

Oregon School Activities Association

Soccer Bulletin #8

2024

We are now approaching the end of the regular season. Some schools have already played their last league game for the year. The others have one or two games left, and then the playoffs begin.

To referee a playoff game, it is a requirement that you participate in your association's playoff review meeting (preferred) and watch the OCEP Playoff Certification video prepared by Gibby Reynolds, Chair of the NFHS National Soccer Rules Committee. Your association's commissioner will inform you of the process for your association's members. After viewing this video, it is absolutely 100% necessary that you understand the tie breaker procedures. Every member of the crew for every playoff game, the referee, the assistant referees and the 4th official, MUST know these procedures, without any doubt in their mind. Your game report should include whether the game went to over time or penalty kicks. Please report the number of successful kicks made by each team, if the game goes to kicks.

Every game from this point on is going to carry with it the knowledge that this may be the last game of the season. Referees can expect that emotions will run high for players, spectators and coaches. These are the games where referees must do all of their pre-game and post-game duties to avoid situations that would not reflect well on one or both teams and schools.

In recent weeks, we have had a number of incidents in which coaches wanted to approach the referee crew at halftime or after the game. We should work together collegially to make these games successful, regardless of who wins and loses. A coach or assistant coach coming over at half time may be something routine, like "We're changing keepers." If they want to argue calls, a caution for dissent may be in order. After the game, the referee crew should immediately be on their way to their cars.

There may be a situation in the last minute or so of the first half or at the end of the game in which the referee may want to stop the clock. 7.4.1 allows the clock to be stopped any time the referee wishes to stop the clock. Why would the referee want to stop the clock in the last minute of a close game? Maybe the only available ball has gone far away. Of course, in that situation, the referee may be stopping the clock anyway to caution a player from the winning team for kicking away to delay the restart. How about a player is down for some reason? Stop the clock and check on them. There are a lot of other situations that might be good reasons to stop the clock late in a close game. Don't forget that substitutions by the winning team in the last five minutes of the game require you to stop the clock, even if both

teams are subbing. Your decision about stopping the clock late in the game, like all of your decisions in the game, should be based on your judgement about what is fair.

Any red cards in these games must be reported to your commissioner the day of the game. Call your commissioner that day, as soon after the game as possible and then file your game report later that day. Your commissioner will want to hear about what happened from you before the Athletic Director calls the commissioner. The playoffs are usually on a very tight schedule and any appeals have to be resolved very quickly.

These are the games that get the adrenalin pumping for everyone. But the referees have to be the calmest people at the game.

Patrick Duffy
OSAA State Soccer Rules Interpreter