

Oregon School Activities Association

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We are still seeing players on the field with tiny shin guards, ear rings, etc. It will be easier to deal with this if you take a look at the players before the game. Some referees doing varsity games where players are introduced before the game will scan the players coming out to us as they are introduced. Please remember that the first such illegally equipped player on the team earns a caution to their coach. The illegally equipped player still has to exit the field. That is first on that team, not first player in the game. In other words, both head coaches could potentially be cautioned for this. Yes, I've seen it happen. After that first card to the coach, any other illegally equipped player on that team gets the caution themselves. Tiny, too small shin guards are not legal. Shin guards that do not have the NOCSAE seal on the front of the shin guard are also not legal. The seal is on page 26 of the rule book.

We are seeing a lot of fouls for pushing so far this year. It is the referee's judgment whether a push is trifling or not. Certainly, if it affects play, it has to be called. And, if it happens behind play, it could still be something that should be called. For example, player A escapes a challenge from player B and passes the ball to a teammate. Player B then pushes player A. This late push is the sort of thing that is not justified as an attempt to defend, because the ball is already gone. Resentment and retaliation can happen when this happens. Yes, there may be advantage to be played here. The referee should communicate about what they saw in this situation. That way, other players will understand why there was no whistle and get the message not to do that themselves.

I and a lot of other referees are forgetting to start counting for the new eight seconds rule. Any time the goalkeeper has the ball under their control with their hand(s) and/or arm(s), start the silent count, even if the keeper is not standing up. We've all seen keepers who catch the ball cleanly and then do a dramatic flop forward. That should not keep the count from starting. When you get to five, raise the arm, showing the number of seconds left with your fingers and count out loud, loud enough that the goalkeeper can hear you. What is not clear in the rule book is who counts when we are using the dual system. The lead referee, closer to the goalkeeper, should be the one counting. The trail should also be silently counting, in case the lead referee forgets.

If you give a card and, after the game, you do not find the player's number on the roster what are you going to do? If you check the roster after the game, you can get the coach to tell you which player it was if you don't see the number. The OSAA website also has rosters for most of the teams, including the names of the coaches.

Please be careful when writing game reports for cards. A caution should include use of the word “reckless” for tackles etc. An ejection should include “excessive force.” If you write that the tackle was ‘violent,’ and give a caution, we have a problem. Likewise, a description that says that the player ‘slid into their opponent from behind’ should have some explanation why it was not an ejection. Any ejection should have a full explanation of what you saw the player do. Wording like just “very bad tackle” is not enough. What you write about an ejection is going to be read by the school’s Athletic Director who may not have been at the game. They have to make the decision about whether to appeal the fine and player suspension. Help them understand what happened.

Be safe out there.

Patrick Duffy
OSAA State Soccer Rules Interpreter