



MEMORANDUM

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The 124th Annual General Meeting of the International Football Association Board (IFAB) took place in Zurich on 6 March 2010. The amendments to the Laws of the Game approved at this meeting and the various instructions and directives issued are listed below.

Amendments to the Laws of the Game and Decisions of the Board

1. Law 1 -- The Field of Play

Goals

Present Text

The goalposts and crossbar must be made of wood, metal or other approved material. They may be square, rectangular, round or elliptical in shape and must not be dangerous to players.

New Text

The goalposts and crossbar must be made of wood, metal or other approved material. They **must** be square, rectangular, round or elliptical in shape and must not be dangerous to players.

Reason

The current definition has been clarified in order to indicate that goalposts of any other shape are not permitted.

USSF Advice to Referees: The above change effectively limits the crossbar and goalposts to one of the four listed shapes. No other shapes are permitted.

2. Law 5 – The Referee

Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees

Injured Players

Present Text

Exceptions to this ruling are to be made only when:

- a goalkeeper is injured
- a goalkeeper and an outfield player have collided and need immediate attention
- a severe injury has occurred, e.g. swallowed tongue, concussion, broken leg

New Text

Exceptions to this ruling are to be made only when:

- a goalkeeper is injured
- a goalkeeper and an outfield player have collided and need immediate attention
- **players from the same team have collided and need immediate attention**
- a severe injury has occurred, e.g. swallowed tongue, concussion, broken leg

Reason

It was considered unfair that players of the same team who collided were required to leave the field to receive treatment, leaving the team concerned at a numerical disadvantage.



USSF Advice to Referees: The new third bullet point extends the exception to be treated on the field to injuries resulting from the collision of two or more players on the same team. The reference to “outfield player” in the second bullet point (collision of the goalkeeper and an outfield player) is interpreted to include any field player from either team.

3. Law 5 – The Referee

Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees

Injured Players

Present Text

- the stretcher-bearers should enter the field of play with a stretcher at the same time as the doctors to allow the player to be removed as quickly as possible

New Text

- the stretcher-bearers should enter the field of play with a stretcher following a signal from the referee

Reason

Stretcher-bearers’ mandatory entry onto the field of play for all injuries where a doctor is requested frequently caused unnecessary disruption of the game.

USSF Advice to Referees: The effect of this change is to disconnect the referee’s call for medical person to attend to an injured player and the call for a stretcher. The referee may permit the entry of medical personnel with or without stretcher-bearers at the same time, or may permit stretcher-bearers to enter the field after the entry of medical personnel, or may decide not to permit stretcher-bearers to enter at all if deemed not necessary.

Other decisions of the IFAB

1. Law 1 – The Field of Play

Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees

Logos and emblems

The IFAB reiterated that the reproduction, whether real or virtual, of representative logos or emblems of FIFA, confederations, member associations, leagues, clubs or other bodies is forbidden on the field of play, the goal nets and the areas they enclose, the goals, the flagposts and their flags during playing time.

Particular emphasis was placed on the fact that such logos may not be reproduced on corner flags.

2. Goal-line technology

(continuation of discussions at the 122nd Annual General Meeting)

The use of goal-line technology and indeed technology in general within the game was rejected by majority decision.



3. Authoritative language for the Laws of the Game

It was confirmed that in the event of any divergence between translations of the Laws of the Game, the English text is authoritative.

4. Additional instructions to match officials

It has been noted that certain associations and confederations are unilaterally issuing their own instructions and recommendations to referees within their territories concerning the enforcement of the Laws of the Game, thus increasing the chance of differing interpretations around the world. We would like to reiterate that the International Football Association Board (or FIFA on its behalf) is the only body with the authority to issue such additional instructions concerning the Laws of the Game in order to ensure uniform application worldwide.

Moreover, a special meeting of the International Football Association Board (IFAB) took place in Zurich on 18 May 2010. The amendments to the Laws of the Game approved are listed below.

Amendments to the Laws of the Game and Decisions of the Board

1. Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees Procedure

Present Text

Feinting to take a penalty kick to confuse opponents is permitted as part of football. However, if, in the opinion of the referee, the feinting is considered an act of unsporting behavior, the player must be cautioned.

New Text

Feinting **in the run-up to take a penalty kick** to confuse opponents is permitted as part of football. **However, feinting to kick the ball once the player has completed his run-up is considered an infringement of Law 14 and an act of unsporting behavior for which the player must be cautioned.**

Reason

In view of an increasing trend in players feinting to take a penalty kick to deceive the goalkeeper, it is necessary to clarify what is permitted and what action a referee must take in the event of an infringement

USSF Advice to Referees: Players may feint during the run to the ball (so long as this does not involve, in the opinion of the referee, excessive changes in direction or similar delays in the taking of the kick) but feinting actions once the run to the ball is complete are now to be considered a violation of Law 14 by the kicker. This would include clearly stopping and waiting for a reaction by the goalkeeper before taking the kick or any similar clear hesitation after the run to the ball is complete and before kicking the ball into play. In other words, once the kicker has reached the ball, the kick must be taken without hesitation or delay. In most cases, the referee should allow the kick to proceed and then decide on the appropriate action to take based on the outcome of the kick: if the ball went into the net, the goal is canceled and the kick retaken; if the ball did not go into the net, an indirect free kick is given to the opposing team where the



violation occurred. In either case, before play is restarted, the kicker must be cautioned for unsporting behavior.

2. The fourth official

The fourth official and the reserve assistant referee (bullet point 7)

Present Text

He must indicate to the referee when the wrong player is cautioned because of mistaken identity or when a player is not sent off having been seen to be given a second caution or when violent conduct occurs out of the view of the referee and assistant referees. The referee, however, retains the authority to decide on all points connected with play.

New Text

He assists the referee to control the match in accordance with the Laws of the Game. The referee, however, retains the authority to decide on all points connected with play.

Reason

It is considered that the scope of the fourth official's duty to assist the referee should be extended to allow him to offer support and advice not only in the limited number of situations under the existing Laws of the Game.

*USSF Advice to Referees: The removal of the listed duties for the fourth official does not mean that they no longer are fourth official responsibilities. As the Board explained, the change was for the purpose of **broadening** the areas of fourth official assistance to include anything which may pertain to assisting the referee to control the match. The change emphasizes the importance of including in the pregame conference a discussion of the areas in which the referee wishes the fourth official to provide specific assistance.*

Entry into force of Laws of the Game 2010/2011

The IFAB unanimously agreed that the decisions of the 124th IFAB Annual General Meeting and the special meeting of the International Football Association Board (IFAB) would come into force on 1 June 2010 and therefore apply for the 2010 FIFA World Cup™.

