

2006 NCAA MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SOCCER RULES CHANGES

**BY: Kenneth G. Andres, Jr., Esq.
NISOA National Rules Interpreter**

The NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee conducted its annual meeting February 2006 in Indianapolis, Indiana and later conferred via telephone conference call approving certain changes for the 2006 playing season which are digested below.

Rule 1 - The Field of Play

**Rule 1 §9
Goals** **The goal posts, which shall be superimposed on goal lines of the same width and depth, shall consist of two wooden or metal posts, equidistant from the corner flags and eight yards (7.32 m) apart (inside measurement), joined by a horizontal crossbar of similar material, the lower edge of which shall be eight feet (2.44 m) from the ground.**

Comment: The rule previously required that the goal lines must be between 4 and 5 inches wide. This change ensures that the goal line, goal posts and crossbar are consistent in width to assist the officials in determining when the whole of the ball has passed over the goal line. See Rule 10 § 1.

Rule 1 - Lighting

**Rule 1 §17
Lighting** **The field shall be uniformly and adequately lighted. Contact information for the Illuminating Engineering Society of America and the minimum**

lighting specifications from the NCAA Broadcasting Manual are incorporated into the rules book for the first time.

Comment: Although lighting is not required by the rules book, this will address a frequently asked question by facilities managers.

Rule 3 - Players and Substitutes

**Rule 3 §5a
Reentry
Rights**

A.R. 27 A goalkeeper is replaced by a substitute, remains on the field as a field player and later is replaced by a substitute. During the same period, the coach instructs the original goalkeeper to substitute for the current goalkeeper. RULING: Illegal. Once the original goalkeeper changes positions, the reentry rule for that position (e.g., midfielder) applies. A player who has not yet entered the game may substitute (i.e., - one reentry) for the goalkeeper as per Rule 3-5-a.

Comment: This will eliminate confusion about the reentry rights of a player in this situation. The committee has stated that the player's rights are determined by the position played when leaving the game (i.e., field player or goalkeeper).

Rule 3 - Substitution Clock Stoppage

**Rule 3 §6
Clock Stoppage
in Final Five
Minutes**

In addition, during the final five minutes of the second period only, if the leading team makes a substitution, the referee shall signal the clock be stopped and beckon the substitute onto the field. If the game is tied or the losing coach chooses to substitute, the clock shall not be stopped.

Comment: This will eliminate the trailing team's ability to prolong the game with substitutions. It does not matter which team initiates the substitution. If the team in the lead makes a substitution, the clock stops.

Rule 4 - Player's Equipment

Rule 4 §1b Shinguards

Beginning with the 2007 Fall season, the NCAA will require players to wear shinguards which meet the standards established by the National Operating Committee On Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) and bear a seal of approval.

Comment: NOCSAE and manufacturers intend to have these shinguards available by 2007. In the 2006 season, the referee still must ensure that shinguards are worn in the manner intended, are professionally manufactured, age and size appropriate and not altered to decrease protection.

Rule 4 - Goalkeeper's Socks

Rule 4 § 2b Sock Color

Goalkeepers shall wear jerseys that distinguish them from all field players and socks that distinguish them from their opponents.

Comment: This will allow goalkeepers to wear the same sock color as teammates and officials.

Rule 5 - The Referee

Rule 5 §3c

Conduct Rules

The rules of conduct, including game times, substitutions and overtime procedures, shall not be altered by the referee or by mutual consent of the institutions.

Comment: This was previously listed in the preface of the rules book and is being incorporated into the rules for emphasis.

Rule 6 - Other Officials and Their Duties

**Rule 6 §4
Scoresheet**

In addition, the official scorekeeper shall obtain the signatures of the referee and assistant referees on the official NCAA box score form or an 8 ½ by 11 inch computer-generated scoresheet with complete game information after the game is completed, thus verifying cards issued, ejection reports and the official score of the game.

Comment: Triple verification of the official scoresheet by all game officials is intended to help eliminate administrative errors related to identification of individual(s) who received cards during the contest.

Rule 6 - Scorekeeper Duties

**Rule 6 §4
Scorekeeper
Duties**

It is the responsibility of the scorekeeper to inform the player if he/she is not eligible to reenter the game. Further, it is the scorekeeper's responsibility to notify the referee when an illegal substitution has been made.

Comment: This will clarify that the scorekeeper should be tracking substitutions and making the necessary notifications. The referee still retains the ultimate responsibility for administering substitutions in concert with the assistant referees and fourth official, if applicable.

Rule 7 - Goalkeeper Reentry - Tiebreakers

**Rule 7 §1b7
Goalkeeper
Injury** **The goalkeeper is eligible to return to the game during the tiebreaker, if physically able.**

Comment: This clarifies the situation when a goalkeeper is injured.

Rule 11 - Offside Position

**Rule 11 §1b
Offside Position** **In determining offside position, the position of any part of the player's head, body or feet will be the deciding factor, not the player's arms.**

Comment: This rule change is consistent with the FIFA interpretation.

Rule 12 - Assault on a Referee

**Rule 12 §17
Referee Assault** **Physical contact with game officials (or any threat of physical intimidation or harm, including pushing, shoving, spitting, kicking, throwing at or attempting to make physical contact) will not be tolerated. Any player(s), coach or bench personnel committing an assault on a referee shall be ejected from the game and is required to sit out at least the following three games, including postseason games. Player(s), coach or bench personnel involved in a second assault on a referee in the same season shall be ejected from the game and shall not compete for the remainder of the season, including postseason games. Game suspensions for assault on a referee are additional to**

suspensions in order for card accumulations.

Comment: Based on situations in other sports and at other levels of the game, the Rules Committee wants to be clear that any assault on a referee is an abomination and will not be tolerated.

Official NCAA interpretations can be obtained at a website addressing frequently asked questions and rule interpretations answered by Secretary-Rules Editor C. Cliff McCrath at: NCAA.org. Go to Sports and Championships and follow the prompts to Interpretations to access this benefit.