

# UNITED STATES SOCCER FEDERATION



## Memorandum 2000

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The 114<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the International Football Association Board was held in Cliveden (England) on February 19, 2000. A number of proposals for changes to the Laws had been put forward for discussion. The actual amendments are now listed below (IFAB Circular 710, March 27, 2000) and will come into force on July 1, 2000.

## **I. AMENDMENTS TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME**

### **1. Law 1 -- The Field of Play**

#### **New Decision 4:**

**(Present Decisions 4 and 5 become Decisions 5 and 6 respectively)**

*There shall be no advertising of any kind within the technical area or within one metre from the touch line and outside the field play on the ground. Further, no advertising shall be allowed in the area between the goal line and the goal nets.*

#### **Reason:**

This clarifies the situation regarding limiting possible advertising around the field of play. It does not permit advertising on the ground within the technical area but does not forbid, for example, advertising on the perspex cover over the trainer's bench in the technical area.

***USSF Advice to Referees: This change extends FIFA's limitation on advertising to include the ground of the technical areas, within one yard from the touch line, and the areas bounded by the net. Advertising would be permitted on the plastic covers often used over the benches in the technical area.***

### **2. Law 3 -- The Number of Players**

#### **New Text:**

Other Matches:

*In other matches, substitutes may be used provided that*

- the teams concerned reach an agreement on a maximum number
- the referee is informed before the match

If the referee is not informed, or if no agreement is reached before the start of the match, no more than three substitutes are allowed.

#### **Reason:**

This new text gives teams flexibility in the number of substitutions permitted in **friendly matches** but the previous controls regarding teams reaching agreement on the numbers to be permitted and on the need for the referee to be informed before the match still remain.

**USSF Advice to Referees:** *Consistent with existing USSF guidelines, referees on matches such as exhibition/friendly games should inquire as far ahead of time as possible regarding the exact number of permitted substitutions agreed to by both teams. Teams are strongly encouraged to determine this number as early as possible and to communicate the information no later than when the team rosters are given to the officials.*

### **3. Law 3 -- The Number of Players**

#### **New Decision 2:**

The coach may convey tactical instructions to the players during the match *and he must return to his position immediately after giving these instructions*. He and the other officials must remain within the confines of the technical area, where such an area is provided, and they must behave in a responsible manner.

#### **Reason:**

This is a simple addition, which brings the text of International F. A. Board Decision 2 into line with the present text concerning the technical areas.

**USSF Advice to Referees:** *The requirement that the coach "must return to his position" should not be interpreted to mean that the coach is required to sit down.*

### **4. Law 6 -- The Assistant Referees**

#### **New Text:**

#### **Duties:**

Two assistant referees are appointed whose duties, subject to the decision of the referee, are to indicate:

- when the whole of the ball has passed out of the field of play
- which side is entitled to a corner kick, goal kick or throw-in
- when a player may be penalised for being in an offside position
- when a substitution is requested
- when misconduct or any other incident has occurred out of the view of the referee
- *when offences have been committed whenever the assistants are closer to the action than the referee (this includes, in particular circumstances, offences committed in the penalty area)*
- *whether, at penalty kicks, the goalkeeper has moved forward before the ball has been kicked and if the ball has crossed the line*

#### **Assistance:**

The assistant referees also assist the referee to control the match in accordance with the Laws of the Game. *In particular, they may enter the field of play to help control the 9.15 m distance.*

## **Reason:**

The duties of the assistant referee are now more clearly defined in the Laws of the Game and increase his responsibility. Assistant referees are expected to give assistance to the referee when they are in a better position to see the incident, especially for incidents inside the penalty area.

It is important to understand the specific distance from the offence **is not** the main criteria. The most important consideration is that the assistant referee has a better view of the incident.

Assistant referees are also expected to indicate to the referee when the goalkeeper moves forward from his goal line at a penalty kick **and** the ball does not enter the goal. The nature of the signal to be given is to be determined by the officials in pre-match discussions.

At penalty kicks, assistant referees are also responsible for judging whether the ball has crossed the goal line.

Assistant referees are also instructed that, whenever necessary, they should enter the field of play to ensure that the 9.15 m distance is respected for free kicks near to where they are positioned.

***USSF Advice to Referees: Standard procedures, as outlined in the Guide to Procedures, clearly assign initial responsibility to the assistant referee for judging goals, whether scored during play or as a result of a penalty kick.***

***Aside from this, there are three new concepts which IFAB has introduced in this change to Law 6: signaling offenses based on having a better view, signaling when the keeper has violated Law 14 by coming forward from the goal line before the ball is in play, and entering the field to assist with enforcing the required distance on free kicks and corner kicks. Referees should note the following guidelines regarding each of these concepts.***

- ***Signaling offenses based on having a better view. IFAB has made it clear that distance (nearness) is not the main issue. USSF continues to emphasize that the primary basis for the assistant referee having a better view is when the incident happens behind the referee's back, on the opposite side of the player from the referee, or when other players screen the referee's view. Furthermore, assistant referees should refrain from signaling even when their view of an incident is better if, based on the referee's decisions observed so far, it is clear that the referee would not have stopped play for the action because it was doubtful or trifling or if stopping play would have given an advantage to the opposing team.***
- ***Signaling when the keeper has violated Law 14 by coming forward from the goal line before the ball is in play. It is critical that referees decide what signal should be given in such cases and that the signal is clearly described to the assistant referees in the pre-match discussions. The signal selected must, however, meet the criteria given in the Foreword to the Guide to Procedures. USSF intends to monitor developing practices in this area and will, after a suitable interval, determine if a standard signal should be incorporated into the Guide to Procedures.***

- **Entering the field to assist with enforcing the required distance on free kicks and corner kicks.** *Referees must discuss in the pre-game meeting the specific circumstances in which they will expect assistant referees to perform this responsibility. In most cases, a signal should be agreed on to indicate that such assistance is needed. Assistant referees must not enter the field or in any other way interfere unnecessarily with a team's right to an immediate free kick restart. In this regard, they must exercise the same judgment expected of referees in properly managing restarts.*

## 5. Law 12 -- Fouls and Misconduct

### New Text:

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own penalty area, commits any of the following five offences:

- *Takes more than six seconds while controlling the ball with his hands before releasing it from his possession*

(Rest of text unchanged)

### Reason:

This change means that time-wasting by the goalkeeper with the ball in his hands or arms is now measured in time rather than distance. The Law no longer limits the goalkeeper to taking four steps when he has control of the ball in his hands or arms. He is allowed to carry the ball for a maximum of six seconds but may take as many steps as he wished within this period.

***USFF Advice to Referees: In removing the "four step rule" and now defining time-wasting solely in terms of time, IFAB has moved the Law even closer to the original reason for this limitation. Referees are reminded, however, that the time taken by the goalkeeper while gaining control of the ball is not counted, trivial infringements of this limitation should not be penalized, and the referee must not count the time verbally or with any visible action.***

## 6. Law 12 -- Fouls and Misconduct

### New Text:

Sending-off offences no. 6:

- *uses offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gestures*

### Reason:

A player may now be sent off if, in the opinion of the referee, he is guilty of using language **or gestures** which are offensive or insulting or abusive. The referee must take into account the severity of the offence.

He continues to have the authority to decide whether, in his opinion, a player's unacceptable language or gestures are to be deemed a sending-off offence.

***USFF Advice to Referees: USFF has long advised referees that the use of the term "language" in prior editions of the Laws of the Games was to be interpreted to include gestures. All verbal and nonverbal communication must be judged by the referee.***

## **7. Kicks from the Penalty Mark**

### **New bullet points:**

- *When a team finishes the match with a greater number of players than their opponents, they shall reduce their numbers to equate with that of their opponents and inform the referee of the name and number of each player excluded. The team captain has this responsibility.*
- *Before the start of kicks from the penalty mark the referee shall ensure that only an equal number of players from each team remain within the centre circle and they shall take the kicks.*

### **Reason:**

This arrangement for kicks from the penalty mark is applied at the end of play when one team has fewer players on the field of play than the other because of expulsion or injury and all eligible substitutes have been used.

The team with more players will be permitted to reduce their number of players to equate with the other team. This is to avert the situation where, all the players in the team with fewer players having taken their kicks, their strongest kicker would be advantaged by being matched against the weakest kicker of the team with more players.

The team captain is responsible for informing the referee of the name and number of the player(s) who will not take kicks from the penalty mark.

***USFF Advice to Referees: The referee will be aware of such an imbalance of numbers and must take the initiative with the affected team captain to obtain the necessary information about who from that team will not participate in the taking of kicks from the penalty mark (and who must also therefore not be on the field during this activity).***

***Players who are off the field to correct illegal equipment or to care for bleeding or blood on the uniform are still considered players and may participate in kicks from the penalty mark, provided their return to the field follows the requirements of Law 3 (referee inspection and permission). Players off the field temporarily due to an injury may also return to the field, provided they have the referee's permission.***

***A player who is declared by the team captain to be injured and unable to participate in kicks from the penalty mark cannot be substituted, even if the team has a substitution remaining. In such a case, the team is considered to be reduced in size just as if a player had been sent off. The opposing team will reduce its size by a like number.***

***The referee must make every effort to complete any player inspections he is required to do under Law 3 in advance of beginning to take kicks from the penalty mark.***

## **8. Fourth Official**

### **Amendments to bullet points:**

- The Fourth Official assists the referee at all times. *He must indicate to the referee when the wrong player is cautioned because of mistaken identity or when a player is not sent off having been seen to be given a second caution or when violent conduct occurs out of the view of the referee and assistant referees. The referee, however, retains the authority to decide on all points connected with play.*

### **Reason:**

The new text increases the authority of the Fourth Official and allows him to take action in situations not concerned with actual play.

***USSF Advice to Referees: Although not expressly stated, it is clear that the fourth official may also indicate to the referee when the wrong player is being sent-off because of mistaken identity. The referee must include in his pre-game discussion an indication of how the fourth official can best provide this sort of information as quickly and effectively as possible so that the error can be corrected.***

***Such errors are preferably rectified before play restarts, but the correction can be made later if the necessary information doesn't get to the referee in time.***

***Where violent conduct has been seen by the fourth official to occur out of the view of the referee and assistant referees, the fourth official may communicate directly with the referee about the incident. The referee may, however, indicate in the pre-game discussion that a different procedure should be followed.***

## **9. Other Actions**

Furthermore, the International F. A. Board expressed its concern at the widespread failure of referees to apply the Laws of the Game when a penalty kick is being taken. Referees must be prepared to take action against a player(s) entering the penalty area before a penalty kick is taken. According to the Laws of the Game it is not necessary to caution a player guilty of this offence but the referee must be prepared to order the kick to be re-taken in appropriate circumstances.

***USSF Advice to Referees: Although not expressly included in the above admonition, IFAB presumably meant to include other similar violations of Law 14 (e.g., entering the penalty arc or moving closer than twelve yards toward the goal line). Referees are reminded that retaking the penalty kick is not automatically a remedy for violating Law 14 (see the chart in Advice to Referees 14.9) and that only violations which are neither doubtful nor trifling require any action by the referee.***