

2005 NCAA MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SOCCER RULES CHANGES

**BY: Kenneth G. Andres, Jr., Esq.
NISOA National Rules Interpreter**

The NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee conducted its annual meeting February 15-17, 2005 in Key West, Florida and later conferred via telephone conference call approving certain changes for the 2005 playing season which are digested below.

Rule 1 - The Field of Play

**Rule 1 §1b
Dimensions** **New facilities shall be a minimum of 70 yards [64.01m] in width by 115 yards [105.15m] in length.**

Comment: An exception allowing facilities with architectural plans before 1995 was deleted although those fields are still permissible. This rule is an administrative rule and can be altered by mutual consent of the competing institutions.

**Rule 1 §2
Boundary Lines** **All lines shall be clearly marked but may not be of a form (e.g., grooves, curbs or other items) that could prove dangerous to players. Further, during the regular season, painted logos or other non-commercial field markings are at the discretion of the host institution.**

A.R. 1 May an institution place markings of a commercial nature on the field? RULING: No.

Comment: The NCAA allows non-commercial field markings and the committee felt the

addition of logos, slogans or mascots would enhance the atmosphere and promote school spirit. The practice of logos painted on the field is already occurring in many conferences.

**Rule 1 §12a
Coaching and
Team Areas**

Penalty for being out of coaching and team area - Upon the first occurrence, the referee shall instruct the coach to return to the coaching and team area. On the second infraction, a caution shall be issued. On the third occurrence, an ejection shall be issued.

Comment: This is not a change in the current rules, but aligns the language in the rules book with current practices among referees.

**Rule 1 § 12-A.R. 5
Coaching and
Team Areas**

Are bench personnel in the press box or spectator area permitted to communicate in any way with bench personnel in the coaching and team areas? RULING: No.

Comment: This Approved Ruling was changed to clarify that all bench personnel, not exclusively coaches, are not allowed outside of the coaching and team area during the game. This item will be on the 2005 rules survey after several coaches proposed that bench personnel be allowed to sit in the spectator areas and communicate with bench personnel.

Rule 2 - The Ball

**Rule 2 §2
Style, Shape
and Material**

The ball shall be spherical. The outer casing shall be leather or approved synthetic and no material shall be used in its construction that might prove dangerous to players.

Comment: This rule change deleted the previous requirement that balls be “stitched,” bringing it into conformance with current manufacturer standards of producing soccer balls.

Rule 3 - Players and Substitutes

Rule 3 § 5a **Goalkeepers - With reference to periods of play, substitutes are**
Reentry Conditions, **as follows:**
Restrictions,
Exceptions

First half: One reentry.

Second half: One reentry.

First overtime period: One reentry.

Second overtime period: One reentry.

Comment: Unlimited reentry of goalkeepers was deleted to avoid the tactic of repeatedly substituting goalkeeper(s) during the last five minutes of the game (the only time the clock stops for substitutions) and delaying the game. In an effort to stop multiple goalkeeper substitutions in the last five minutes of the game and thus, delaying the game, the committee permitted the additional reentry conditions for the goalkeeper, in excess of those permitted for field players.

Rule 4 - Player’s Equipment

Rule 4 §1-b **Players shall wear shinguards under the stockings in the manner**
Uniforms - **intended without exception. The shinguards shall be professionally**
Shinguards **manufactured, age and size appropriate and not altered to decrease**
protection. Further, the NCAA will require players to wear shinguards

that meet -within two years of its adoption - standards established by the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE).

Comment: For years, officials have expressed safety concerns about players wearing inappropriate shinguards and the associated liability for injury. NOCSAE is in the final stages of developing a standard, expected to be released in the Spring of 2006. Adding this language to the rules book now allows coaches the opportunity to plan and budget for the purchase of NOCSAE approved shinguards when they are available. NOCSAE currently provides standards for equipment in several NCAA sports, including softball, baseball and football.

**Rule 4 §2b
Contrasting
Colors -
Goalkeepers**

Goalkeepers shall wear jerseys and socks that distinguish them from all field players. Goalkeepers can have the same jersey colors as an opposing goalkeeper.

Comment: The 2004 rules book did not allow for goalkeepers to wear jerseys, shorts or socks which were the same color as referees; this rule change caused concern throughout the coaching community because goalkeepers' socks and shorts are often black, the same color as the referees. By deleting the words "and referee" from the end of the rule, this will allow goalkeepers and referees to wear the same colors. Referees will still be able to differentiate between the goalkeepers and other field players as their jerseys and socks must be different from all field players.

**Rule 4 §2d
Contrasting Colors**

It is recommended that any visible garment worn under the jersey or shorts shall be a solid color that matches the dominant color of the respective garment.

Comment: The prior rule required compliance and has been changed to a “recommendation.” The committee felt that changing the rule to a recommendation complies with standard practice and does not impact the image of the game. This is an administrative rule and may be altered by prior mutual consent.

**Rule 4 §2e
Contrasting
Colors -
Substitutes**

It is recommended that players warming up outside the coaching and team areas wear colored jerseys/vests that distinguish them from all other field players.

Comment: This change will allow referees to more easily distinguish the players on the field from the players warming up. This is an administrative rule and may be altered by prior mutual consent.

**Rule 4 §6
Jewelry**

**A player shall not wear jewelry of any type whatsoever. Exception:
Medical alert items may be worn but must be taped to the body.**

Comment: Questions arose as to whether or not the “Lance Armstrong Live Strong” and similar unity bracelets qualified as jewelry. Many players wore these bracelets asserting they were not dangerous as they were made of a soft, pliable material. The committee

amended this rule to clarify that these bracelets are jewelry and as such, are illegal.

Rule 4 §6 New A.R. 43 Jewelry **May a player wear earrings, chains, charms, watches, hair clips, bobby pins, tongue studs, bracelets of any type or items associated with piercing (visible or not visible). RULING: NO.**

Comment: This new approved ruling clarifies that the “Lance Armstrong Live Strong” or other soft unity bracelets are considered jewelry and are not allowed.

Rule 5 - The Referee

Rule 5 §2 Uniform **All referees shall dress in the prescribed uniform and wear shoes that are predominantly black. Shirts of the same color and style shall be alike for all officials and shall be in contrast to those worn by the competing team. Exception: Shirts may match the color of goalkeeper jerseys. It is permissible for officials to wear a cap.**

Comment: This clarification is in accord with the change previously noted in Rule 4 §2b addressing contrasting colors - goalkeepers.

Rule 5 §5 Discretionary Power **A.R. 61. What happens in the event that the assigned referee fails to appear for a game? RULING: (1) The senior assistant referee shall assume the role of referee provided the services of a certified assistant referee is immediately available - and both teams agree to the selection of the substitute official prior to the**

game beginning. Moreover, once the game begins, it shall continue under the control of the three officials who started the game. (2) Failing (1) above, the two assistant referees assigned to the game then shall operate the dual-referee system of control. (3) If the game begins under the dual-system of control and the assigned referee then appears, he/she shall assume the role of assistant referee and the remainder of the game shall be governed by the diagonal system of control.

Comment: The updated language is in accord with the procedures followed by NISOA in the event an assigned referee fails to appear for a game.

Rule 6 - Other Officials and Their Duties

Rule 6 §3 Timekeeper

When an electronically controlled scoreboard clock is visible to both benches and spectators, it shall be used as the official timepiece. The clock may count up or down, however, it is recommended that it count down. There shall be one official timekeeper designated by the home team.

Comment: This rule change clarifies the fact that the electronically controlled scoreboard clock may count up or down at the discretion of the home institution.

Rule 6 §5 Ball Persons

It is recommended that a minimum of four ball persons - appropriately positioned and at least 10 years of age - be provided for the duration of

the game. Further, it is recommended that ball persons wear colored jerseys/vests that distinguish them for all field players.

Comment: This change recommending that ball persons wear different colored jerseys/vests will allow players and referees to more easily distinguish the ball persons. This is an administrative rule and may be altered by prior mutual consent.

Official NCAA interpretations can be obtained at a website addressing frequently asked questions and rule interpretations answered by Secretary-Rules Editor C. Cliff McCrath at: NCAA.org. Go to Sports and Championships and follow the prompts to Interpretations to access this benefit.