

## NOTES FROM THE VSOA DIRECTOR OF INSTRUCTION / RULES INTERPRETER 2020-2021

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### **ADVANTAGE Rule 5.3.1.d**

Applying advantage by calling out “play on” (or “advantage”) & signaling with an under swing of one or both arms means you have observed a foul but you are electing to let the foul go unpunished because by calling the foul would be advantageous to the offending team. If the continuing play that was anticipated does not develop at that time, the referee shall penalize the original foul. It is best to have a slow whistle to see if the advantage develops rather than a quick whistle that takes the advantage away from the offended team.

When the referee has called “play on” and allowed play to continue, if the original foul warranted a caution or an ejection said “card” should be administered at the next stoppage of play. Do not call “play on” if there has been no foul but you simply want play to continue, you may call out “nothing”, “no foul”, or anything other than “play on” or “advantage”.

### **ANCHOR THE GOALS**

This topic has been covered multiple times over recent years by former DOIs, *Marty Adams, 2014-2017 and Andy Gingris, 2018-2019*. This is one of the few times that we should not play the game. This is a serious safety issue. Do not start the games until the goals are (in your opinion) properly anchored or counter-weighted. Do not allow school officials or coaches to tell you that other referees have not had an issue for prior games so you should allow the game to be played. Safety. Safety. Safety.

Some goal manufacturers have lower bars attached to the base if the goal posts running back from the goal line for attaching the lower sides of the goal nets. Some older goal parts may rust or become disassembled from the base of the goal posts and the exposed ends are lying next to the goal post. This creates a safety hazard and must be addressed prior to starting the game.

Have the sides and bottom of goal nets properly affixed to the goal posts, cross bar and back bar (or anchored to the ground). Check for holes in the nets. It will be a problem if during a game a referee cannot be sure if the ball was in the goal because it passed through or under the net. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

### **ASSISTANT REFEREE TRAINING 2021**

The Vermont Principals Association has directed that all Vermont High School soccer State Playoff Semi-Finals and Finals are to be officiated using the **Diagonal System of Control**, aka 3-person system. During the regular season schools may request 3-person officiating crews for some of their more competitive or rivalry games. Some schools are limited by budget challenges as to the number of games they can request the extra official. This impacts our opportunities to practice.

It is critical that the **officiating team conduct a thorough pre-game discussion**. How will you support each other? How will you communicate? And what is expected of your teammates are just a few of the general topics. This pre-game is what is to be used and carried out during the game. It is an agreement on how you will all work together. If what is discussed (and agreed to) in the pre-game is not exercised or carried out during the game; it may lead to miscommunication and confusion. As the NFHS book (Page 90) states, “the assistant referees are assistants to the referee, their duties (**subject to the**

**decision of the referee...**). What this means is that during the pre-game discussion the referee will explain how best you can assist him/her during the game. **The AR's job is to "assist", not "insist".**

Several very experienced referees acknowledge that converting from a 2-person system (and a whistle) to the AR using a flag is not comfortable. It feels different. To be an AR that is unfamiliar with positioning, duties, priorities and mechanics in a competitive game, is not a good experience. Training and practice is the way to enhance your comfort level and your performance.

### **ADAPTING TO AR DUTIES**

A challenge with **adapting to the AR duties from a dual system** is that **in the dual system referees focus on watching play and judging for fouls**. This means they are "watching the game" or "watching the ball". **As an AR the focus should be on the second-to-last defender or the ball whichever is closer to the goal line**. If you are ball watching, at some point you will likely look up to find that the second-to-last defender has moved and you are now out of position to make an offside judgment and must catch up. Since offside is the AR's first priority and fouls is their last priority, as an AR you need to adjust and refocus your attention to the second-to-last defender for the entire game.

The 2020 NFHS Rule Book shows the AR signals on page 82. Pages 90-92 cover some guidelines for AR positioning and duties. Pages 92-94 outline proper positioning for corner kicks, counterattacks, goal kicks, free kicks at the halfway line, free kicks near the goal and penalty kicks. THE NFHS Book does not tell the whole story. Following are additional points for positioning, duties, priorities, communication and mechanics. Some points overlap and will be repeated, but I will repeat to emphasize the importance of information.

**THERE ARE 3 MAIN DUTIES FOR AN ASSISTANT REFEREE.** In order of priority they are:

**#1 Offside call (on or off);**

**#2 Balls in or out of play.** That includes balls in or out of touch along the touchline AND balls in or out of play on the goal line. And included in this is being a "goal judge" to affirm that a ball has or has not completely crossed over the goal line and between the goal posts

**#3 Fouls (in your quadrant)**

While there are other responsibilities / duties such as signaling for & supporting substitutions, managing team area behavior and fan behavior, talking to players in your quadrant to support overall game management to name a few; these are your primary duties in order of priority.

There are reasons to emphasize the priority order of AR duties. Let's consider the following game situation. You are the lead AR. The ball is being pushed forward by an attacking player with a defender close at his/her side. You have two other attacking players also moving up field looking for the good crossing pass. Do you focus on the potential foul in front of you or the potential offside? Your priority is offside. This should be discussed in the pre-game so the referee can support the AR in this situation. The reasoning behind this priority is; what is more important, a possible foul near the touchline or a "game critical" offside call to judge the position of the attacking player(s) as the ball is crossed toward the area? The referee will be better positioned to help with the possible foul, but he/she is not in a position to help judge offside.

## **AR DUTIES #1 MAKING THE OFFSIDE CALL**

Making the correct call indicating that a player is or is not offside is a “game critical” call. Your **proper position**, even with the second-to-last defender or the ball, whichever is closer to the goal line, is extremely important to be able to make the correct call.

The position of the offensive player’s body in relation to the second-to-last defender is a snap judgment. If a player’s hand is forward of the defender, it is not offside. If the player’s foot or body part that can legally play the ball is forward of the defender, it is considered offside. As stated earlier, because offside calls can be game critical these fine details require your focus and your proper position to make the correct call.

### **HOW TO SIGNAL OFFSIDE**

Once you judge that the player was in an offside position AND “became involved in active play”; stop, face the field, with the flag in your **right** hand, raise your arm and flag directly vertical. Extend your arm. No bent elbow. Look to make eye contact with the referee. When the whistle is blown to stop play, lower your flag to the correct position to show where the restart should take place; far side, middle of the field, near side. Hold your position and hold your flag position until the ball has been placed where you and the referee want it for the restart. Remember that in your defensive third of the field a restart that is off by a yard or two is not critical. However, a restart position can be important if the player taking the free kick is capable of playing the ball into the penalty area. Signaling of offside is ALWAYS made with the right arm.

There is no signal to indicate a player was NOT offside.

## **AR DUTIES #2 BALLS IN & OUT OF PLAY**

First let’s review **BALLS OUT-OF-TOUCH**. The AR position along the touchline often puts them in the better position (than the referee) to determine balls out-of-touch. Discuss this in your pre-game.

Out-of-touch calls in the AR’s quadrant should be made by the AR and then signaled (supported) by the referee. There may be exceptions. In the referee’s quadrant, balls that are **clearly** over the touchline should be made by the referee and **may be** supported with a signal from the AR. Balls over the touchline that are

not clear and obvious can be signaled by the AR looking down the touchline in the referee’s quadrant. Again, this should be part of the pre-game discussion.

### **HOW TO SIGNAL BALLS OUT-OF-TOUCH**

*Should the flag be raised straight up or should the AR simply show direction?* The answer is, it depends.

**If the ball clearly crosses over the touchline;** stop, face the field and (with the flag in the correct hand to signal direction) raise the flag to a 45 degree angle. Hold your position for a few seconds (unless there is a quick restart) to give players a chance to see your flag and direction. Keep in mind that if it is obvious to all that the ball has crossed the touchline, the referee will not blow his/her whistle. (Because the ball was clearly out-of-play, the AR does not have to indicate they have information share; so the flag does not go straight up.)

**If the ball crosses the touchline and players (may) continue to play the ball,** the AR signal is to stop, face the field, with the flag in the correct hand to show direction, raise the flag straight up. (You are now

Indicating, “I have information to share”.) When the referee sees your flag and stops play by blowing his/her whistle, then lower your flag to a 45 degree angle to show direction.

### **AR DUTIES #2 BALLS OUT-OF-PLAY OVER THE GOAL LINE**

It is important for the AR to move, sprint when required, and be in the proper position to make the call. Center referees’ area of responsibility is not to run in their diagonal goal line to goal line. It is the lead AR’s duty to get to the goal line to judge balls that may go out-of-play; or (for that matter) completely over the goal line between the goal posts. If the AR is yards up the touch line when (trying to) make this call, they subject the officiating team to second-guessing by players, coaches and fans.

#### **HOW TO SIGNAL THE INFRACTION**

When the lead AR observes a ball completely over the goal line, and they are in position on the goal line behind the corner flag and facing the goal line; with the flag in the right hand, raise the flag directly over the head. (This means “I have information to share”.) Hold your flag high, no bent elbow. Make eye contact with the referee. When the referee blows his/her whistle to stop play, complete your signal. If you are **signaling for a goal kick restart**, lower your flag extending it parallel to the ground directly in front of you and hold for a few seconds so everyone has time to see your signal. Then move to your restart position (along the touchline) for a goal kick at the 6 yard line. Once the ball is properly placed for the restart in the goal area, you may hold this position at the 6 yard line or move up the touchline to be even with the second-to-last defender, depending on player positions. If you are **signaling for a corner kick restart**, (on the goal line) take a big step to your left along the touchline. With the flag in your right hand, point with your flag to the base of the corner flag pole. The flag should be at a 45 degree (down) angle away from your body. Hold your signal for a few seconds so all can observe. Then move to your restart position behind the corner flag. For a restart from the far corner you may stand in front of the near corner flag to offer the best view of the restart.

When obvious to all that the ball has gone over the goal line, do not raise your flag straight up and then signal. Since your call is obvious, simply signal for a goal kick or corner kick, whichever is correct.

Be in the proper position before signaling. The AR needs to be on the goal line to signal a goal kick or at the one yard line to signal a corner kick.

### **AR DUTIES #3 FOULS AR SIGNALS FOR FOULS**

Signaling fouls may be the #1 priority for the center referee, but the **#3 priority for an AR**. To work as a team, the AR needs to maintain the awareness of the referee’s position and determine if the referee was in position to see the infraction the AR observed. Keep in mind that the referee may have observed the infraction but decided it was trifling or is looking to play advantage. If the infraction occurs directly in front of the AR, the AR can make the call. If the infraction occurs closer to the referee, the referee should make the call.

#### **HOW TO SIGNAL A FOUL INFRACTION**

You have observed a foul. The infraction occurred in close proximity to you or you have noted the referee’s position and feel he/she is not in position to see what you observed. When that criteria is met; stop along the touchline, face the field, with the flag in the correct hand to show (eventual) direction, raise the flag straight up in a “snapping motion”. (You are indicating that you have information to share.) Look to make eye contact with the referee. After the referee has blown the whistle to stop play, wiggle

the flag to indicate a foul and then lower your flag to a 45 degree angle in the direction to show the restart.

### **AR POSITION & POSITIONING**

Quoting from NFHS rules book page 91 “The AR should keep in line with the second-to-last defender on his/her half of the field or the ball, whichever is most forward. ARs have the responsibility for the touchline they are on and the goal line they are moving towards.”

What does this mean? Do not “ball watch”. Focus on the second-to-last defender. Your position is along and approximately one yard back from the touchline. Do not come onto the field unless requested or required. Do not go past the halfway line. There are some exceptions to this positioning and they should be discussed in the pre-game meeting. IE: Setting the wall in your quadrant if requested, getting close to players that are exhibiting a loss of emotional control, and whenever requested by the referee; to mention a few. AR positioning requires and may test your ability to sprint to keep up with play. The AR needs to be in position to make the out-of-touch call along the touchline and the out-of-play call on the goal line. The referee will likely not be running from goal line to goal line, so it is important for the lead AR to be at the goal line to make calls and “assist” when needed.

The NFHS rule book diagram of the field shows that the team & coaching area is 10’ back from the touch line. This is intended to keep the AR from having to be concerned about the position of coaches and bench players as the AR moves up and down the touchline maintaining their focus on the field.

### **FLAG POSITION & FLAG MOVEMENT**

Along with your (body) position, flag position is also important. The flag is the AR’s tool for communicating. It needs to be visible to the referee at all times. To begin the game, as the AR faces the field (even with the second-to-last defender) the unfurled flag should be in the left hand (closer to the referee) and down at the side parallel to the leg. As the AR moves from the halfway line toward their goal line, the flag should remain low (below the waist) in the left hand. As the AR moves from the goal line along the touchline toward the halfway line the flag will be in the right hand (below the waist). As the AR moves and turns to keep up with the flow of play, the flag is to be moved from hand-to-hand while the hands are below the waist. While running the AR is to keep the flag below the waist with a straight arm and not moving or swinging the flag in the running motion.

### **MECHANICS**

Mechanics is the term used to cover and review “how” we complete our ARs duties, primarily the proper positioning and use of the flag. There are many points to consider under this subject. Please know that the following is in no way a complete list of the “hows” and “whys” of mechanics.

Let’s touch on a few basics for signaling. You have observed something and you want to share this information with the referee. The flag is your instrument to make our signal. How to make a signal.

1 Get into the correct position before signaling. IE: The goal line for goal kicks; the one yard line for corner kicks.

2 Come to a complete stop along the touchline and face the field.

3 Raise your flag directly above your shoulder with a snapping motion looking to make eye contact with the referee. This noise is an additional way to draw the referee's attention.

The flag is an extension of the arm. Consider that by raising your flag, you are informing the referee "I have information to share". Raise the flag in the hand that you may (eventually) show direction.

4 Once the referee sees your flag, he/she MAY blow their whistle to stop play. With play (now) stopped, use your flag to signal your information. Example: If you have observed offside, lower the flag to signal the offside. Or, if you have observed a foul, (after play is stopped) wiggle the flag to indicate a foul and then lower it to a 45 degree angle to indicate direction for the restart.

6 Signals for goal kicks, corner kicks, offside should ALL be made with the flag in the right hand. Signals for fouls and throw-ins should be made with the flag in the hand that will show direction for the restart.

#### **A few do's and don'ts.**

- Do hustle to be in the best position to signal your call.
- Do not run with your flag raised.
- Do not "snap" your flag to support the referee's call or to lower your flag.
- When signaling, take your time. One additional second to raise your flag is not an eternity. For fouls, remember this is not your #1 priority. Know the position of the referee. Are they in position to see what you saw? If so, do not raise your flag. It is best to have a slow flag that is the same as the referee's signal than a quick flag that conflicts with the referee.
- If you raise your flag and the referee does not see your flag, call out "FLAG". Players, coaches and fans may already be yelling "Ref" or the referee's name, so a distinctive word, such as FLAG, helps distinguish you from other loud voices.
- If the referee fails to see a raised flag, the trail AR should also raise their flag to mirror the lead AR. The trail AR should also call out "FLAG". If the trail AR is the first to get the referee's attention, when the referee makes eye contact the trail AR can simply point to the lead AR's flag.
- Once you have raised your flag, do not lower it without making eye contact with the referee. There may be exceptions if discussed during the pre-game conference.
- Know your quadrant area. In the pre-game; discuss that in your quadrant, you will signal first and the referee will mirror your call. In the referee's area, the referee will show direction first and the AR will mirror his/her call. There may be /should be exceptions. These should be covered in the pre-game. IE: A ball that goes out-of-touch in the referee's quadrant. In some instances the referee may defer to the AR to signal first. Another example is if the lead AR is deep in their end of the field and a foul occurs near the halfway line in the AR's quadrant, the referee may well be better positioned to make the call. The suggestion is to make eye contact with the referee before making your call to prevent conflicting calls.
- Do not stop a ball from rolling past you. If stopping a ball contributes to a fast(er) throw-in or restart and that restart results in a goal, you unintentionally contributed to that goal.
- Do not signal out-of-touch calls in your half but on the opposite (far side) touchline.

- Do not signal with your arm across your body. Signal with the flag in the correct hand.
- Know that the referee may choose not to acknowledge your “information” and may waive down your flag. When this happens, do not take it personally. The referee may want to allow play to continue. IE: You raise your flag for on offside infraction and the ball ends up in the possession of the keeper and the referee decides to let the keeper possess and punt the ball and not call the offside. OR You raise your flag to signal a foul and the referee decides that he/she wants to allow play to continue and waives down your flag. Do not take it personally.
- Do not switch the flag from one hand to the other above your head. If you need to signal in the other direction, lower your flag, switch hands below the waist and then raise the flag for the correct direction.
- If you think you might have observed an infraction and are not sure, do not raise your flag. An example of this is when the lead AR is in position to make an offside call. The play is on the far side of the field. There is an offensive player in the offside position. The ball is played forward and a defender either plays the ball or it is deflected. As the AR you observe the ball change direction, but you are not sure if it was “played” by the defender and the ball deflected off the defender. The correct mechanic is, do not raise your flag. Allow play to continue. If the ball does not end up in the goal, do nothing. If the player in the offside position shoots and scores, do not raise your flag. Hold your position. When the referee looks to the lead AR to confirm the goal, the AR can waive the referee over to explain what they saw or ask a question. The referee can then confirm the goal or reverse his/her decision to award the goal based on this additional information. If the referee fails to look at the lead AR, the AR should remain in position until he/she sees the AR. Do not allow the game to restart without getting the referee’s attention. The main point here is the AR should not raise their flag. By raising the flag the AR is indicating that they have observed an infraction. By standing still and holding the position (and not running up the touchline), the AR is indicating, “I have a question” about the goal. It may or may not be a good goal.

When signaling a ball over the touch line the flag should be raised in the hand of the direction you are signaling. As lead AR a restart for the offensive team is signaled with the flag in the right hand. A signal for a throw-in for the defending team is made with the flag in the left hand.

To distinguish between an IFK and a DFK infraction, the AR may raise their hand with a bent elbow vertically in front of their body to indicate an IFK. No further signal is needed for a DFK. This should be covered in the pre-game.

### **MECHANICS FOR SUBSTITUTIONS**

Both the lead AR and the trail AR may signal that eligible substitutions have “reported” and are looking to be beckoned at the next legal substitution opportunity. The ARs should mirror the substitution signal so all players are aware that a whistle will be required for the ball to be put back into play. The signal for substitutions is shown on page 82 of the 2020 NFHS Rule book. The flag is held in both hands and raised with straight arms above the head. This position is held under the referee stops play. It may be helpful to call out “SUB”. When can ARs lower their flag?



### **How and when to communicate that substitutions are completed.**

There are multiple acceptable ways to do this. In one way the flag is furled and held behind the AR's back. When the substitution(s) has been completed the AR unfurls the flag and lets the arm hang straight down at the side (in view of the other AR and CR (if looking)). Another way using a furled/unfurled method is to furl the flag and hold it out to the side about 12" from the body. When subs are complete, unfurl the flag and let the arm drop straight to the side of the body.

These methods are two fold. 1. The AR does not hold the flag above the head after he/she has gotten the attention of the CR and the sub procedure has started. If the flag would be kept above the head, it too often interferes with the AR's vision. So the flag should NOT be kept above the head until the sub process is completed. 2. Any signal used by the officiating team should be simple and something easy for the CR and other AR to see and yet not bring undo attention to the AR and the signaling process. No snapping of the flag. No big motions. Just a simple unfurling and movement to get the job done.

There are differences between the USSF and NFHS substitution procedures about **when to allow the incoming player to enter the field**. For USSF the in-coming player or substitute becomes the "player of record" when they enter the field. In NFHS the in-coming player or substitute becomes the "player of record" when "beckoned. The CR and not the AR should beckon the substitutes. Also, with USSF time can be added at the end of each half if substitutes take too much time. In NFHS we can stop the clock if we feel there is time-wasting by the player leaving the field, but that (stopping the clock) seldom happens. Stopping the clock in the last 5 minutes by the leading team is a "tool" added for officials to control the repetitive substitutions by coaches looking to waste time. So, my take is that for NFHS and VSOA, once play has been stopped with the whistle and the exiting player has been identified, that the substitute can be "beckoned". When the player leaving the game has cleared the last opponent AND the incoming player has gained their desired position, play can be restarted. We need to avoid situations where play is restarted before the incoming player has a chance to get into position. IE: When the restart is a corner kick.

As to standard AR signals, I would not want to require one format. I would strongly suggest and may want to require that the flag NOT be held above the head after the CR has blown his/her whistle and stopped play. I would then strongly suggest that whatever format is agreed to in the pre-game is used to signal the completion of the subs so the CR can look at AR2 when needed to restart play. After substitutions, play is *always* restarted with a whistle.

### **MECHANICS FOR SIGNALING AN INFRACTION INSIDE VS OUTSIDE THE PENALTY AREA**

Calling fouls by an AR is the third of three priorities. If an AR is to make a call or assist by indicating the infraction called by the referee is inside or outside of the penalty area, it is important as to how this is to be communicated. If the infraction has occurred **outside the penalty area**, the AR raises the flag, makes eye contact, then lowers the flag and may move toward the halfway line to emphasize that the infraction was outside the area. However, the AR must be in position to judge offside in the event of a quick restart. The current USSF AR signal for **an infraction that would result in a PK**, is to raise their flag and make eye contact with the referee and when the referee blows the whistle to stop play the AR is to wiggle the flag and then lower the flag and move to the corner flag. In prior years USSF has had the AR hold the unfurled flag in front of them at waist height or put the unfurled flag straight down between the legs. The AR can also sprint to their position for the taking of a PK (where the penalty area line meets

the goal line). Whatever signal you agree to in the pre-game is good.

### **MECHANICS FOR PENALTY KICKS**

The trail AR is located on the touchline at the halfway line. The lead AR should take a position on the goal line where the penalty area line intersects the goal line. This position along the goal line is flexible. As long as the AR has a clear view of the keeper and the goal AND in the event that the keeper makes a save and play continues, the AR can quickly retreat to the touchline and be in position to judge offside.

The 2020 rule book, page 94, states that both the referee and the lead AR should be in position to note if the goalkeeper comes off the line by stepping or lunging forward before the kick AND to judge if the whole of the ball crosses the line. Since both officials can be judging for the same thing, this should be part of the pre-game.

The PK play should be allowed to be concluded before making any signal. This is because if the keeper or a defending player committed an infraction and the ball enters the goal, the goal is good. So do not signal before the play is complete (a save or the ball goes out-of-play).

The AR should position a furlled flag at waist height in front of their body. If the AR observes an infraction, they are to unfurl the flag and let it hang in front of them. This allows the referee the opportunity to discuss and asks questions of the AR if need be to make the correct call. If the AR was to raise the flag, the AR is stating there is an infraction and action needs to be taken.

If the AR is affirming that there is no infraction and the goal should be counted, the AR is to turn, run to the touchline and continue running down the touchline toward the halfway line about 10 yards.

### **KICKS FROM THE MARK**

If the game will be decided with kicks from the mark, the officiating team will have a few minutes to discuss the procedures. Proper recording of the player numbers as kicks are taken and those that did or did not score. The trail AR should be positioned at the halfway line between the designated kickers for the two teams. This AR should keep a watchful eye on the 10 kickers and also assure that the coaches and other bench players and personnel remain in their designated bench area. This trail AR should also record as indicated. The referee will also record player numbers and goals. The lead AR performs their duties as stated for PKs, unless instructed otherwise by the referee. However, when a goal is scored, the lead AR should remain on the goal line (and not turn and run to and up the touchline. Also refer to Penalty Kicks.

### **MECHANICS FOR SIGNALING A GOAL**

When a goal is scored, before pointing to the center of the field, the center referee should look to the lead AR to confirm that they agree that the whole of the ball has completely crossed over the goal line and between the goal posts and the goal was good.

To inform the referee that a goal has been scored, the lead AR should furl the flag in their right hand and, with the flag at their side, sprint at least 10 yards up the touchline. Come to a stop and face the field.

If the AR has observed the ball clearly over the goal line between the goal posts and play continues, the signal is to raise the flag in the right hand (indicating I have information to share). When you make eye

contact with the referee, lower and furl your flag in your right hand and sprint up the touchline at least 10 yards, come to a stop and face the field.

To inform the referee that a goal has not been scored (the whole of the ball did not cross the whole of the goal line) the AR may make eye contact with the referee. There is no formal signal

To inform the referee that the AR has questions about the goal, the AR should remain in position at the touchline. **Do not raise your flag** if you are not signaling an infraction. Just stand still.

### **ALTERCATIONS OR MASS CONFRONTATION**

In the event of an altercation between players the ARs need to be ready to respond quickly. The AR closest to the confrontation should get to the incident quickly to assist the referee and record numbers. The other AR should place themselves between the team benches and the confrontation and discourage anyone from leaving the bench area. Should anyone leave the bench area, this AR should record numbers.

### **ATTIRE / APPEARANCE / DEMEANOR**

First impressions count. Once you are at the game site, please know you are being watched and be careful what you say and do that could be construed the wrong way. Keep your communication with the coaches short and professional. We should not appear to be too friendly with one coach over another for instance. *Marty Adams August, 2015*

Be properly attired with a complete uniform (properly worn with socks pulled up and shirts tucked in) as you take the field to introduce yourself to the coaches. Your body language and carriage can be interpreted as professional or lackadaisical & uncaring depending on your presentation.

### **BENCH / COACH AREA**

Rule 1.5.1 These areas are (to be marked) at least 10 feet from the touchline.

Rule 1.5.3 The team area shall extend from 10 yards on each side of the halfway line for a distance of 20 yards.

Coaches will wander outside of the 20 yards allotted to them for coaching. Coaches should not be allowed to encroach up to the hallway line OR to move down the touchline (beyond their 20 yards) to be closer to play. This must be managed. A verbal warning is appropriate followed by a caution if the encroachment behavior continues. Coaches shall be restricted to the coaching area.

There are no dimensions for the rear of the team /bench area. When a coach retreats up a hill or grade to gain a better view and is multiple yards from the touchline and bench area, this can be managed as long as the coach is easily available to the referee when needed.

### **CASTS / SPLINTS / BRACES**

4.2.1.c "Hard & unyielding items (guards, casts, braces, etc.) (this includes splints) on hands, wrists, forearms, elbow, upper arm or shoulder **MUST BE COVERED & MUST BE PADDED** with closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½" thick." A bandage and / or a towel wrapped in a bandage is not closed-cell slow-recovery foam.

**CAUTION (YELLOW CARD)** Rule 12.8.1.a-g

Cautioned players shall leave the field and may be replaced. Should the team with a cautioned player elect to play short elect to play shorthanded, the cautioned player may not re-enter nor be replaced until the next legal substitution opportunity.

**CHANGES – RECENT MAJOR CHANGES IN THE RULES 2019 – 2020**

**INTERPRETATIONS / CLARIFICATIONS**

- Clock management in the last 5 minutes when leading team wants to substitute  
If both teams have substitutes that have reported, the clock is stopped.
  - Clock management after the goal creating the five goal differential.
  - Rule 12.7.3. & 13.2.2.j Teammate’s pass back to keeper – from above the knee is not an infraction
  - Managing the team / coaching area when the coach refuses to the AR to move bench players back from the touchline. Rule 12.8.3.b “The coach may be cautioned or disqualified either for team misconduct or for bench misconduct that cannot be attributed to a specific individual.”
  - Team / coaching area dimensions & managing the “back line” of the team / coaching area
  - Does a foul called in the penalty area “require” a card?
- 
- Rule 4.1.1.a Player jerseys no longer have to be tucked in.
  - Rule 8.1.3 Kick off can be kicked in any direction. The player taking the kick off may be in an offside position when putting the ball in play. (All free kicks may be taken in any direction. *The one exception is a PK which must move forward.*)
  - Rule 9.1.b When the ball hits an official **AND** changes possession, or leads to a promising attack, or enters the goal; play is stopped and restarted with a drop ball.
  - Rule 9.2.2 ALL drop balls are uncontested.
  - Rule 9.2.2 If the ball goes out-of-play caused by two opponents simultaneously touching the ball, the ball should be dropped (5 yards in bounds) to a player from the team who last possessed the ball prior to the simultaneous touching.
  - Rule 9.2.3 If the ball was last touched by either team inside the penalty area, the ball is dropped for the defending team’s goalkeeper.
  - Rule 9.2.4 The ball is “in play” when it touches the ground. This means that when the ball is dropped to a field player, the ball can be touched multiple times by that field player receiving the dropped ball. Rule 9.2.6 However, if the ball enters the goal without touching (played by or deflected by) another player, the restart is a goal kick.

- Rule 12.2 Handling –Players shall be penalized for deliberately handling, carrying, striking or propelling the ball with a hand or arm. Players may protect themselves by moving their hands / arms after the ball is kicked. Arms above the head are not a “natural playing position”. Players may not extend their arms to make themselves bigger.
- Rule 12.8.1.13, 14 & 15 and 12.8.2.d.1 & 2 DOGSO
- Rule 13.3.1 Free Kicks For a free kick restart from inside the penalty area, the ball is in play when it is touched and moves. Opponents are to be outside the penalty area AND at least 10 yards from the ball and remain there until the ball is in play.
- Rule 13.3.3 For all free kicks (DFK & IFK) the kicker may not play the ball until it has been touched or played by another player. Should the kicker “play” the ball a second time the penalty is an IFK awarded to the opponent from the spot of the foul (the second “play” of the ball).
- Rule 13.3.1 The WALL – when a wall consists of 3 or more defensive players all offensive players must be at least one yard from (any defender in) the defensive wall.
- Rule 13.3.4 Referees MUST SIGNAL an IFK by raising their arm above their shoulder. Failure to signal an IFK and the ball enters the goal directly from the kick without touching another
- player, the kick is retaken. The arm should remain extended above the shoulder until it touches another player or the ball goes out-of-play.
- Rule 14.1.3 At the taking of a PK; until the ball is kicked, the keeper must have one foot “on or in line with” the goal line. The keeper shall not be touching the goal posts, crossbar or nets until the ball is kicked.
- Rule 16.1.2 Goal Kicks The ball is in play when it is touched and moves. Opponents shall remain outside the penalty area until the ball is in play.
- Rule 16.1.4 Goal Kicks The kicker may not play the ball again until it has been touched by another player. The penalty is an IFK from the spot of the foul (the second touch.)

### **CLOCK MANAGEMENT**

**Clock management in the last 5 minutes when the leading team has a substitute that wants to enter the game.** Rule 3.4.1 Situation 1 During regular play, the substitute becomes “a player” when beckoned by the referee.

Rule 3.4.3 “The clock shall be stopped when a substitute by the team in the lead is beckoned onto the field in the last 5 minutes...”. So, in the last 5 minutes, a substitute becomes a “player” when the clock is stopped. In the last 5 minutes if both teams have substitutes that have reported, the clock is stopped.

### **Clock management after the goal creating the five goal differential.**

When a goal is scored creating a 5 goal difference the clock should continue to run. If the referee stops the clock (due to habit), the clock should be restarted when the error is realized.

### **Stopping the clock for an injury - field players & keepers**

3.3.2.b.2 Once the clock is stopped for an injured player, that player leaves the field. A field player may be substituted for; a keeper must be substituted for.

3.3.2 Situation A Both teams may substitute an unlimited number of players as long as they check in and are beckoned by the referee.

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3.3.7 If the team elects to play short, the injured player may return during a dead ball

OR 3.3.2 Situation I at the next stoppage of play for the injured player. A replacement player may enter at the next legal substitution opportunity.

### **CORNER KICK MANAGEMENT**

“Managing the mixer” is the first thought that comes to mind for corner kicks. The penalty area and more specifically the goal area can become crowded with players “jockeying for position”. There are set plays and spots where players are trying to get positioned to gain their advantage and increase their scoring chances. There may be players looking to restrict the movement of the keeper or other opposing players.

Try to be verbally present during and prior to corner kicks, especially regarding players being around the keeper. I usually try to remind everyone to “play the ball...” If a player is trying to obstruct the keeper and is not making a play on the ball, call it immediately. It should take care of the issue. On a related note, the keeper cannot push people out of the way to get to the ball. They have no more rights than anyone else that is trying to play the ball. Lastly, do not allow players to “play the keeper” that is in the air catching the ball. *Marty Adams 2016*

**Note for Corner Kick management** Under Rule 18.1.e (definitions) “A restart can never be changed for what occurs during a dead ball. Example: As the offensive player is placing the ball on the corner arch to take the corner kick, you observe “pushing”. The restart is still a corner kick. It is NOT a PK. If after the ball is put in play, you observe an infraction, then the penalty for that infraction would apply.

**DIAGONAL SYSTEM OF CONTROL / 3-PERSON SYSTEM** Refer to **Page 2** Assistant Referee Training 2021

### **DISQUALIFICATIONS (RED CARD)**

**Rule 12.8.2.a-g Penalty** A disqualified “player” may not be substituted for.

Rule 3.3.6 A substitute becomes a “player” when beckoned onto the field.

The reason this point is important is, if a “player” commits a disqualification infraction, they may not be replaced. A disqualified player or substitute who has not yet been beckoned may be replaced.

### **DISSENT**

Do not take abuse from assistant coaches or other bench personnel. The head coach should have some leeway to discuss calls or situations with the officials in a professional and calm manner. The assistant coaches typically not so much. My procedure is to let the head coach know that I’d like to hear one voice from their bench, the head coach. I do not go looking for trouble but if an assistant coach is overstepping their bounds, that’s when I try to get near the bench and quietly remind the head coach of

my preference. Abe used to say it best when he would tell them "Coach there is a little in my check that says I have to listen to you, but there is nothing in there for your assistant coach(es)." *Marty Adams 2016*  
When you do have an overzealous coach dissenting from the sideline, do not hesitate to deal with it. By ignoring it, it often only gets worse. Players will follow their coach's lead, positively or negatively. If the coach is harping on the far side official, it is acceptable for the bench side official to warn and/or caution the coach. Often it will calm everything down much quicker than trying to reason with the coach or having a running dialogue...*Marty Adams 2016*

When dissent is expressed by a loss of emotional control it cannot be ignored. Do not allow this type of negative behavior detract from the game. Show the appropriate card for dissenting players or coaches. When the guilty party is a spectator, ask the venue administrator to remove the offender.

### **DOGSO**

First. There are 4 elements that **MUST BE MET** in order for it to be a DOGSO situation. That doesn't mean you cannot have a foul. It does mean that if the 4 elements are not met, it is not DOGSO (Denying an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity).

The 4 elements are known as the 4 "D"s, in no order

1. # of Defenders and position of defenders between the offensive player and the goal. (Is it in fact an obvious opportunity to score or were there other defenders that would have become involved in the play?)
2. Distance from the ball. (at the point of the foul). Was the offensive player within playing distance of the ball at the time he was fouled?
3. Distance from the goal. Was the player close enough to the goal that his play would lead to an obvious score? This could be an example of where there could be a foul, but the situation would not meet the requirements for DOGSO.
4. Direction of the play. The offensive play must be directed toward the goal. This can be another example if the play was running parallel to the goal (ie: along the 18 yard line) and not toward the goal, there may be a foul but it would not be considered DOGSO.

All 4 "D's of DOGSO **MUST** be met for it to be DOGSO.

After considering the 4 Ds; there are multiple scenarios to cover, so I will take them one at a time.

...Outside the penalty area - a defender denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity and the goal is not scored - ejection (Red) restart a DFK. 12.8.2.d.3

...Outside the penalty area - a defender commits a foul on a breakaway and the goal is scored - because the goal was scored, it is not DOGSO. However, 12.8.1 f.14 the player is to be cautioned.

...Inside the penalty area - a defender commits a foul while attempting to play the ball and a goal is not scored - played is cautioned (Yellow) + PK. 12.8.1.f.15.

...Inside the penalty area - a defender commits a foul while not attempting to play the ball (ie: a shirt tug pulling the offensive player down or off the ball) - If a goal was scored (not DOGSO), count the goal, player is cautioned 12.8.1.f.15, restart with kickoff. If the goal was not scored it is an ejection + PK restart - 12.8.2.d.4.

... Inside the penalty area - defender deliberately handles the ball and 12.8.1.f.15. prevents a goal - player is disqualified /ejected (Red) + PK restart

... Inside the penalty area - defender deliberately handles the ball and the goal is still scored - player is cautioned (yellow) 12.8.1.f.15. restart is a kickoff.

My suggestion is that if you have what you consider a DOGSO, blow your whistle and call the foul and take some time to think. This can be done by conferring with an AR or your partner. Just take time to reflect on the 4 elements. You still call the foul. You can still issue a card if you have reckless play (caution) or serious foul play (ejection) but it may or may not be DOGSO.

**DROP BALL     Rule 9.2**     In 2020-2021 the rules and mechanics for a drop ball had more change than any other rule.

Rule 9.1.b     When the ball hits an official **AND** changes possession, or leads to a promising attack, or enters the goal; play is stopped and restarted with a drop ball.

Rule 9.2.2     ALL drop balls are uncontested.

Rule 9.2.2     If the ball goes out-of-play caused by two opponents simultaneously touching the ball, the ball should be dropped (5 yards in bounds) to a player from the team who last possessed the ball prior to the simultaneous touching.

9.2.3     If the ball was last touched by either team inside the penalty area, the ball is dropped for the defending team's goalkeeper.

Rule 9.2.4     The ball is "in play" when it touches the ground. This means that when the ball is dropped to a field player, the ball can be touched multiple times by that field player receiving the dropped ball.

Rule 9.2.6     However, if the ball enters the goal without touching (played by or deflected by) another player, the resulting restart is a goal kick.

#### **ENCROACHMENT     Rule 12.8.1.f.5**

Encroachment is the one item that has been brought to my attention from a couple different angles this week. There have been several instances of coaches saying to officials "we were told this would be called differently this year and cautions would be issued without warnings..." or something to this effect. Some of you may have heard this. I am not sure where this is coming from, although I'm told it was discussed at a coaches/league meeting. It is not a point of emphasis from the NFHS. If anyone has any insight about this please let me know.

There have been some encroachment situations with walls this season. . Rule 12.8 Misconduct states that "a player, coach or bench personnel **shall be cautioned (yellow card) for:...F.#5 encroachment.**" What I believe is a good procedure is to get to the area quickly and to verbally tell the players to move back if appropriate, without interfering with a quick restart

should the offense be so inclined. If a player or group of players tries to stall the game and/or refuse to move back quickly, stop the clock and pick a player (usually the one standing the closest or setting the wall) and card that player. The rule does not stipulate that you can only card one player as it is an unsportsmanlike act but typically picking one player is sufficient. If the offensive player(s) ask for the requisite 10 yards (and the 10 yards is required, it does NOT need to be asked for as some defensive players and/or coaches will try to tell you), move in quickly, tell everyone that a 2<sup>nd</sup> whistle will be the restart and that it will be the lead official's whistle, point to your whistle to the kicker and get them to acknowledge it. Set the wall, move into position and either sound the whistle if you are the lead, or let the lead official know you are ready when they are, if the wall is set by the trail official. I hope this helps.

*Marty Adams 2016*



The official is not required to (literally) pace off 10 yards. An official should not be expected to “administer” encroachment on a repetitive basis. The progression can be; ask the player(s) to move back, warn the player(s) to respect the proper distance, caution.

#### **EQUIPMENT – PLAYER**

Rule 4.2.1-10 **Illegal Equipment** is an issue for the safety of the player and the safety of other players. The use of tape to hide or cover illegal equipment (bracelets, earrings) does not correct this issue.

Rule 4.3 The head coach is responsible for ensuring that their players are properly and legally equipped. Illegal equipment shall result in a caution. The first caution for illegal equipment goes to the head coach. Subsequent cautions for illegal equipment goes to the player.

**Improper equipment**, as defined in 18.1.1.u, shall be corrected. If the issue can be quickly corrected the player does not have to leave the field. If they need to leave the field, once corrected they can return at the next dead ball. Play should not be stopped for an equipment infringement of this rule unless it presents a dangerous situation. The referee may stop play at the next dead ball.

#### **FANS / SPECTATORS**

For high school sports the playing field is considered an extension of the classroom. Do not permit fans to become part of the classroom. They shall not communicate with the players and they shall not dissent to the officials.

If a fan’s or group of fans’ dissenting comments are taking your attention, your focus is no longer on the game. Locate the field administrator (in absence of an administrator the home team head coach) and ask them to remove the dissenter. If you cannot identify a specific fan, you may ask for a group of fans in a certain area to be removed.

#### **FIELD MARKINGS – also refer to Bench / Team Area**

Especially early in the season, check the field markings for proper measurements. Specifically, is the PK mark at 12 yards? Is the penalty area and penalty arc properly measured? The person lining the field may not be soccer knowledgeable.

If markings are incorrect, advise the coaches, play the game and report any concerns in your game report.

#### **GAME MANAGEMENT**

The counter to ‘game flow’ is ‘game control’ – this is when the Referee needs **Less** Flow and **More** Game Control

##### *Early warning signals*

Frustration level of players increasing, player acceptance of decisions decreasing (verbal outbursts)

Player focus – where are the players looking? (concentrating on the ball or lining up the opponent)

Body language – stiff, rigid; preparing for a charge, a nasty tackle?

##### *Warning Signs*

Fouls near the team benches

Wet field – comfort level of players to make tackles increases

Tackles extend from 3 yards to 7 yards (this becomes dangerous)

Sequence / succession / repetition of challenges in a short time span (cluster fouls)

More body-contact  
Mismatched body contact (feet versus chest, head versus knee)  
Change from containment defense to high-pressure and chase  
Challenges (including 50-50) and apparent challenges on the goalkeeper

#### *More Warning Signs*

Near the touchline and no way out for the ball or the player  
Retaliation foul after play restarts  
Player into goal to retrieve ball after a score  
The winning team protecting the ball at the corner flag to use time  
Excessive fouls on the skillful player (playmaker and scorer)  
Escalation in the “severity of fouls” committed  
Dissent increasing  
Player feedback from both teams indicating “we don’t want flow”  
Score and time  
And finally, the application of Misconduct as a game management tool:  
If the foul (offence) involves contact, it is penalized by a direct free kick. In addition to the foul, how do we determine when a card is warranted, here are the guidelines:

Careless is when a player shows a lack of consideration when making a challenge or acts without precaution. No additional disciplinary sanction is needed (normal run of the mill foul).

Reckless is when a player acts with disregard to the danger to, or consequences for, an opponent and must be cautioned (yellow card).

Using excessive force is when a player exceeds the necessary use of force and endangers the safety of an opponent and must be sent off (red card). Clearly has no regard for the safety of the opponent.

Beyond these clear guidelines consider the “big picture”, if you’re on the fence. This relates to the atmosphere and/or environment surrounding the match as it is played out and the referee’s “feel” for what the game needs at a given moment. If an act by a player could be interpreted as either a foul or a possible cautionable foul (reckless), the referee needs to consider the “big picture” surrounding the match. In the few instances when similar borderline cases arise, referees should consider asking themselves:

(1) Does the player need the card?

Consideration is given to the player’s prior behavior (the overall conduct of the player to that point) in the game and the intent of the player’s act.

(2) Does the game need the card?

Consideration is given to the temperature of the game (the overall atmosphere of the match) to that point. The referee should quickly analyze where the game has been and where it is heading based on player conduct to that point. Is it time to settle things down, an opportunity to get everyone to chill a bit – if that’s the case, a card might help send your message if things are on that proverbial borderline.

*Andy Gingris 2018*

In making a decision to “manage the game” or “enforce the rules”, be sure to enforce the rules. Caution or disqualify those infractions and actions that by rule SHALL BE cautioned or disqualified.

#### **GOAL NETS** -refer to ANCHOR THE GOALS

Inspect the goal nets for holes. Are nets properly connected to the goal posts, cross bar and the ground or side and back goal frame?

## **HANDLING**

Over recent years there have been many rule changes, interpretations and clarifications covering handling and handballs. Refer to **Rule 12.2** to read the most updated explanation.

Players are allowed to move their hands / arms to protect the head, face, groin and chest.

If the defensive player is using their hand /arm as a reflex and it is not a deliberate act, it is not handling. If the defensive player is deliberately using their hand / arm to make their body bigger (not in a natural playing position) it is handling.

Know that as of 2022-23 the NFHS Rules for Handling are not the same as the USSF Laws for handling.

**INJURIES** Player safety first. Fault to the side of caution. For head injuries and when a player is in obvious serious pain, stop play. Try not to stop an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, but protect the player.

**Rule 3.2.a.1-4** If the referee stops the clock for an injured field player or keeper, that player must leave the field and may be substituted.

**3.3.2. Situation A** If the clock is stopped for an injury both teams may substitute an unlimited number of players as long as the report and are beckoned by the referee.

**3.3.2 Situation I** The injured player may re-enter at the next stoppage of play. If the team elected to play shorthanded, the replacement player may enter the game at the next legal substitution opportunity.

## **ISSUING CARDS**

A cautioned player should be shown a yellow card and must leave the field. They may be replaced / substituted for. Should the team decide to play shorthanded, the cautioned player or their substitute may enter at the next legal substitution opportunity.

A disqualified player should be shown a red card and shall not be replaced. If the player is being cautioned a second time, a second yellow card; show the yellow card and then show the red card.

A disqualified player may remain in the bench area and the head coach is responsible for bench player's behavior.

A disqualified coach or bench personnel (other than a substitute listed on the roster) must leave the bench area and the field.

If there was no assistant coach or person listed on the roster by name to replace the head coach in the event that head coach is disqualified, the game shall be terminated. This is a Vermont specific rule of local competition. The person identified to replace the head coach must be listed on the roster given to the head referee at the time of the coach/captain meeting. The name can be added to the roster during the game but cannot be added to the roster after the head coach has been disqualified.

## **KEEPER – ILLEGAL HANDLING 12.7**

12.7.3 - 4 The keeper shall not touch the ball with their hands when receiving it directly from their teammate. Balls played by the teammate "below the knee" may not be touched by the keeper. When the

ball is played by a teammate by the knee or above, the keeper may touch it with their hands. Players may not use trickery to circumvent this rule.

In the event the keeper does touch the ball (when kicked by a teammate), the penalty is an IFK restart for the opponent from the spot where the keeper touched the ball.

**KEEPER INTERFERENCE                      Rule 12.4.3**

“The goalkeeper in possession of the ball shall not be interfered with or impeded in any manner...”. Bear in mind that when play is stopped for this infraction, the restart is an IFK from the spot of the infraction. Since it may be a disadvantage to award an IFK (vs a keeper punt). I recommend that unless you will caution the defensive player with a yellow card, instruct the defender to make way or to not impede and allow the keeper to punt the ball.

**KEEPER UNIFORM - JERSEY & SOCKS      Rule 4.1.1.h**

VPA is not looking to the referees to be uniform police. It should also be understood that some schools have limited uniform budgets. When a keeper jersey or sock color does not clash or may be hard to distinguish, ask the coach for an alternative. Keeper jerseys should be numbered. Keeper jerseys may not contain advertising of logos of other teams. Socks should be a different color from the opponent. Make corrections to make your job of distinguishing players easier. Play the game and report concerns in your game report.

**KEEPER –PROTECTING THE KEEPER      Rule 12.4.2&3** “A player shall not, in any manner, charge the keeper...” A keeper playing the ball inside the penalty area can find themselves in a vulnerable position. By jumping with arms raised to retrieve a high ball, their rib cage is exposed. In diving or reaching for a low ball the keeper’s head and face are exposed. Referees must protect the keepers when they are playing the ball in these positions. When an offensive player attempting to play the ball charges into the keeper, at minimum, the referee should talk with the player to avoid any escalation and let all know that as the referee, you will protect the keeper.

**MISCONDUCT    Rule 12.8                      also refer to Issuing Cards**

Players, coaches or bench personnel guilty of a misconduct offense shall be cautioned or disqualified. This Rule, Section and 3 Articles provide the means to manage behavior and enforce the rules beyond a simple recognition of an infraction. When the referee stops play for an infraction or talks with a player or coach to let them know their behavior is not acceptable, they are looking for a change if that player or coaches behavior. If the behavior does not change the misconduct rule provide the explanation and tools to make this behavior stop. This is why Rule 5.3.1.e & f requires referees to explain the reason for a caution or ejection to both coaches, the scorer and other officials.

**NETS – refer to Anchor the Goals**

### **OVERTIME**

Regular season overtime and playoff overtime rules are not the same. Regular season games still tied at the end of 80 minutes of play will play overtime. There is a 5 minute break during which there is a captain's coin toss to determine possession & direction. Following this break we play two 10 minute halves separated by a 2 minute break to reverse ends of the field. So, the breakdown is 5-10-2-10.

Overtime is golden-goal or sudden victory. If a team scores, the game is over.

If the score remains tied at the end of the overtime period, the game is over and the tied score stands. There are no KFTM (Kicks from the Mark).

### **NOISE MAKERS**

Any noisemakers that could distract a player or an official is illegal. This is a Vermont specific rule of local competition. The referee should stop play at the next stoppage and request the home venue administrator to deal with the situation. If judged by the official that the noise is so distracting that it needs immediate attention (ie: a whistle) play should be stopped and the restart would be a drop ball to the team that last possessed the ball.

### **PENALTY KICKS**

A stutter-step approach to the ball is legal as long as the kickers motions is continuous toward the ball. The ball must be kicked forward.

### **PLAYOFFS**

Playoffs are games when a winner must be determined. **Playoffs procedures are not the same as Overtime Rules.** Playoff games are 5-15-2-15. They are sudden victory or golden goal.

a. There will be a five-minute mandatory time out after the regulation time.

b. There will be a maximum of two 15-minute sudden victory overtime periods, eleven-on-eleven.

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c. Teams will switch ends at the conclusion of the first eleven-on-eleven sudden victory overtime with a 2-minute break. If the score is tied after both sudden victory overtimes, each team will select any five players to take penalty kicks in an alternating fashion. Order of kicks will be determined by a coin toss. The same players or different players may be selected for each round. Additional kicks will be conducted in rounds of five. The team scoring the greatest number of these kicks will be declared the winner.

d. A game interrupted before the completion of the 1st half will be replayed in its entirety. A game interrupted during the 2nd half will be replayed from the point of suspension unless both teams agree not to complete the contest, in which case the score will become final.

Proper protocol for setting up for penalty kicks (kicks from the mark) should include the following:

- Referees decide which goal will be used, considerations - condition of goal mouth, sun, proximity of fans
- Players should be at midfield or at their benches
- The non-active goalie should be off the goal-line outside the penalty area
- Any player on the roster and not disqualified during the match may participate in the kicks

*Andy Gingris -2018*

### **PRE-GAME WITH COACHES**

Get a copy of their roster. Confirm that everyone in their bench / team areas is listed on the roster. Ask & get a verbal response that their players will be legally & properly equipped when on the field. Review any venue specific items that need to be covered.

### **PRE-GAME WITH OTHER OFFICIAL(S)**

**ROSTERS**      **Rule 3.1.3**      Do not start the game without a roster. All players, coaches, managers and trainers that will be in the team area should be listed on the roster. Players & coaches may be added to the roster after the start of play.

Note by Vermont local rule of competition a coach name may NOT be added to the roster to replace a head coach that has been disqualified.

**Rule 4.1.1.h**      All jerseys, including the keeper, shall display their number on the back.

### **RULE CHANGES / INTERPRETATIONS - refer to Changes**

### **SUBSTITUTIONS**      **Rule 3.3**

Substitutions are covered in great detail in the NFHS Rule book and I will not look to repeat the rule in this memo. It is important to know when substitutions are allowed and when substitutes become a "player". Know that NHSF rules and USSF LOTG covering substitutions are not the same. This can cause some confusion or misunderstanding for players and coaches that play in multiple competitions throughout the year.

If you have questions or would like a clarification, email the VSOA Rules Interpreter.

### **THUNDER / LIGHTNING**

"If you hear it or see it, then flee it." Any sound of thunder or sight of lightning requires the field to be cleared and the teams and officials to seek safe cover. You MUST wait 30 minutes since the last sight or sound of lightning or thunder. Every time you hear or see it, the clock must be reset. If it is looking like the storm will not quickly pass or that you will run out of time (night game during the week and

the visitors have a long trip) or light (daytime game with darkness approaching), get with the coaches and/or administrator on site and determine if you are going to try to wait it out or go home. If the game has reached half time it is considered a complete game. If it has not reached half time it will be replayed from when it was stopped. The officials should sign the official scorebook (home team) with the score and time. Do not make any declarations of who wins/loses etc. Let the teams work that out with the VPA. *Marty Adams 2016*

When stopping play due to thunder / lighting, instruct teams that they must leave the field and immediate area. Define from the venue administrator or home team head coach where the two teams

may go to get out of harm's way. It is suggested that the venue announce to fans to leave spectator areas, especially metal benches and stands.

**UNSPORTING CONDUCT      Rule 12.8.1.f**

Unsporting behavior covers a wide breadth of behaviors. Review the 15 sub-topics of this rule. These offenses shall be cautioned (yellow card).

A player removing their jersey in celebration shall be cautioned.

**WALL    Rule 13.3.1**

In 2020 NFHS Rule Book provides specific direction to referees for administering a defensive wall. This rule makes the referee's job easier. "Where 3 or more defending team players form a wall, all attacking players must remain at least 1 yard from the wall until the ball is in play." Failure to maintain the 1 yard distance is considered a delaying tactic and the guilty player should be cautioned.