



Summary of the 2009 Changes To the Laws of the Game

The 123rd Annual General Meeting of the International Football Association Board was held February 28th in Northern Ireland. With 2010 FIFA World Cup™ qualification matches underway, the IFAB made minimal revisions. There are no changes in interpretation or application of the *Laws of the Game*.

Law 11 – Offside (Interpretations of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees)

When a defender leaves the field of play without the referee's permission, the defender remains a player and must be considered for the purposes of judging offside. The text of the Law 11 interpretation now makes this requirement explicit. The player is to be considered to be on the goal line or touch line, as appropriate, at the point of departure from the field. This applies whether or not the referee decides that the departure constitutes a cautionable offense. If he does, the referee must caution the player at the next stoppage.

Procedures to Determine the Winner of a Match or Home-And-Away

In the procedure for Kicks from the Penalty Mark, the explanation of the “reduce to equate” rule has been extended to emphasize that any player who is excluded under this rule may not participate in kicks from the penalty mark. As a practical matter, this means that any player so excluded may not remain on the field with the players who are participating in the kicks.

The Technical Area

Previously, only one person within the technical area was authorized to convey tactical instructions and was required to return to the bench area immediately thereafter. The second portion of this requirement has been eliminated.

Injured players

The IFAB reminded referees of their responsibility under Law 5 to stop the match if, in the opinion of the referee, a player is seriously injured. Players should not have to kick the ball out of play in order to obtain a stoppage for a seriously injured player. Referees must assess the status of an apparently injured player and decide promptly whether a stoppage is required. AYSO referees should additionally consider the age and skill level of players when making such judgments. As a general rule, the younger the player, the more likely it is that a stoppage for an apparent injury should occur.

The amendments to the *Laws of the Game* and decisions of the IFAB become mandatory from 1 July, but for seasons not ended by that date the adopted alterations to the Laws may be delayed until the following season.

The 2009/2010 *Laws of the Game*, AYSO Edition, should be available from the AYSO Supply Center in July.

Prepared by the AYSO National Referee Advisory Commission
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