

Oregon School Activities Association

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We are now at the point in the season where we don't need to take water breaks anymore. Now it's more like breaks from water. If a grass field is absolutely soaked, the home school may choose to not play the game. That's their right. See rule 1.7. However, if they aren't saying anything, you should not be too shy to point out that the field is really unplayable. Some players may even enjoy playing on a field that will be a mud pit by the end of the game. But games on those fields are usually a travesty and the field is a complete mess afterwards. We've even had a case where a turf field was under water and that is clearly not playable.

There have been a few games already this year in which a head coach or assistant coach was shown the red card, usually for insulting language directed to the referees. Please remember that the wording of the rule is "using insulting, offensive or abusive language or gestures." Note that the word is "or," not "and." Even language that is "only" insulting should result in a red card. "Insulting" is clearly different, of course, from dissent. Yellow for dissent, red for insulting, offensive or abusive.

When a coach or other bench personnel is shown the red card, they must leave. They MUST go far enough away that you can't see or hear them. Do not restart the game until you see that they are gone. I know, I know. The players and surviving coaches just want to get the game going again. Please resist the social pressure to restart right away. But they did the deed and now they have to do the perp walk. It's on them, not you. You can always tell the coaches who are still on the bench something like "we have to wait until he's gone." OSAA considers that failing to leave after a coach or other bench personnel is disqualified (red card) is a very, very serious offense. You absolutely must include in your game report the particulars of any disqualification, including their behavior, good or bad, after you show the red card. And, of course, call your commissioner after you leave the game site to report what happened when any red card is shown.

And now for something completely different. I have received some reports that referees are not stopping the clock during sub-varsity games when the rules require it. You do not have the right to change the NFHS rules as adopted by OSAA. The players in those games have the same right as the varsity players to a complete game with two 40 minute halves and a clock that stops on goals, cards, injuries and penalty kicks. See 6.2.3.

The game reports I have seen so far this year are greatly improved over what I saw last year. However, I am still seeing some referees giving a team with a red card and three cautions a perfect 10 for sportsmanship. That kind of misconduct is not sporting behavior. You should find it difficult to give even a 5, for average behavior, to a team with that record in this game.

Your description of both yellow and red card offenses must give a short but complete description of what happened, the name, number and school of the offender and the minute the offense occurred. Did they leave the field? Did they make any comments to you or the world in general as they left? Were there any further problems with the player or coach during or after the game? Please do not just describe what happened as “UB” (for unsporting behavior.) That is not sufficient information. Finally, the term “excessive force” (as well as “disproportionate” or “unnecessary” force) is reserved for red card offenses. If you say something like “he tackled the opponent with excessive force” and you report a yellow card, the reader may wonder whether you just clicked the wrong box and really meant that you gave a red card. Since cards can be protested by the school, we have to be clear about what occurred and how that fits within the yellow and red card offenses described in the NFHS rules.

Finally, if you have a problem with a fellow official before, during or after a game, please do not include that in your game report. The game report is about what the two teams did. You should contact your commissioner if you have a problem with another official.

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