

**2026 New York State Certified Officials of Soccer (NYSCOS) Rules Exam (Boys and Girls Soccer)**

**1. Prior to kickoff, the referee team verifies that the match balls are inflated to 11 psi (within the legal 10-12 psi range stated on the ball). The visiting coach objects, claiming the balls are too hard. The referee should:**

- A) Deflate the match balls to the absolute minimum of 8.5 psi
- B) Allow the visiting team to supply their own match balls
- C) Proceed with the balls at their current verified inflation level
- D) Adjust the pressure to a consensus value agreed upon by both head coaches

**2. A second whistle from the referee is mandatory to resume match play in which of the following scenarios?**

- A) Immediately following a completed player substitution
- B) Following a temporary stoppage to issue a caution or ejection
- C) Prior to the taking of a penalty kick
- D) All of the above scenarios

**3. Team A shoots on goal and the goalkeeper for Team B makes a diving save and controls the ball with their hands. How long does the goalkeeper have to release the ball once possession has been gained? (\*\* 2026 rules update question)**

- A) 6 seconds
- B) 8 seconds
- C) 10 seconds
- D) The referee has the sole discretion on how long it takes

**4. The referee is forced to stop play while the ball is live in the midfield area due to a dog running on the field. What is the correct restart?**

- A) Indirect Free Kick
- B) Dropped Ball
- C) Kickoff
- D) Direct Free Kick

**5. To kick off the second half, Player A1 strikes the ball directly into the opponent's goal on the opening kickoff without it touching any other player on the pitch. The referee must:**

- A) Disallow the goal and award a goal kick to Team B
- B) Award an indirect free kick to Team B from the center spot
- C) Award the goal and restart the match with a kickoff for Team B
- D) Disallow the goal and order a retake of the kickoff

**6. Attacker A3 is standing in an offside position. A teammate, A10 takes a hard shot on goal, and the ball deflects off a defender's hip directly to A3, who controls and plays the ball. The official should:**

- A) Award an indirect free kick to Team B at the spot where A3 played the ball
- B) Award an indirect free kick to Team B from the spot where the shot was originally taken
- C) Allow play to continue as there is nothing wrong
- D) Allow play to continue for an advantage scoring opportunity

**7. A hard-driven pass from Team B strikes the hand of a Team A defender whose back is completely turned to the kicker and whose hands are held naturally down at their side. The referee should:**

- A) Issue a yellow card caution to the defender
- B) Award an indirect free kick to Team B
- C) Award a direct free kick to Team B for the foul
- D) Allow play to continue with no foul as this is a reflex action and not considered to be deliberate handling

**8. An attacker's offside position is not penalized if they receive the ball directly from an opponent who performed which action?**

- A) The defender deflects the ball and has no time to react to the ball
- B) The defender makes a deliberate play on the ball
- C) Made an instinctive, reflex body deflection
- D) Was struck by the ball inadvertently while standing completely still

**9. In the dual system (2 man) of officiating, the trail official calls a white team defender for a tripping foul 25 yards away from goal in the blue teams attacking half of play. The blue team asks for 10 yards and the trail official comes down to mark the space and set the wall. As this is now a ceremonial restart, which official has the second whistle to restart play?**

- A) Trail Official
- B) Lead Official
- C) Whichever referee is closer
- D) Player may kick it when the trail official verbally says it is ok to kick

**10. During a goal kick restart, the goalkeeper miskicks the ball in a forward direction 6 yards. Before the ball completely exits the penalty area, the goalkeeper kicks the ball a second time with their foot to clear it. What is the correct ruling?**

- A) Order the goal kick to be retaken by the defending team
- B) Award an indirect free kick to the opponent from the spot where the goalie touched the ball the second time
- C) Allow play to continue since the ball never left the penalty area
- D) Award a direct free kick to the opponent at the spot of the second touch

**11. The referee observes a player wearing solid blue socks (the dark home team color) with white medical tape wrapped multiple times around the sock above the ankle. What is the ruling?**

- A) Permitted as long as the visiting team is wearing white socks
- B) Allowed only if the tape is completely covered by shin guards
- C) Not permitted. The color of the tape must be a similar color of the sock above the ankle
- D) Allowed under all high school equipment rules

**12. The color of the visiting teams socks and jerseys must be.....**

- A) White jerseys and white socks
- B) Dark jerseys and dark socks
- C) Coaches should decide on colors of jerseys and socks in the locker rooms
- D) Jersey and sock colors are chosen at the captains meeting

**13. An attacking player encroaches into the penalty area before a penalty kick is struck. The ball rebounds off the post directly to this attacker, who immediately kicks it wide of the goal. The restart is:**

- A) Retake the penalty kick for the attacking team
- B) Award an indirect free kick from the spot of the infraction
- C) Award a goal kick to the defending team
- D) Award a dropped ball to the defending goalkeeper

**14. During a heated verbal altercation between opponents, Player A deliberately spits directly at Player B. The referee must rule:**

- A) Both players are cautioned and shown yellow cards for the altercation
- B) Player A is cautioned and shown the yellow card
- C) Player B is automatically ejected for causing the spitting and altercation
- D) Player A is ejected and shown the red card for spitting at Player B

**15. When determining whether a foul constitutes Denying an Obvious Goal-Scoring Opportunity (DOGSO), which categories must be considered and present under the simplified rule?**

**(\*\* 2026 rules update)**

- A) The general direction of play and the distance between the offense and the goal
- B) The location and total number of defenders
- C) The likelihood of keeping or gaining control of the ball
- D) All of the above

**16. Attacker A1 is driving forward on a promising attack. Defender B5 intentionally pulls A1's jersey from behind, completely stopping a promising attack (SPA) outside the penalty area. The referee shall:**

- A) Eject Player B5 immediately for a violent conduct foul
- B) Award a penalty kick and issue a yellow card to B5
- C) Allow play to continue and wave play on
- D) Caution Player B5 and show the yellow card

**17. Attacker A10 is standing deep in an offside position when they receive the ball directly from a goal kick executed by their own goalkeeper. What should happen next?**

- A) The referee stops play and awards an indirect free kick to Team B
- B) Play is allowed to continue because there is no offside violation
- C) The referee only stops play if A10 gets involved directly in the play
- D) The referee stops play and orders the goal kick to be retaken

**18. Team B is awarded a corner kick. B6 takes the kick and curves it directly into the goal without the ball touching any other player on either team. The referee should....**

- A) Stop play and restart with a dropped ball for Team A's goalkeeper
- B) Stop play immediately and award a re-do
- C) Award a goal for team B and restart with a kickoff
- D) Caution B6

**19. Team A is awarded a penalty kick. The referee blows the whistle and Player A2 runs up and kicks it. A loud pop is heard mid-flight and the ball completely deflates right before crossing the line and eventually lands into the goal. What is the correct restart?**

- A) Disallow the goal and restart with a dropped ball to Team B's goalkeeper
- B) Award the goal and restart with a kickoff for Team B
- C) Disallow the goal and retake the penalty kick
- D) Disallow the goal and award a goal kick to Team B

**20. The referee beckons medical staff onto the field after the goalkeeper and a teammate collide heavily. Both players remain on the turf holding their heads. The referee shall:**

- A) Only allow the goalkeeper to remain in the game
- B) Allow both players to stay in the game if requested by their head coach
- C) Ensure that both players leave the field with the option to be substituted
- D) Only allow both players to stay if cleared instantly by the school's athletic trainer

**21. A goalkeeper is cautioned (yellow card) during the taking of a penalty kick. Which of the following happens next?**

- A) The goalkeeper leaves the field and must be replaced by a substitute from the bench or a field player.
- B) The goalkeeper remains on the field and a field player is removed in their place.
- C) The goalkeeper must be replaced strictly by a field player currently on the field of play.
- D) None of the above.

**22. The referee awards a penalty kick. A1 is taking the penalty kick. A1 stutter steps towards the ball in a continuous motion, shoots and scores into the back of the net. The referee should....**

- A) Retake the penalty kick and caution A1 for stutter stepping
- B) Signal for a goal and restart with a kickoff
- C) Award an indirect kick going out for team B at the penalty spot
- D) None of the above

**23. The referee observes Player B6 wearing illegal equipment on the field while the ball is in active play. This is the first occurrence of illegal equipment for Team B, and there is no immediate danger. The correct ruling is:**

- A) Stop play immediately and caution (yellow card) Team B's head coach.
- B) Stop play immediately and caution (yellow card) B6.
- C) At the next stoppage, stop play and caution (yellow card) Team B's head coach.
- D) At the next stoppage stop play and caution (yellow card) B6.

**24. The referee observes Player A10 who is improperly equipped. The violation is not immediately correctable, so the referee instructs A10 to leave the field. Team A elects to play shorthanded while A10 fixes the equipment. When can A10 re-enter?**

- A) Since Team A elected to play shorthanded, A10 can return during the run of active play.
- B) At the next dead ball.
- C) At the next legal substitution opportunity for Team A.
- D) Any of the above.

**25. The first half expires and the teams head to the locker rooms. Which of the following actions is strictly prohibited by rule?**

- A) Making an unlimited number of player substitutions during the halftime interval.
- B) The captain approaching the referees to ask for clarification on a call
- C) The coach, a player, or another member of team personnel (other than the captain) confronting an official without permission or being beckoned.
- D) Extending the halftime interval by mutual agreement of opposing coaches due to the heat.

**26. Team A is awarded a dropped ball restart. The referee drops the ball to Player A10. After the ball is in play, A10 kicks the ball directly into the opponent's goal without any other player touching it. What is the correct call?**

- A) Goal is awarded to Team A; play restarts with a kickoff.
- B) No goal. The ball must touch at least two players before a goal can be scored. Play restarts with a goal kick for the opposing team.
- C) Retake the dropped ball because the ball was not legally in play.
- D) Award an indirect free kick to Team B from the center spot.

**27. B10 has the ball and is dribbling inside his attacking penalty area. Player A2 is down with a serious head injury. The officials whistle, stop the clock and beckon the trainer onto the field. How shall play be restarted?**

- A) Indirect free kick for team B at the spot of the ball when play was stopped
- B) Drop ball to team B at the spot of the ball when play was stopped
- C) Drop ball to the goalkeeper for team A with all opposing players outside the penalty area
- D) Direct free kick to team B at the spot of the ball

**28. The referee calls 8 seconds on the goalkeeper for team A. How will team B restart play?**

- A) Indirect free kick at the spot where the goalie was when the 8 seconds was called
- B) Corner kick
- C) Penalty kick
- D) Direct free kick at the spot where the goalie was when the 8 seconds was called

**29. During a goal kick, the goalkeeper passes the ball directly to a teammate located within their own penalty area. An opponent who was legitimately trying to exit the area is struck in the back by the ball. What should the referee do?**

- A) Blow the whistle and order the goal kick to be retaken.
- B) Caution the attacker for delaying the restart.
- C) Award a direct free kick to the defending team.
- D) Allow play to continue. This is legal.

**30. Player B6 is cautioned and must leave the field. Team B had 4 substitutes waiting to enter and checked in at midfield prior to the caution being issued. Which of the following is true?**

- A) Only B6 may be replaced with a substitute
- B) The 4 substitutes for team B may enter plus an additional sub for B6
- C) Team B must play a man down until the next dead ball
- D) None of the above

**31. Play is stopped solely for a standard, non-misconduct foul committed by Team A in the midfield. Substitutes from both teams are waiting at the scorer's table. Which of the following statements is true?**

- A) Only Team A's substitute is allowed to enter the game.
- B) Only Team B's substitute is allowed to enter the game.
- C) Both teams' substitutes are allowed to enter the game.
- D) Neither teams' substitutes are allowed to enter the game.

**32. A penalty kick is awarded, to team B. B7 goes down with an ankle injury as a result of the foul and leaves the field of play. B5 replaces B7. Which of the following statements is true regarding the entering substitute, B5?**

- A) Any injury substitutions are banned whenever a penalty kick is awarded.
- B) A substitute entering the game may take the penalty kick
- C) A substitute entering the game cannot take the penalty kick.
- D) None of these statements are true.

**33. Team A is awarded an indirect free kick. Player A1 runs by the ball at full speed and doesn't touch or move the ball in the act. Player A4 then shoots the ball directly into the opponent's goal. The referee should award a:**

- A) Goal and kickoff for Team B.
- B) Retake of the indirect free kick for Team A.
- C) Goal kick.
- D) Indirect free kick for Team B.

**34. When a goal kick is awarded to the defending team, the ball may be legally kicked from which location?**

- A) Only from the exact corners of the six-yard box.
- B) From anywhere inside the goal area.
- C) Strictly from the line bounding the goal area.
- D) Anywhere within the larger 18-yard penalty area.

**35. The ball goes out of play for a corner kick. A substitute from the attacking team reports to sub in after the ball has gone out and right before the kick is to be taken. What is the correct ruling regarding this substitution situation?**

- A) Only the defending team may substitute.
- B) Only the attacking team may substitute.
- C) Both teams may legally substitute.
- D) Neither team may substitute at this moment and situation

**36. Player B6 trips on his own and lands on top of the ball on the ground. Player A is within a very close playing distance only one yard away. Player B6 remains down with his stomach over the ball. What should the officials rule? (\* 2026 rules focus)**

- A) No foul continue playing
- B) Verbally shout to B6 to stand up
- C) Caution B6 for embellishment and simulation
- D) Award an indirect free kick to team A for playing in a dangerous manner

**37. At what precise location or moment does the official jurisdiction and authority of the referee crew over a high school match begin?**

- A) At the exact moment of the opening match kickoff.
- B) 15 minutes prior to game time when rosters are locked.
- C) When the pre-game captains' conference begins.
- D) Upon arrival at the field/immediate surroundings.

**38. Is electronic tracking technology (such as GPS tracking vests) legally permitted to be worn by high school soccer players? (\* 2026 rules focus)**

- A) Only if the tracking data is transmitted live to the opponent's bench.
- B) No, wearable electronic technology is strictly illegal under all circumstances.
- C) Yes, but it must be worn conspicuously over the player jersey.
- D) Yes, wearable technology may be worn if securely fastened and under the uniform.

**39. The referee instructs a cautioned player to leave the field. Team A elects to play shorthanded while the player sits out on the bench. When can this cautioned player legally re-enter?**

- A) At any standard dead ball situation.
- B) Allow Team A to play shorthanded. The cautioned player may not re-enter until next legal substitution opportunity.
- C) Immediately during active run of play once the coach gives permission.
- D) At the start of the next period.

**40. Player B6 asks during the captains meeting to wear a body camera to record his playing for his Tik Tok account. What is the correct ruling?**

- A) Allowed under all circumstances
- B) Not allowed under any circumstance
- C) The player is allowed to wear only if it is strapped on tight
- D) Allowed only if the player has a proper reason to record

**41. Player A6 is taking a penalty kick. Before the ball is struck by A6, the goalkeeper B11 clearly comes forward and encroaches. A6 takes the kick well high and over the crossbar. What is the correct decision? (\*\* 2026 Rules update question)**

- A) Award a goal kick as the encroachment didn't impact the play
- B) Caution the goalie and retake the kick
- C) Eject the goalkeeper for DOGSO
- D) None of the above are the correct decision

**42. The score is 3-1 in the second half of play with team A in the lead. The ball goes out over the goal line with 2:29 on the clock. The restart is a goal kick. Team A has a substitute ready at midfield. The referee should....**

- A) Allow the substitution and add back 30 seconds at the end of the game
- B) Allow the substitute only if the player is replacing an injured player
- C) Stop the clock, beckon the substitute onto the field and restart play with a whistle once the substitution is complete
- D) The substitute is not permitted to enter the field of play

**43. During a penalty kick, Attacker A1 runs up to the ball, completely finishes their approach, and then executes a feint or fake kick to trick the goalkeeper before finally putting it in the net. Under the updated Rule 14 restrictions: (\*\* 2026 rules focus)**

- A) Allow the goal and restart with a kickoff.
- B) Caution Attacker A1 and restart with an indirect free kick for Team B.
- C) Disallow the goal and order a retake of the penalty kick.
- D) Warn the goalkeeper and retake the penalty kick.

**44. The lead referee blows the whistle for the taking of a penalty kick. Right before the ball is struck, the goalkeeper deliberately moves forward off of the goal line. Which of the following is true? (\*\* 2026 rules focus)**

- A) The referee should blow the whistle right away and caution the goalkeeper
- B) The referee should hold their whistle until the kick is completed. If the ball enters the goal, it is a good goal
- C) The goalie may come forward off the line right before the attacker strikes the ball
- D) None of the above are true

**45. Unsporting language originates from an unidentified substitute player inside Team B's bench area. The referee cannot identify the specific individual. Who is penalized?**

- A) The team captain on the field.
- B) Caution the head coach for Team B.
- C) The entire substitute bench is ejected.
- D) No penalty can be assessed if the culprit is unknown

**46. To ensure a smooth match flow, the rules dictate that the home team must provide a minimum of how many ball holders?**

- A) Two ball holders.
- B) Three ball holders.
- C) Four ball holders.
- D) Ball holders are strictly optional.

**47. The referee blows the whistle and erroneously points to signal a free kick for Team B. Before the restart takes place, the referee realizes the foul was actually committed by Team B against Team A. The referee should:**

- A) Maintain the original signal to prevent team confusion.
- B) Order a dropped ball restart.
- C) Stop the clock, correct the decision and signal and allow the kick to be taken by Team A.
- D) Allow the teams to play on without a whistle kick.

**48. Spectators enter the field and disrupt play to dispute the referees decision. Which actions should the referee crew take?**

- A) Go into the crowd and eject the spectators
- B) Show a red card to the home coach right away
- C) Stop the game and instruct the appropriate site personnel or home coach to take action
- D) Ignore the actions

**49. When a referee issues a card (Yellow or Red) which of the following is the correct procedure? (\*\* 2026 rules update)**

- A) Hold the yellow or red card up and indicate player, coach, or substitute
- B) Direct any player shown a yellow or red card to leave the field
- C) Notify the other referee(s), both coaches and the official scorer of the card color, player number and reason
- D) All of the above is apart of the process

**50. Player A6 has just been shown a caution. The stadium scoreboard reads there is 19:05 left to play in the 1st half. The referees are ready to restart play. When should the clock restart?**

- A) As soon as the whistle is blown to restart play
- B) As soon as the cautioned player has left the field
- C) The clock only stops on goals and injuries
- D) As soon as the ball is kicked or thrown back into play