



# Summary of the 2004 Changes To the Laws of the Game

This year's Annual General Meeting of the International Football Association Board (IFAB), its 118<sup>th</sup>, was part of a weekend of FIFA Centennial celebrations in London, paying tribute to the four British associations' key contributions to the game of football. The revisions to the Laws that were approved are given below. A few comments regarding the application of these changes in AYSO are also shown. Changes go into effect 1 July 2004.

## Law 1 – The Field of Play

**Field Surface**—New section:

*Matches may be played on natural or artificial surfaces, according to the rules of the competition.*

## Law 1 – The Field of Play; New Decision 7

*Where artificial surfaces are used in either competition matches between representative teams of associations affiliated to FIFA or international club competition matches, the surface must meet the requirements of the FIFA Quality Concept for Artificial Turf or the International Artificial Turf Standard, unless special dispensation is given by FIFA.*

**IFAB's Reason:** "Advances in artificial surface technology have created high quality surfaces, which are fully acceptable at all levels of the game. This proposal recognises the surface of the field in the Laws of the Game for the first time and also the fact that artificial surfaces in identified levels of international competition must meet recognised FIFA standards."

## Law 1 – The Field of Play; New Decision 8

*Where a technical area exists, it must meet the requirements approved by the International FA Board, which are contained in this publication.*

**IFAB's Reason:** "This new International FA Board Decision gives formal recognition to the text on the technical area, which is published as an appendix to the Laws in the Laws of the Game booklet."

**AYSO Comment:** AYSO's technical area is called the *Coaches' Area*. It extends ten yards on each side of the halfway line, the front and back edges, respectively, one and three yards from the touch line.

Participation by coaches during AYSO games is limited to **positive instruction and encouragement**. Coaches must remain within the coaches' area.

## Law 3 – The Number of Players

**Other Matches**—This section has been replaced with the following:

*In other matches, up to six substitutes may be used.*

**IFAB's Reason:** "The practice of making large numbers of substitutions in friendly matches devalues the game and creates a farcical situation. The number of substitutes used in friendly matches must be controlled."

**AYSO Comment:** This change does not impact AYSO; our substitution rules are given in the *AYSO National Rules and Regulations*.

## Law 5 – The Referee; Revised Decision 2

The new text reads as follows:

*In tournaments or competitions where a fourth official is appointed, his role and duties must be in accordance with the guidelines approved by the International FA Board, which are contained in this publication.*

**IFAB's Reason:** "This additional text using the phrase 'which are contained in this publication' is to provide consistent wording with other IFAB Decisions and to formally recognise the guidelines on the fourth official published in the Laws of the Game booklet."

## Law 7 – The Duration of the Match

**Extra Time**—The text reading "Competition rules may provide for two further equal periods to be played. The conditions of Law 8 will apply." is being deleted. It will now be included in "Procedures to determine the winner of a match" following Law 17 in the Law Book.

## **Law 10 – The Method of Scoring**

**Competition Rules**—This paragraph has been revised to read as follows:

*When competition rules require there to be a winning team after a match has been drawn, only the following procedures, which have been approved by the International FA Board, are permitted:*

- *Away goals rule*
- *Extra time*
- *Kicks from the penalty mark*

## **Law 10 – The Method of Scoring; New Decision 1**

*Only procedures to determine the winner of a match, which are approved by the International FA Board and contained in this publication, are permitted in competition rules.*

**IFAB’s Reasons for both Law 10 changes:** *“These texts confirm the decision taken at the Annual Business Meeting of the IFAB in September 2003 that competition rules to determine the winner of a match may only include procedures that have been approved by the International FA Board.”*

## **Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct; New Decision 6**

The new decision reads as follows:

*A player who removes his jersey when celebrating a goal must be cautioned for unsporting behaviour.*

**IFAB’s Reason:** *“The removal of the jersey after a goal has been scored is unnecessary and players must avoid such excessive displays of celebration.”*

**AYSO Comment:** We want to avoid unnecessarily cautioning players. Until this decision is widely understood, coaches should instruct their players to not remove their jerseys to celebrate the scoring of a goal. Referees, during equipment inspection, should also remind players.

## **Procedures to Determine the Winner of a Match**

The Golden Goal is no longer an approved method of breaking a tie. The paragraphs down to “Kicks from the Penalty Mark” have been replaced by the following:

*Away goals, extra time 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.*

### ***Away Goals***

*Competition rules may provide that where teams play each other home and away, if the scores are equal after the second match, any goals scored at the ground of the opposing team will count double.*

### ***Extra Time***

*Competition rules may provide for two further equal periods, not exceeding 15 minutes each, to be played. The conditions of Law 8 will apply.*

### ***Kicks from the Penalty Mark***

*Text unchanged*

**IFAB’s Reason:** *“This text confirms the procedures proposed earlier.”*

## **Other Issues Discussed**

### **Radio Communication System**

*It was recognised that this technology could make a positive contribution to match control but it was also recognised that such a system must only be used for communication between the match officials and must not be used for broadcasting purposes.*

### **Radio Communication between Players and Technical Staff**

*The Board supported FIFA’s opposition to the use of radio communication between players and technical staff.*

## **Law 4 – The Players’ Equipment**

*The Board agreed that the use of a one-piece playing suit was contrary to the Laws of the Game.*