practice this August. Please remember that there are four OHSAA sports that have a required acclimatization period prior to the commencing of any contests or physical contact, which is the case for football. The other sports are boys and girls cross country and 7-8th grade track and field, which require a minimum of 10 days of interscholastic practice prior to any competition for a student. The following is the regulation that addresses the mandatory five-day period in football.

**Five Days of Acclimatization Required** — Acclimatization is a period of time when players can become accustomed to the heat and humidity. Health professionals recommend at least a five-day period. All football candidates must participate in five days of pre-season, non-contact acclimatization prior to any physical contact. No pads may be worn on the first two days. Shorts, helmets, shoes may be worn. Shoulder pads may be added on day three and four, but no contact is permitted. Full equipment may be worn on the fifth day, but contact is prohibited. Candidates reporting late must participate in five days of non-contact acclimatization. This rule applies to all school teams from grades 7-12.
All coaching and medical staff personnel shall observe the following precautions for all sports competed outdoors and/or in a hot, humid environment:

- **Stress to participants the importance of properly hydrating** themselves during the day leading up to the contest, and also to drink 8-to-12 ounces of water or sport drinks 20 minutes prior to the contest. This practice can help prevent problems during practice and contests.

- **Schools should have unlimited amounts of water** and sport drinks on hand during a contest, and coaches in team sports should be prepared to play a lot of players rather than just the starters.

- **Contest officials are permitted to establish predetermined breaks** during a contest, such as halfway through each period. At that time players can drink water and remove their equipment, which should also take place at halftime (the more skin that is exposed, the more cooling that can take place). **This provision applies to all sports.**

- **NFHS football playing rules allow the referee to shorten periods** per mutual agreement by the opposing coaches. In addition, by mutual agreement a game may be terminated at any time.

- **Contest managers are advised to monitor conditions** for others affiliated with the contest, like cheerleaders, band members, coaches, officials and especially spectators.

- **In football, if schools decide NOT to play a contest, it becomes an open date for both.** If one school desires to play but the other does not, there are no forfeits involved. Again, it would become an open date for both schools. However, schools do have the option to reschedule contests, and OHSAA regulations do permit schools to play more than one contest per week. There also are no OHSAA regulations that prohibit games from being played on Sundays. The same concepts apply to all other OHSAA sports.

- **Please review the OHSAA policy on inclement weather and lightning.** In short, upon the first indication that thunderstorm development is within 15 miles of the game site, the activity shall be suspended until 30 minutes after the storm has left this 15-mile zone. Individuals should move to a safe area until the storm has moved away.

- **Know both the Temperature and Humidity.** The greater the humidity, the more difficult it is for the body to cool itself. Test the air prior to practice or a game using a wet bulb, globe, temperature index (WBGT index) which is based on the combined effects of air temperature, relative humidity, radiant heat and air movement. The following precautions are recommended when using the WBGT Index: (ACSM’s Guidelines for the Team Physician, 1991):
  - Below 64 - Unlimited activity
  - 65-72 – Moderate risk
  - 74-82 – High Risk
  - 82 plus - Very high risk

  One other method of measuring the relative humidity is the use of a sling psychrometer, which measures wet bulb temperature. The wet bulb temperature should be measured prior to practice, and the intensity and duration of practice should be adjusted accordingly. Recommendations are as follows:
  - Under 60 F Safe but always observe athletes
  - 61-65 F Observe players carefully
  - 66-70 F Caution
  - 71-75 F Shorter practice sessions and more frequent water and rest breaks
  - 75+ F Danger level and extreme caution

The OHSAA advises careful monitoring of the weather and plans to modify training and competition including:

1.) Modification of equipment, if applicable to the sport;
2.) Allowance for more frequent rest breaks and the use of shaded areas for those breaks;
3.) Modification of practice time;
4.) Availability of water always;
5.) Availability of cold water immersion tubs for onsite cooling;
6.) If exertional heat stroke is suspected, immediate onsite cooling using cold water immersion before transport by EMS, and
7.) Review and practice of the OHSAA’s recommended Emergency Action Plan, “Anyone Can Save A Life,” or similar plan for all sports teams with special emphasis on the heat illness section.

MEDIA REGULATIONS

The Ohio High School Athletic Association develops the regulations for media coverage of all OHSAA tournament contests. Some policies shall also be in effect for regular season contests. General media regulations shall be approved annually by the Board of Directors and published separately from the OHSAA Handbook.

B. Coaches’ and Participants’ Comments to the News Media

OHSAA Bylaw 8, Section 2, reads in part, “Great care shall be exercised in the selection of officials, well in advance of the contest and agreed upon by schools involved. When the contest begins each school waives all of its rights so far as objecting to the officials.” Public criticism of officials is a direct reflection upon those who were responsible for assigning the officials to the game.

Officials are trained and expected to make no derogatory public comments directly to the media or through the use of social media regarding other officials, the players, coaches or schools. Coaches and participants are expected to follow the same procedure and make no derogatory public comments directly to the media or through the use of social media regarding not only the officials, but also the players, coaches or schools. Failure to follow this request will result in penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

Headgear

Please note, the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee has concluded that, “While padded headbands may assist in reducing the incidence of abrasions, the risk of concussions and other serious head injuries will remain a concern in the sport of soccer. A headband is not a substitute for an appropriate post-injury recuperative period.”

In 2017-2018, the NFHS promulgated NFHS 4.2.9: Soft-padded headgear is permitted.

Notes:
1. 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.
2. No headgear can stop athletes from suffering concussions, and all sports should be played, coached and officiated in recognition of that fact. (Appendix C, page 106)

4.2.9 SITUATION (2017): During pregame warmup, the referee observes A5 is wearing (a) soft-padded headband; (b) soft-padded headgear of an approved material. RULING: (a) and (b) are legal. COMMENT: The use of a soft-padded soccer headband or headgear is permitted but not required.

2017 NFHS Points of Emphasis #1 Headgear: Though not required equipment, soft-padded headgear is permitted to be used by any soccer player. The SMAC emphasizes that there is no research or data available that shows that wearing soft-padded headgear prevents or lessens the possibility of a concussion. The determination regarding wearing soft-padded headgear is entirely up to the individual or school district. Schools, parents and students are free to make their own assessments relative to this piece of equipment. The relevant ASTM standard for the soft-padded headband can be found at www.astm.org/Standards/F2439.htm.

2017 NFHS Comments on the Rules: The use of soft-padded headgear is now permitted but not required. The change provides an expanded scope of the use of headwear to include soft padded headgear and headbands. Coaches, parents and players are able to make their own assessment on the need to use headwear.

Protective Facemasks

RULE 4.2.8: “A protective face mask may be worn by a player with a facial injury. The mask may be made of a hard material, but must be worn molded to the face. A medical release for the injured player signed by an appropriate health care professional shall be available at the game site.”

NFHS Soccer Rules Committee Rationale: “Permits participation by an injured player when a doctor signs a release. Masks protect the player and do not pose a threat to other players.”
NFHS Comments on the Rules (from 2006-07): “Prior to this rule [i.e., NFHS 4.2.8], face protection of any kind was declared illegal. Manufacturers have now developed protection for the face that is safe to the player wearing it and to other players. The committee is concerned that players would play without protection, putting them at serious risk. This new rule allows players to play as long as they have a medical release from an appropriate health care professional. Officials still have the authority to declare any equipment illegal if it is dangerous or confusing.”

NFHS Press Release, from February 2, 2006: “Rule 4-2-8 was added so that players who have incurred facial injuries can continue to play without fear of re-injury. This rule was made possible as a result of new technology in protective face masks. ‘The new masks are molded to the face …, providing no additional risks to the player or opponents, and are legal with appropriate medical sign-offs,’ said Bob Lombardi, chair of the NFHS Soccer Rules Committee and associate executive director of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association. According to Lombardi, this new rule will also prevent players with facial injuries from continuing to play with no protection.”

Shinguards
All players are required to wear shinguards with the NOCSAE seal and height range permanently marked on the front of each shinguard.

➢ Shinguards need NOT have the NFHS seal on them.

The National Federation identifies certain rules that may or may not be adopted by each state’s Athletic Association. These are known as “state adoptions”. These state adoptions are identified below and the Ohio High School Athletic Association’s adoption is indicated for each.

1. **Players may wear caps in inclement weather** (NFHS 4-2-1h Exception 2) – Adopted in Ohio
   Players may wear soft and yielding caps in inclement weather. Caps must be the same color.

2. **Artificial limbs** (NFHS 4-2-5) – Adopted in Ohio
   The coach or athletic administrator must request permission in writing from the OHSAA in order to secure permission for the prosthesis to be worn during play. Photos of the prosthesis in place on the individual must accompany the written request. Once it has been determined that the prosthesis meets the guidelines in NFHS 4-2-5, written permission will be provided. No student may play with an artificial limb until such permission has been granted.

3. **Systems of Officiating** (NFHS 5-1-1) – Adopted in Ohio
   The game officials shall be a head referee and a referee (dual system of officiating), a head referee and two assistant referees (diagonal system of officiating), or a center referee and two side referees (double dual system of officiating) 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: Schools may choose a system by prior agreement.

4. **Officials’ Shirt Color** (NFHS 5-1-3) – Adopted in Ohio
   The officiating uniform for soccer officials is provided in the OHSAA Handbook for Officials, on our website (www.ohsaa.org) and within this manual. The uniform indicated shall be worn in all OHSAA games, preseason, regular season and the entire postseason tournament.

5. **Time kept on field** (NFHS 6-2-1) – Adopted in Ohio (in part)
   The home school timer shall be the official timer. However, the head referee is permitted, at his/her discretion, to take the clock onto the field when the timer has failed in his/her duty so many times as to imperil match control.

6. **Score kept by referee** (NFHS 6-3-1) – NOT Adopted in Ohio
7. **Fourth Official as scorer** (NFHS 6-3-3) – NOT Adopted in Ohio  
   Refer to OHSAA tournament regulations for additional information regarding use of fourth officials during tournament play.

8. **Four equal quarters rather than halves** (NFHS 7-1-1) – NOT adopted in Ohio

9. **Shortened periods** (NFHS 7-1-2) – NOT Adopted in Ohio

10. **Suspended games** (NFHS 7-1-3) – Adopted in Ohio  
    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. **Per OHSAA Board adopted policy**, if less than one half has been completed, the game may be restarted from the point of suspension of play.

    Tournament games interrupted because of events beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority shall be continued from the point of suspension. Any ejected player or coach cannot participate in the resumed game. Teams playing short will continue to play short. NFHS 7-1-3 is not in effect for tournament games.

11. **Goal differential** (NFHS 7-1-5) – Adopted in Ohio, 2019 OHSAA Soccer Reg. 10(A)(1.7): 1.7  
    Goal Differential/Running Clock – During any regular season or tournament contest, any time the score differential reaches 6 goals or more AFTER the first half of the contest, a running clock shall be used. After the 6-goal differential has been met but the score drops below 6 goals, the clock reverts to regular timing. The clock shall be stopped only for an injured player on the field or when there is any unusual delay deemed necessary by the officials.

12. **Regular Season Overtime procedure** (NFHS 7-3-1) – NOT adopted in Ohio  
    NFHS 7-3-1 refers to overtime procedures during regular season play. No overtime procedures will be conducted during regular season play in Ohio.

13. **Disqualified player barred from competition** (NFHS 12-8-3 Note) – Adopted in Ohio  
    Refer to OHSAA Soccer Regulations for specific penalties for disqualified or ejected players and / or coaches.

14. **Sample Tie-Breaking Procedure** – Adopted in Ohio, in part  
    Please refer to “Game Procedures: Tournament Overtime Procedures”, above.

15. **Incidental Use of Vulgar or Profane Language** (12.8.1(d) NOTE) – Not adopted in Ohio

16. **Sample Fourth Official/duties** – Adopted in Ohio, in part for post-season tournament play only

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**Soccer Player and Coach Ejection Protocol**

**ALL PLAYER and COACH EJECTIONS ARE FINAL**

No later than noon of the first SCHOOL day following an ejection, the officials are required to make contact with the Athletic Director or Principal of the violator’s school to advise the administration of the ejection. Also, upon an ejection, the official files a report ONLINE in the myOHSAA system with the OHSAA. Since the procedures listed below are all triggered by the submission of the Officials’ Report online, officials are penalized in accordance with OHSAA adopted policies in the event they do not submit the report. After this written report that includes narrative is submitted:

- The report is automatically sent electronically to the OHSAA and copies to the school’s Athletic Director.  
- The school’s Athletic Director is required to submit a reply that includes the school and coach/player side of the events/ejection  
- In the submitted reply from the school’s Athletic Director, he/she is required to submit the coach’s email address  
- Upon the Athletic Director’s submission of the “Response Form”, an email is sent to the ejected coach explaining the consequences (below) of the ejection:
An ejected coach is suspended from ALL GAMES for the remainder of the day of the ejection PLUS ALL GAMES UNTIL 2 AT THE LEVEL OF THE EJECTION ARE COMPLETED. Thus, a JV coach ejected from a JV contest cannot coach a JV OR Varsity contest until 2 JV contests have been played.

Ejected coaches must also pay a $100.00 fine and complete the National Federation of State High School Association’s (NFHS) “Teaching and Modeling Behavior” course within 30 days of the ejection. The payment of the fine is completed with an online payment per the instructions provided to the coach on the email he/she receives that is triggered by submission of the School Response Form.

Consequences of ejections are to be enforced by the school administration and served by coaches/players even if the above protocol is not completed.

1. All Scrimmage Ejections MUST be Reported
2. All Subsequent Cautions MUST be Reported
Specific Soccer Ejection Policy Explanations

- The Ejection Policy for players now permits the individual player to be on the bench and in the locker room area during the period of suspension. The suspended player, as a result of an ejection, is not permitted to be in any school warm-up or uniform during the time of suspension and is strictly prohibited from being on the field during pre-game or halftime warm-up time.

Specific Card Procedures

**Straight RED CARD**
- Given to player, coach or bench personnel under NF 12-8-2(a), -(b), -(d), -(e), -(f), -(g); to a coach under NF 12.8.3; OHSAA Tobacco Regulation for tobacco use or to a player under OHSAA Soccer Regulation 10(A)(1.1) for playing more than three halves in one day or more than 42 halves in one season.
  - A red card only is displayed.
  - The Official is required to submit the online Game Report.
  - The ejected individual is also prohibited from playing, coaching or participating in any match for the rest of the day on which he/she is ejected.
  - The ejected coach or player is suspended for all matches until 2 matches at the level of the ejection have been played. A coach or player who receives a straight red card is considered “ejected” for purposes of OHSAA Soccer Regulations.
  - The number of players on the field is reduced for a straight red card given to a player.

The **SUBSEQUENT CAUTION** or “DOUBLE YELLOW” for Players, Coaches and Bench Personnel
- Given to a player, coach or bench personnel for a second yellow-card offense in the same match, under NF 12-8-2(c).
  - The disqualified person is prohibited from participation in the remainder of the match.
  - The disqualified person can participate in OTHER matches on the same day.
  - The disqualified person is not subject to any additional suspension.
  - A person so disqualified under NF 12.8.2(c) is NOT considered “ejected” for purposes of OHSAA Regulations.
  - The yellow card is first displayed and returned to the pocket. The red card is then displayed and returned to the pocket.
  - A Game Report is required.
  - The school does not need to be contacted by the official.
  - Number of players on the field IS reduced for a “double yellow” or subsequent caution.

In a nutshell: For a Subsequent Caution or “Double Yellow-Card” disqualification for a player, coach or bench personnel: the total suspension penalty for the disqualified person is limited to sitting out the remainder of the match in which disqualified and, in the case of a disqualified player, the player’s team finishing the match shorthanded.

**Sportsmanship**

**NFHS Sportsmanship Mission Statement**
Good sportsmanship is viewed by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) as a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. The ideals of sportsmanship apply equally to all activity disciplines. Individuals, regardless of their role in activities, are expected to be aware of their influence on the behavior of others and model good sportsmanship.

**The OSSCA & Sportsmanship**
Good Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association (OSSCA) stands tall in its commitment to good sportsmanship. The school-based experience is one that affords tremendous opportunities to student-athletes that they will remember for a lifetime. Those experiences are dependent on the role model the head coach provides. The OSSCA encourages all coaches to exhibit behavior that serves as a role model for the student-athletes we serve. In conjunction with the OHSAA’s Sportsmanship, Ethics and Integrity (SEI) Committee, the OHSCA annually selects a recipient of the SEI Award.
The Official's Role in Sportsmanship

In 2004 the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) conducted a survey of 550 sports officials and asked “what is the number-one problem in our games today?” Not too surprising, the number one response was “Poor Sportsmanship”. As a result, the NASO brought together some of the best and brightest in youth, high school, collegiate and pro sports to examine the issue and explore the official’s role in promoting positive on-field behavior. The results were published in the book at the right and identified 3 critical ideas:

1. What is at Stake
2. What is Expected, and,
3. What steps to Take

As a result, the following are important results of this study and publication:

1. 65% of respondents indicated their respective associations do not do enough to help improve sportsmanship.
2. 89% of officials responding consider themselves PARTNERS with players, coaches and administrators in improving sportsmanship.
3. 54% of officials responding indicated they felt they DO have the training, authority and knowledge to make an impact.

The conclusion:
Sportsmanship is EVERYONE’S job and we are all partners in this endeavor.

Special Soccer Coaches’ Note on Sportsmanship

Expectations need to be placed on team members relative to sporting behavior. High School soccer continues to grow and improve each and every year. I urge coaches to be at the forefront of setting examples of behavior and translating that into expectations for their student-athletes. It is good for the game and will allow the continued growth of soccer. During my years administrating sports, I have ‘heard it all’ and the most common response from ejected coaches is “I was only sticking up for my players”. I can assure you that NO official has ever set out to degrade or disrespect the game of soccer and we ALL need to remember that the game is ‘for the players’. I continue to urge you to keep that at the forefront of the leadership and guidance you are entrusted with. Two areas of concern that have arisen in the past few years that coaches can assist:

Warm Up at Conclusion of JV Game
During the first game of a ‘doubleheader’ night (JV game or the boys/girls’ playing prior to the second game), teams will often begin their warm-up prior to the conclusion of the first game. This often leads to a team ‘circling the field’ prior to the first game ending. We are discouraging this as nearly 30 minutes are provided as ample time for warm-up when the game concludes. Additionally, there are growing sportsmanship issues with players unsupervised as they cross paths with opponents’ team areas. This is an area that COACHES can assist with.

Running over to Fans at the Conclusion of a Game
Yes, it may be an ‘accepted’ thing…a ‘soccer thing’; a team runs across the field together to the opposite touch line at the conclusion of a game to share the joy of victory with other students. But…we are encountering more and more acts of unsporting behavior that occurs when fans of the OTHER team are in that same area. Please utilize your leadership role and prevent issues before they occur. Address this frequently with team members.

The OHSAA & Sportsmanship

As we prepare for the upcoming seasons, the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) wishes to emphasize to each of you the importance of your leadership role in the promotion of sportsmanship, ethics and integrity. The professional manner in which officials and coaches conduct themselves prior to, during and following a contest unquestionably impacts the behavior of others who may be involved.

The OHSAA has joined the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) in its quest to improve sportsmanship, ethics and integrity. We are involved in an ongoing campaign in every sport to do just that. Printed below is the mission statement of
the NFHS concerning sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity. Please take the time to read and digest this statement and then carefully consider your impact upon students, officials, coaches, and fans. Thank you and have a great season!

The Ohio High School Athletic Association challenges all of us in the soccer community to take positive steps toward the goal of attaining the high ideal of good sportsmanship. It is the responsibility of each of us to serve as a positive role model and set high expectations for others.

Roxanne Price
Assistant Commissioner

ADMINISTRATORS
Athletic departments are comprehensive, pre-eminent teaching departments with a subject matter all their own: self-confidence, leadership, teamwork, discipline, perseverance, respect for others, strategic thinking, dedication, the importance of rules, and sportsmanship. These are true life lessons and participation in athletics provides another forum for learning. Coaches and Officials are responsible for promoting sportsmanship and positive behavior on the field. Administrators, we need your continued assistance in promoting sportsmanship and controlling fan behavior in the stands! Let the parents and fans know what you expect!

COACHES
Your athletes will demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors they have learned from you, either through direct instruction or through observation of your actions. *Never underestimate the influence you have on your players!* You must:

- Abide by and teach the rules of the game in letter and in spirit.
- Set a good example for players and spectators to follow.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will serve to create a positive impression of you and your team.
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
- Develop a program that rewards participants and spectators for displaying proper sportsmanship and enforces penalties on those who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.

It is difficult to develop a great finisher, a great centerback or a great goalkeeper. That is true. However, your greatest challenge is to develop mature young adults who will become great citizens and role models in your community.

OFFICIALS
Your job is not an easy one, but the official must be aware that they are an important component in the educational development of students. To carry out this responsibility, you must:

- Know the rules and mechanics of our sport and the philosophy behind them.
- Get fit and stay fit. An official with all of the rules and mechanics knowledge and people skills in the world does no good if he or she cannot physically keep up with play.
- Maintain professional and ethical relationships with athletic administrators, especially in the area of fulfilling game contracts.
- Work cooperatively with fellow officials during games and within the referees’ association to improve members’ performances.
- Maintain at all times and when interacting with all participants, an attitude of civility and professionalism.
- Practice effective preventive officiating as much as possible before, during, and after a match. The quiet word, proper signals, timely verbal instructions, a simple thank-you to a player for avoiding an unsporting act, and well-thought-out pre-game conferences with the teams and other game officials will result in an improvement of sportsmanship by eliminating the chance for things to go wrong.
**STUDENT-ATHLETES**
You serve as a role model for your younger siblings, young fans in the stands, your teammates, and your classmates. Set high expectations for everyone and help them follow-through! You must:

- Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of representing your school and the community.
- Live up to the standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff.
- Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with others. This will assist everyone in the achievement of a better understanding and appreciation of the game.
- Treat opponents as you would like to be treated……with respect.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will serve to create a positive impression of you and your team.

**CONCLUSION**
Good sportsmanship is everyone’s responsibility. It is the essence of interscholastic athletics. Remember…some may question an official’s call or a coach’s substitution, but no one can question the value of good sportsmanship.

On the OHSAA’s “Respect the Game” pages you will find **Fair Play Codes** for athletes, coaches, and fans, as well as additional information regarding **parents’ role in interscholastic athletics**. The sportsmanship page also includes information about the Harold A. Meyer Sportsmanship Award and the Archie Griffin Sportsmanship Award. Please feel free to contact us with any additional questions. Please take time to visit this from the OHSAA’s website along with MANY helpful items previously mentioned on the NFHSlearn website at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com).

Emotions run high at the end of a contest and coaches are often tempted to make inappropriate comments to the news media covering a game. The OHSAA Constitution and Bylaws reads in part **“Great care shall be exercised in the selection of officials, well in advance of the contest and agreed upon by schools involved.”** Public criticism of officials is a direct reflection upon those who were responsible for assigning the officials to the game. Officials are trained and expected to make no derogatory comments regarding the players, coaches, or schools. Coaches are expected to follow the same procedure in regard to the officials. Coaches violating this rule may be asked to discuss the problem personally with the Commissioner. (See Sports Regulations “Media Regulations”, Section B, page 78, OHSAA Handbook).
**SPECIAL PERMIT REQUEST-Waiver to Uniform**

Please complete and return to Kathleen Coughlin at kcoughlin@ohsaa.org

NFHS Soccer rules and OHSAA regulations permit schools to request a waiver to the Uniform Regulations in Rule 4-1-1 of the NFHS Soccer Rules Book. The waiver is granted 1 time per season for schools participating in a contest conducted for a specific cause, such as but not limited to “Kick for the Cure” events. Upon approval, the waiver will permit schools to wear an alternate colored jersey that may include the sponsoring event’s logo but will still require all teams to meet the ‘number requirements’ outlined in Article 1 (i) of Rule 4, (6” player unique numbers on back of jersey).

Name of School Making Request:

Type of Event/Sponsoring Organization:

Nature of Request (sponsoring agency’s logo on jersey, etc.):

Date of Contest:

Opponent:

Head Coach’s Name: 

Head Coach’s Email:

Athletic Director’s Name:

Email request to Kathleen Coughlin at kcoughlin@ohsaa.org, Director of Sport Management