

# **Oregon School Activities Association**

## **Soccer Bulletin #1**

**2025**

This is the best time of the season. Everyone is undefeated, no one has been carded and there hasn't been a single bad referee decision anywhere! But the actual season starts this week. Coaches and referees are the adults out there. It is our job to give the players their chance to represent their school, use their skills and learn the life lessons that we learned as members of high school teams 'back then.'

Please remember that we use NFHS rules for high school soccer, not IFAB/FIFA/USSF or NCAA. We can get confused during the crazy fall season, when we may be using three different rule books in three days.

As I hope you already know, there were a few rule changes this year that we need to remember. Perhaps the most significant is that, during half time, only the team captain(s) can come talk to the referees. No coaches, other players or other bench personnel. Of course, you can ask the coach and/or the home school game manager to come talk to you if you need to do so.

From what I have heard so far, the rule change that has coaches' attention is the change that allows the referee to card the head coach in addition to the assistant (or other bench personnel) for misconduct by the assistant coach. This should not be done automatically, just when the referee feels that the bench is getting out of control, over emotional, etc. and you think that the additional card will settle things down.

There is also a re-wording of an existing rule that emphasizes that any time the officials call on the trainer or coach to help an injured player, the player has to leave the field, even if they are the goalkeeper. This is a rule difference with other rule books.

It is also worth remembering a number of things that may come up in a high school game. The rules (1.5) require that team areas be marked. This is done to help remind the wandering coach that they have to stay in the bench area. If there are no lines for the bench area, and there probably won't be at most fields, then have them put down cones before the game.

I am sure that you will run across players this year who are wearing playing card sized shin guards, due to changes in the IFAB Laws of the Game. The high school rule (4.1.5) has NOT changed, however. Particularly early in the season, please walk around before the game and check that shin guards appear to be large enough. The players here are minors, under the law,

and therefore cannot legally consent to assume the risk of injury from wearing inadequate shin guards.

The stadium clock is official in high school. We stop for goals, cards, injuries, penalty kicks and when you determine that the clock should be stopped to bring justice to the game. We do this for all varsity, JV and JV2 games. In high school games, we play 40 minute halves.

Before the game, we have to walk the field, checking for any problems. Goals MUST be secured to your satisfaction. If they cannot be secured, do not start the game. We have to get a roster from both coaches and ask the coaches if their players will be legally and properly equipped before kickoff. If there is a stadium clock, please verify that the clock operator knows when to stop the clock and start the clock.

Red carded players remain on the bench, under the supervision of the head coach. Red carded coaches or others on the bench who are not substitutes (i.e. the adults) must leave and they must be far enough away that you can't see them or hear them. Watching through the fence does not meet that requirement.

Cautioned players must leave the field. The referee must tell both coaches the reason for the card. E.g. "Seven white, unsporting conduct."

Immediately at the end of the game, the referee crew leaves! Ref and run. Do not stop to change your shoes, change your shirt, get a big swig of water, etc. This works best if, during half time, you prepare your stuff for immediate departure, e.g. keys and phone are immediately available. Go directly to your bags, pick them up and head for your car.

Be safe out there.

Patrick Duffy  
OSAA State Soccer Rules Interpreter