

Oregon School Activities Association

Soccer Bulletin #7

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I know you are all out doing games, high school and maybe also youth, college and/or adult leagues as well. I'll try to keep this one short.

We are still seeing players with illegal shin guards. This is a safety issue, even if the players don't realize it. I just had a game myself in which a player was wearing small but, arguably, legal size shin guards. On a challenge later in the game, he got whacked above the middle of his shin, too high to be protected by the small ones he was wearing, and he had to leave the game. I would recommend looking at the players while they are warming up. No, they don't have to be wearing them during warmups, but, if they aren't, there's a good chance that they won't be wearing them when the game starts. Please work through the coaches to deal with this in advance.

We have had far too many incidents this year of spectators mocking or otherwise verbally harassing opposing players or their school. Even worse, some of this has been directed at specific players, by name. This may or may not be part of a discriminatory language situation. If any of the AR's hear this, they should get the referee's attention at the next stoppage, and tell them what you heard. The referee then tells the game manager and gives them time to deal with it before restarting the game. Rinse and repeat, as necessary. Referees do not have the authority to order any or all spectators to leave. That's the game manager's responsibility. At sub-varsity games, only rarely is there a separate game manager. If there is not a separate game manager, varsity or sub-varsity, the home team's head coach is the game manager.

We had a game recently during which a coach expressed his disagreement with some referee or AR decisions that went against his team. The coach then threatened to 'report' the referee to 'your boss.' This kind of bullying is unacceptable. At the very least, it should result in a caution to the coach, not a warning. Some of these coaches are just trying to get into the referee's head. An immediate caution, however, checkmates them. They know that they can't continue yapping without getting sent off. And if they do continue, then it's clear that they have lost their self-control and shouldn't be allowed to continue coaching that day. It would only lead to players joining in the dissent. If any of their language could be considered to be an insult, then an ejection should be the decision. No warning, no caution first.

Last week, there was a game where one school had less than 11 players. The NFHS rules 3.1.2 say that seven players is the minimum on each team. In this case, the other team was

willing to reduce the number of their players on the field to seven and they shortened the field as well. All of this is perfectly legal. The other team could not be required to reduce their numbers, but it was a very sporting action on their part.

The only situation that could be a problem in such a game would be an injured player reducing the number below seven. If the injury is minor and they are expected to return relatively quickly (or they weren't injured but have to adjust their equipment), the referee should simply suspend the game until the seventh player is able to return. Please work with the coaches in this situation. If the player cannot return, the game has to be terminated. Any situation where there are fewer than 11 eligible players should be noted in your game report. This is going to be a rare situation, but the 1A schools in particular have relatively few students in the whole school that could form a team. We just want to give the players the chance to play.

Be safe out there.

Patrick Duffy
OSAA State Soccer Rules Interpreter