

UNITED STATES SOCCER FEDERATION



Memorandum 2001

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The 115th Annual Meeting of the International Football Association Board (IFAB) was held in Edinburgh, Scotland, on 10th March 2001. The amendments to the Laws of the Game and various instructions and directives are listed below.

1. AMENDMENTS TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME

Notes on the Laws of the Game

New text:

Modifications

Subject to the agreement of the national associations concerned and provided the principles of these Laws are maintained, the Laws may be modified in their application for players of under 16 years of age, for women footballers, for veteran footballers (over 35 years) and for players with disabilities.

Reason:

This change recognizes the large number of players with disabilities who play football and permits appropriate modifications to the Laws to enable them to take part in officially organized competitions.

USSF Advice to Referees: Law changes to accommodate disabilities under this provision are intended for special competitions sanctioned by and under the authority of USSF, which is responsible for reviewing and approving such modifications.

Law 3 - The Number of Players

New Text:

Decisions of the International FA Board

Decision 2

A team official may convey tactical instructions to the players during the match and must return to his position after doing so. All team officials must remain within the confines of the technical area, where such an area is provided, and they must behave in a responsible manner.

Reason:

The new text recognizes that tactical instructions may be given by different team officials during the match provided the person returns to his or her position after giving these instructions and behaves in a responsible manner. The statement that the team official must return immediately to his or her position has been removed.

USSF Advice to Referees: Under most circumstances, the referee (assisted by the assistant referee and/or the fourth official) should ensure that no more than one team official is giving tactical instructions at any one time. Referees are reminded that the requirement to return to his position does not mean that the team official must be seated.

Law 12 -- Fouls and Misconduct

New Text:

Indirect Free kick

Delete bullet point 5

- Wastes time

Decisions of the International FA Board

Decision 3

Delete final paragraph

The goalkeeper is considered to be guilty of time wasting if he holds the ball in his hands or arms for more than 5-6 seconds.

Reason:

Both texts are no longer necessary because of the alteration to Law 12 in 2000 which stated that a goalkeeper is permitted to control the ball with his hands or arms for up to six seconds.

USSF Advice to Referees: This is an editorial change to make the Law more internally consistent and does not affect the application of Law 12. Referees should review Memorandum 2000 regarding the procedures for enforcing the six second time limit.

Disciplinary Sanctions

New text

Only a player or substitute or substituted player may be shown the red or yellow card.

Reason:

This clarifies the use of the red and yellow cards.

USSF Advice to Referees: This addition to Law 12 enforces prior guidance regarding who may commit misconduct and therefore be shown a card. Referees are reminded that it is improper to show cards to anyone other than players, substitutes, or substituted players. If irresponsible behavior is committed by anyone else in the immediate area of the field, the circumstances must be included in the game report. "Substituted players" refers to any player who has been substituted and, although not permitted to return to the field, remains in his team's area.

Sending-Off Offences

To be added after Sending-Off Offence No. 7

A player who has been sent off must leave the vicinity of the field of play and the technical area.

Reason:

This clarifies the situation for players who have been sent off.

USSF Advice to Referees: In many circumstances, particularly involving youth players, it may not be possible to apply this requirement strictly. The primary objective of the requirement is to ensure that a player who has been sent off will no longer in any way interfere with, participate in, or otherwise be involved in subsequent play. The failure of a player who has been sent off to meet this objective cannot result in any further disciplinary action against the player by the referee but all details of any incident must be included in the game report.

Decisions of the International FA Board

Decision 1

Delete. The decisions 2 to 6 became decisions 1 to 5 respectively.

Reason:

This confirms the sanction to be taken, as stated in the Questions and Answers Book on the Laws of the Game, when an object is thrown at an opponent from a distance.

USSF Advice to Referees: Referees should review the recent memorandum on "Placing Restarts" for additional details regarding the above reference to Questions and Answers. In brief, the location for any foul or misconduct involving a thrown object is not where the action begins but where the object strikes or would have struck, if this location is on the field of play.

KICKS FROM THE PENALTY MARK

New Title:

PROCEDURES TO DETERMINE THE WINNER OF A MATCH

The Golden Goal and taking kicks from the penalty mark are methods of determining the winning team where competition rules require there to be a winning team after a match has been drawn.

The Golden Goal

Procedures

- During the period of extra time played at the end of normal playing time, the team which scores the first goal is declared the winner.

- If no goals are scored the match is decided by kicks from the penalty mark.

Kicks from the Penalty Mark

Procedure

Text remains unchanged

Reason:

To formally recognize the approval by the International FA Board of the Golden Goal as one of the possible procedures to determine the winner of a match.

USSF Advice to Referees: Referees must be aware of any league, tournament, or competition rules which define when and how a match which is tied at the end of regulation time must be continued until there is a winner. The above Law change recognizes the option of the "Golden Goal" (sometimes also called "sudden death") as one means of accomplishing this objective.

2. INFORMATION, INSTRUCTIONS, AND DIRECTIVES

Holding and Pulling

The International FA Board expressed its concern at the amount of holding and pulling which was prevalent in football today. It recognized that not every instance of holding and pulling of jerseys and shorts was unsporting behavior, as is also the case with deliberate handball. It expressed regret, however, that referees were not applying the Laws fully in dealing with blatant cases of holding and pulling and issued the following Mandatory Instruction:

Referees are instructed that, in the case of blatant holding and pulling, the offence must be sanctioned by a direct free kick, or a penalty kick if the offence is committed inside the penalty area, and the player must be cautioned for unsporting behavior.

USSF Advice to Referees: Holding or pulling the jersey of an opponent has always been a penal foul, subject of course to the decision of the referee that the action was not trifling. The above Mandatory Instruction serves to emphasize to referees that their standards for making such decisions must take into account the blatant and cynical nature of the action, regardless of its effect.

Treatment of Injured Players

The Board considered the problems caused by injuries to players. It was of the opinion that referees should allow players to return to the field of play as soon as possible after they have recovered from injury. In this respect, and in the case of players returning from treatment for a bleeding injury, referees may be assisted by the fourth official, where one has been appointed to the match.

The Board also expressed its concern at the loss of playing time caused by the assessment of injuries and their removal from the field of play. The safety of the players must always be the

main priority, however referees are instructed to add the full amount of time lost for these and any other reasons at the end of each period of play.

USSF Advice to Referees: The practical effects of this instruction are:

- ***to add the option (as decided by the referee and discussed in the pregame conference) to involve the fourth official in confirming that any bleeding or blood-soaked uniform problem has been corrected***
- ***to allow a player who is off the field, with the permission of the referee, for treatment of an injury or for correction of a bleeding or blood-soaked uniform problem to return to the field, with the permission of the referee, while play is continuing***
- ***to require referees to add the full measure of time lost due to injury***

Keeping in mind the ultimate purpose of this instruction (ensuring that the full strengths of both teams are participating in play), USSF advises referees that, if a fourth official has not been appointed to a match, the referee may authorize the assistant referees to inspect players for the correction of bleeding or blood-soaked uniform problems.

3. EXPERIMENTS TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME

Two referees

The Board, having monitored the experiment of using of two referees in a number of federations, decided to end the experiment.

9.15metre Advancement

The Board received reports from the Football Association and from the Scottish Football Association about the experiment of advancing play by 9.15 metres towards the centre of the opposing goal where a player failed to respect the required distance, delayed the restart of play by carrying, throwing or kicking the ball away, showed dissent by word or action or indulged in any other form of unsporting behaviour.

It agreed that the experiment should continue for another year with an amendment to the current experiment to cease the advancement of play at the penalty area line.

Advertising

The Board noted with concern that its decision taken on 4 March 1995 prohibiting advertising and club logos on goal nets and corner flags, was not being respected. Such advertising or publicity is not permitted in the Laws of the Game and FIFA was asked to take action against clubs which do not respect these instructions.

Celebration of a Goal

The Board recognized that the celebration of a goal was an important and emotional part of football and relaxed the earlier statement in FIFA Circular 579 of 23rd January 1996 that any player removing their jersey when celebrating a goal should be cautioned.

Players will no longer be cautioned if they remove their shirt but they will be cautioned for unsporting behavior if their celebrations are provocative and intended to incite or ridicule opponents or opposing spectators. Players guilty of excessive time wasting while celebrating a goal will also be cautioned.

USSF Advice to Referees: The purpose of this guidance is to remove the requirement that a player who removes his shirt while celebrating a goal is to be cautioned automatically. The Board has emphasized the continued importance of dealing with celebrations which incite, are provocative, or take an excessive amount of time.

Players Wearing Spectacles

Sympathy was expressed for players, especially young players, who need to wear spectacles. It was accepted that new technology had made sports spectacles much safer, both for the player himself and for other players.

While the referee has the final decision on the safety of players' equipment, the Board expects that they will take full account of modern technology and the improved safety features of spectacle design when making their decision.

USSF Advice to Referees: Referees must not interpret the above statement to mean either that "sports glasses" must automatically be considered safe or that glasses which are not manufactured to be worn during sports are automatically to be considered unsafe. The referee must make the final decision: the Board has simply recognized that new technology has made safer the wearing of glasses during play.

Artificial Surfaces

The Board was pleased to note the major developments taking place in artificial playing surfaces and the introduction of the FIFA Quality Concept for Artificial Turf. FIFA stated that there was great interest in the introduction of these surfaces both for climatic reasons and for use in enclosed all seated stadia.

Artificial surfaces are already permitted for qualifying matches in the 2002 FIFA World Cup™ and Olympic Football Tournaments.

The amendments to the Laws take effect from 1st July 2001 and other instructions and directives from the Board are introduced with immediate effect.

USSF Advice to Referees: It is particularly important to note that all directives above are in effect immediately.