

# Oregon School Activities Association

## Soccer Bulletin #5

**2016**

We are coming into crunch time. For whatever reason, many of the better varsity teams' schedules this year had less competitive opponents in the early season. Now the outcome of today's game may have a big impact on who makes the playoffs and who doesn't. Let's step it up, so the players determine the outcome and not referee mistakes. That means showing up at least 30 minutes before scheduled kickoff and going through all of our pre-game responsibilities. It means wearing a proper, complete, professional uniform because we never get a second chance to make a good first impression. It means running, sometimes running very fast, and getting where we can see play, particularly seeing contact between players. And it definitely means calling the fouls that are there and giving the cards that identify misconduct, without feeling bad that we had to give the free kick or the card.

There have been a significant number of head injuries reported so far this year. This is a tribute to your great job of reporting these incidents and their outcome at the field. The school administrators need to know what happened, so they can see that the players receive appropriate care. I have seen only one incident in which a coach returned a player with a head injury to the same game. If this happens, we need to report that it occurred. We do not have the right to prevent the coach from doing so, even if it strains credulity that the player really was cleared by an appropriate health care professional at the game site. Your commissioner will report this to the school and any coach who does such a thing is placing their coaching career at risk.

Game reports continue to be a challenge for some referees. All cards given must be reported. The report must include enough information that someone who wasn't at the game can tell what happened. Simply saying something like "unsporting behavior" is not sufficient. What did they do? What did they say? "He used bad language" is not enough. Put the actual words you heard in the report. On the other hand, some referees are reporting their opinions or their thoughts, such as "I almost carded white #7 for arguing calls." No post game action will be taken for a card that you didn't give. And please do not make comments about your fellow officials in the game report. That information should go in a separate e-mail to your commissioner.

Sometimes, we encounter scoreboards that die on us in mid-game. Or the scoreboard operator isn't paying attention. I've even seen the operator not update the score for the home team! It would be a good thing to make contact with the operator before the game, just to remind them of the length of the halves, the half time, that they should count down the last 10 seconds of the half and verifying whether there will be a horn or buzzer at zero. All of the referees should keep a back up watch, just in case the scoreboard dies or the clock operator gets off by a significant amount. The referee has the authority to correct the clock, if necessary. If the operator is repeatedly not stopping the clock at the correct times, get the clock corrected. There is a point, however, at which you should order the clock

shut down and keep the time on the field. In my opinion, and this is just an opinion, not a rule interpretation, the third time it happens, shut it down. Obviously, if the clock does go blank, the referee has the time and they should communicate that to the coaches, as a good game management practice.

If a drop ball is kicked by one or both players before it hits the ground, we do the drop ball again. 9.2.4 PENALTY. If the same player kicks the ball too soon a second time, you have the option to caution the player. It is not required, however, so use your best judgment. I would suggest that the player's attitude would play a role in your decision. Even if you give a card, though, and the player has to leave the field, the restart is still a drop ball.

WEATHER! There are reports that the Pacific Northwest is in for some wild weather in the next 10 days. Please work with the home school to determine if the game can be played safely. See rule 1.7 That includes not only the condition of the field itself but also whether "the elements and other conditions," such as wind, rain, lightning, etc. will allow the game to be played. Until the game begins, that decision is strictly up to the home school's administrator, i.e. the athletic director or their representative. We can offer an opinion but the decision is theirs.

However, once the game begins, the referee determines whether the game can continue safely. Please do not try to 'over rule' the school's pre-game decision by starting the game and immediately terminating it. However, it is your responsibility to deal with changes in conditions during the game that affect the safety of players (and referees!) Just FYI, by OSAA adoption, any game that lasts for a complete first half or more is official if the game has to be ended prematurely. Anything less than that has to be replayed from the start. You, however, do not make the determination about complete game v. replay. Just report the facts in your game report. This should not come into consideration when you determine whether the game can continue or not.

I'd say "stay dry," but we all know that isn't going to happen.

Patrick Duffy

OSAA State Rules Interpreter