



FLORIDA
HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

2025-26 FHSA Soccer Rules Presentation



Introduction

Alex Ozuna
Director of Athletics

Responsibilities include:

Fall: Cross Country

Winter: Boys & Girls Soccer

Spring: Boys Volleyball and Boys & Girls Lacrosse



Soccer Advisory Committee

FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Section	Name	Email	School	Phone	Term Expiration
1 Boys	Morgan Dall'Acqua	CoachDallAcqua@gmail.com	Santa Fe High School	(386)462-4167	June 30, 2026
1 Girls	Jochen Schmitges	schmitgesj@duvalschools.org	Sandalwood High School	904-646-5100	June 30, 2027
2 Boys	David Wilson	dawilson@pasco.k12.fl.us	Wiregrass Ranch High School	813-346-0652	June 30, 2026
2 Girls	Vicky King	vak.radar@verizon.net	Land O Lakes High School	(813)794-9400	June 30, 2027
3 Boys	Chris Hawley	chrishawley12@icloud.com	South Fork High School	772-219-1840	June 30, 2027
3 Girls	Shannon Aitken	shannon.aitken@hcps.net	Steinbrenner High School	813-792-5131	June 30, 2026
4 Boys	Steven Lucovic	steven.lucovic@pinecrest.edu	Pine Crest School - Fort Lauderdale	954-776-2134	June 30, 2027
4 Girls	Kate Dwyer	Kate.Dwyer@browardschools.com	Cypress Bay High School	754-323-0388	June 30, 2026
FACA	John Walsh	john.walsh@aquinas-sta.org	Saint Thomas Aquinas High School	954-327-2181	
FACA	Pete Hald	haldp@flaglerschools.com	Flagler Palm Coast High School	386-437-7540	



Officials Advisory Committee

Soccer Chairs

FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Section	Name	Email	School	Term Expiration
1	Dante Buckley	dante35@gmail.com	North Central Florida Soccer Officials Association	June 30, 2026
2	Sean-Micheal Kemp	skemp@flsrc.org	High School Sports Officials Of Central Florida	June 30, 2027
3	William Ayers	payers@burr.com	Florida West Coast High School Soccer Officials Association	June 30, 2026
4	Daniel Va	vadaniel0106@yahoo.com	The School Board of Broward County, FL	June 30, 2027



Soccer Advisory Committee

Active Items

FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Adjust State Tournament Format

- Looking to adjust the State Series format to have semifinal and final games played on consecutive days.
 - 1st Year of Review: Approved by SCAC 9-0
 - 1st Year of Review: Endorsed By ADAC 15-0
 - Moving into the 2nd year of committee review

Define Mandatory Statistics which are Required

- Looking to specifically define that the statistics required to be reported for soccer are: For field players, Name, Jersey Number, Games Played, Goals Scored, and Assists. For goalkeepers: Name, Jersey Number, Minutes Played, Goals Allowed, and Shutouts.
 - 1st Year of Review: Approved by XCAC 9-0
 - 1st Year of Review: Endorsed By ADAC 14-1
 - Moving into the 2nd year of committee review

Overtime Procedures (Golden Goal)

- Looking to reestablish the Golden Goal for state series overtime procedure in the sport of soccer.
 - 1st Year of Review: Approved by SCAC 6-3
 - 1st Year of Review: Endorsed By ADAC 14-1
 - Moving into the 2nd year of committee review



Soccer Advisory Committee

Active Items

FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Referee's Ability to Communicate

- Looking to require at least one member of the officials' crew to be able to communicate in English with coaches.
 - 1st Year of Review: Approved by SCAC 9-0
 - 1st Year of Review: Endorsed By ADAC 12-1
 - Moving into the 2nd year of committee review

Separate State Championship Tournament by Gender

- Looking to adjust regional and state Final Four scheduling so that all girls' classifications play on the same dates and all boys' classifications play on the same dates. Maintain two different start weeks for regionals, but divide them by gender rather than classification. Keep the two-site structure for the Final Four, but ensure that all girls' games are held at one location during the same week and all boys' games at the other.
 - 1st Year of Review: Approved by XCAC 9-0
 - 1st Year of Review: Not Endorsed By ADAC 14-0
 - Moving into the 2nd year of committee review



Important Soccer Season Dates

FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Soccer	Date
First Practice date	Oct. 13
Preseason Tournament	Oct. 27-Nov. 1
First Regular Season Playing date	Nov. 3
Roster Due on Home Campus	Nov. 3
Last Regular Season Playing date	Jan. 17
District Tournament dates	Jan. 20-28
1A-3A Girls Regional Tournament Dates	Feb. 2, 9, 13
1A-3A Boys Regional Tournament Dates	Feb. 3, 10, 13
4A-7A Girls Regional Tournament Dates	Feb. 5, 11, 17
4A-7A Boys Regional Tournament Dates	Feb. 6, 12, 17
1A-3A Florida High School Boys & Girls Soccer State Championships	Feb. 17-21
4A -7A Florida High School Boys & Girls Soccer State Championships	Feb. 23-28

Current FHSAA Policies & Procedures





NEW – How to Submit an Ejection Report

The screenshot shows the 'Officials Central Hub' website. At the top is a navigation bar with links: HOME, TEST, REGISTRATION, STEPS, SPORTS, DIRECTORY, FAQ, CONTACT, and ELIGIBILITY. Below the navigation bar is a green banner with the Florida High School Athletic Association logo and the text 'Officials Central Hub'. The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column, titled 'Important Documents', lists several items: Booking Fees Pay Structure, 2025-2026 Officials' Regulations, Game Fees, Ejection Report (Password 123), How to Submit an Ejection Report, AT7 Exceptional Sportmanship, 2024-2025 Insurance Claim Form, 2024-2025 Insurance Benefits, and Rules Exams Instructions. A yellow arrow points to the 'Ejection Report (Password 123)' link. The middle column, titled 'How to Submit an Ejection Report', shows the date 'Saturday, August 24, 2019' and the text 'How to Video' and 'Password- 123'. The right column, titled 'Important Dates', lists 'Registration and Exam Deadlines'. Below this is a section titled 'Recruitment/Retainment Videos' with a list of videos: Solution, Whistle, Rewarding, Adrenaline, Team, and Hero.

- <https://www1.arbitersports.com/Groups/103524/Library/files/How%20to%20Submit%20an%20Ejection%20Report%20-%20Officials.mp4>



FHSAA Soccer Officials Evaluation Program

- **Procedure**

- To be eligible for the state series, each official must be evaluated at least once every two years.
- The evaluation score received will be calculated into the ranking formula.
- If an official has multiple evaluations, the average score of the evaluations will be taken into the ranking formula.
- Each official and/or association is responsible for contacting and scheduling the date/time of each evaluations with one of the FHSAA Certified Soccer Evaluators.
- The evaluations will be done at the expense of the association or the individual official(s) at a rate not exceeding **\$90 per crew (including travel cost)**
- Once an evaluation has concluded, the evaluator will provide a copy of the evaluation to the contest official(s), the official's association, and the FHSAA. This is done through Arbiter.
- All evaluations must be submitted through Arbiter.
 - *** If an association does not have Arbiter, you will have to use an Excel form for the Eval.***



Soccer Officials Ranking Breakdown

- **Rank 1 Official.** A Rank 1 Official is an individual who has demonstrated consistent superior performance over a sustained period of time. This official is at the top of his/her peer group and has met standards of performance in excess of those required of Rank 2 and Rank 3 officials. The qualifications for a Rank 1 Official are as follows:
 - (a) The official must earn 90 or higher on FHSAA rules examination.
 - (b) The official must score a 4 or 5 on FHSAA evaluation.
 - (c) The official must have 4 or more years of previous experience as a high school official.
- **Rank 2 Official.** A Rank 2 Official is an individual who has demonstrated the competence and gained the experience necessary to officiate at all levels of athletic competition in his/her sport. This official is in the broad middle range of his/her peer group and is distinguished by the FHSAA by means of proficiency points. The qualifications for a Rank 2 Official are as follows:
 - (a) The official must earn 80 or higher on the FHSAA rules examination.
 - (b) The official must score at least a 3 on the FHSAA evaluation.
 - (c) The officials must have 2 or more years of previous experience as a high school official.
- **Rank 3 Official.** A Rank 3 Official is an individual who doesn't meet the requirements of a rank 1 or 2 official.



Point of Emphasis – Official Game Clock

- **FHSAA Official Clock Procedure**

- 6-2-1. The official time will be kept by a contest official on the field, and if the stadium clock is available, it is unofficial.
 - The official game clock is to be kept on the field by a contest officials during the entire of the game.
 - If there is a display clock available, it can be used but the displayed time is unofficial.
 - The proper procedure for a display clock is to run the game clock to 0:00 during each half. Do not stop the clock at the 2:00 mark.
 - If a display clock is available, throughout the entirety of the contest, the contest official must be sure that the official game time kept on the field is in sync with the display stadium clock.
 - If the display stadium clock and the official game time kept on the field are not in sync, the official must be sure to make the appropriate adjustments to the display stadium clock during the water breaks or any stoppage.
- Prior to the game, be sure to communicate the clock procedures with clock operator, and the coaches of both teams.

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2025 FHSAA Soccer State Series





Regional Seeding Determination

- **Regional Advancement Procedures**

- Each District Champion will get an automatic bid to the regional tournament.
- All non-champion teams will be placed as At-Large teams.
- The 4 District Champions and the top 4 At-Large teams in each region will advance to the regional tournament and will be seeded 1 through 8 on the bracket, based on the latest FHSAA Rankings
- The highest-seeded team in each matchup will host each game during the regional tournament
 - The exception: **during the first round only**, if a district champion is matched up against an at-large team, the district champion will host regardless of seeding.
 - In all other circumstances, the higher-seeded team will host the regional tournament game.



1A-3A State Championship
Lake Myrtle Sports Complex
Auburndale, Florida
February 17-21, 2026

4A-7A State Championship
Spec Martin Stadium
DeLand, Florida
February 23-28, 2026





State Championship Tournament Schedule

Lake Myrtle Sport Complex 1A-3A – February 17-21

2A State Tournament:

- Semifinal – Feb 17, Final – Feb 18

3A State Tournament :

- Semifinal – Feb 19, Final – Feb 21

1A State Tournament :

- Semifinal – Feb 20, Final – Feb 21

Spec Martin Stadium (DeLand) 4A-7A – February 20-28

6A State Tournament :

- Semifinal – Feb 23, Final – Feb 25

7A State Tournament :

- Semifinal – Feb 24, Final – Feb 25

4A State Tournament :

- Semifinal – Feb 26, Final – Feb 28

5A State Tournament :

- Semifinal – Feb 27, Final – Feb 28

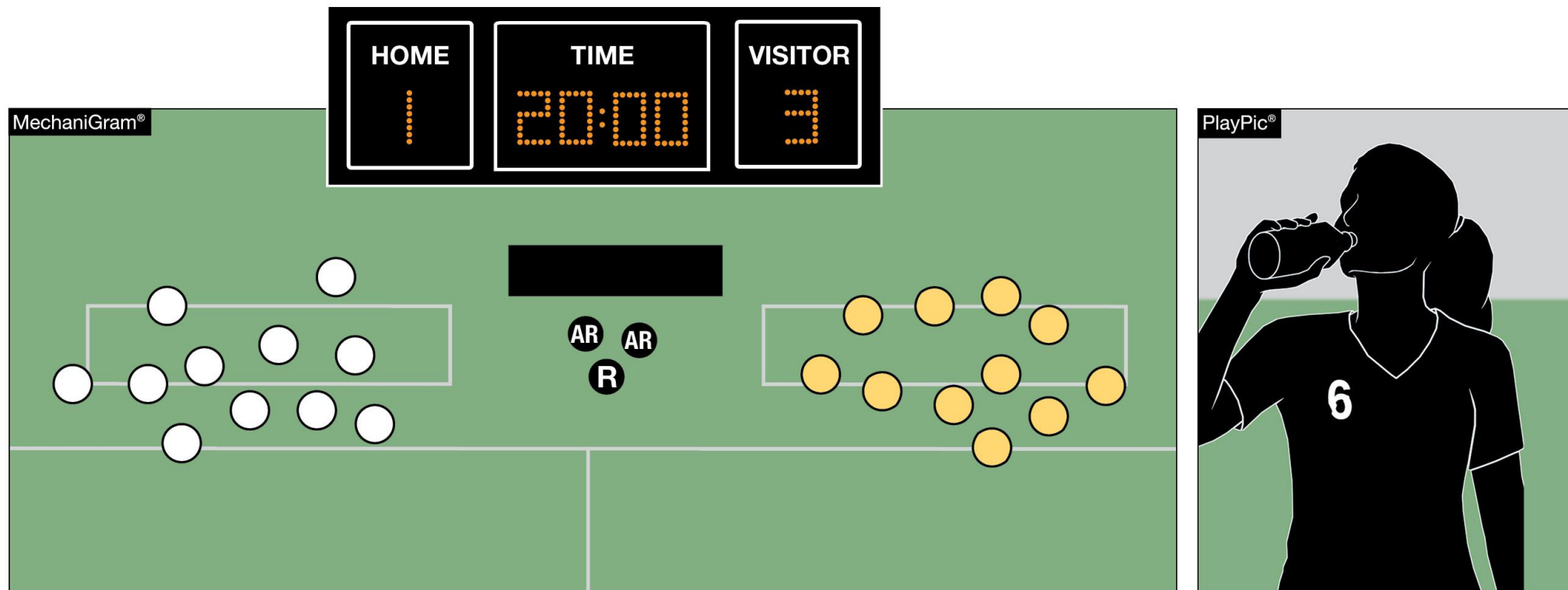


2025-26 NFHS Soccer Rules Changes



SUBSTITUTIONS

RULE 3-3-2c



In addition to being able to substitute players after a goal is scored or when a player is injured, teams may substitute players **when a game is temporarily suspended.**

SUBSTITUTIONS

RULE 3-3-2b2



Amended language clearly states that **once the appropriate health care official is beckoned by the referee**, an injured player (including a goalkeeper) must leave the game.

REQUIRED UNIFORM

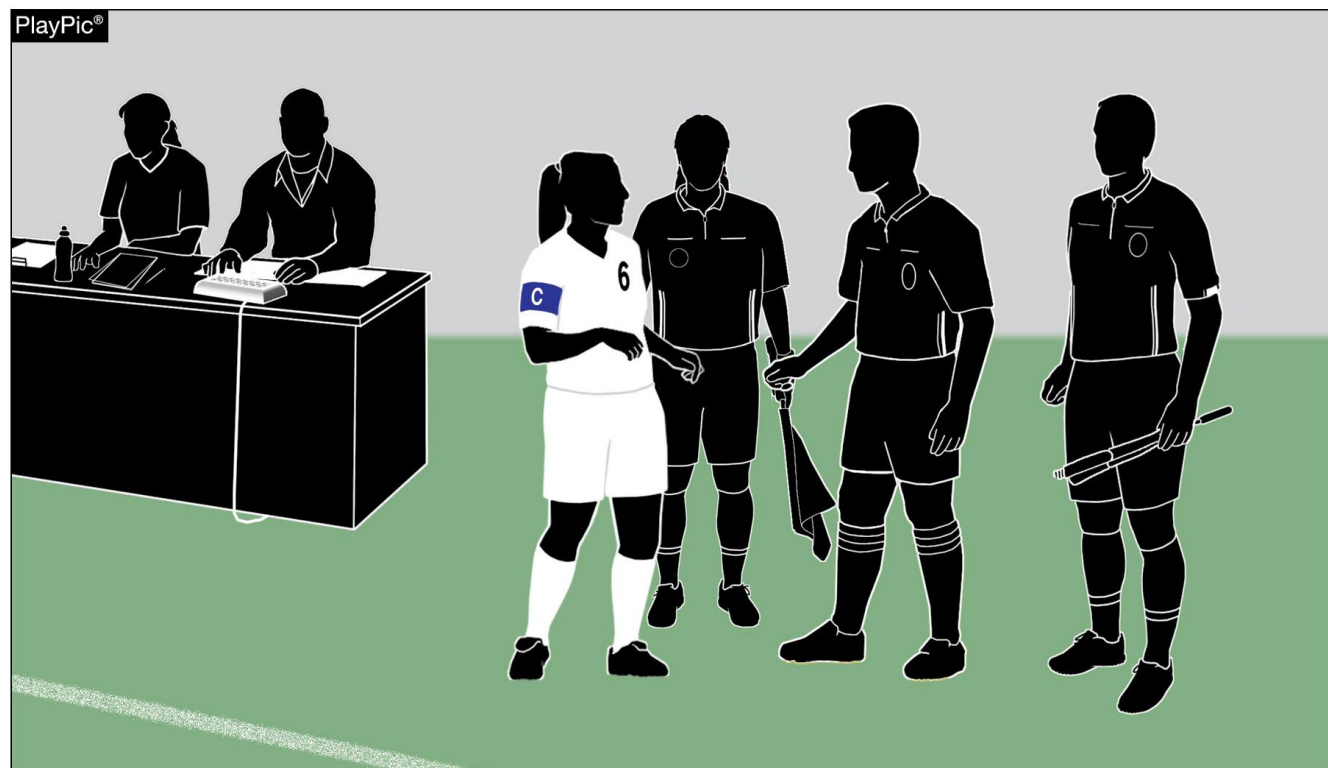
RULE 4-1-2



Amended language clarifies a player's number may be placed on the **front of the jersey and/or shorts** in addition to the back of the jersey.

INTERVALS BETWEEN PERIODS

RULE 7-2-4



This time is for officials to talk amongst themselves and for coaches to work with their players.

No coach, player, substitute or other team personnel other than the team captain shall approach or speak to the officials during an interval between periods, unless beckoned by an official.

MISCONDUCT

RULE 12-4-4b



The head coach is responsible for conduct of their team, inclusive of all bench personnel in the team area. The head coach may be warned, cautioned or ejected for misconduct committed by bench personnel.

DEFINITIONS

RULE 18

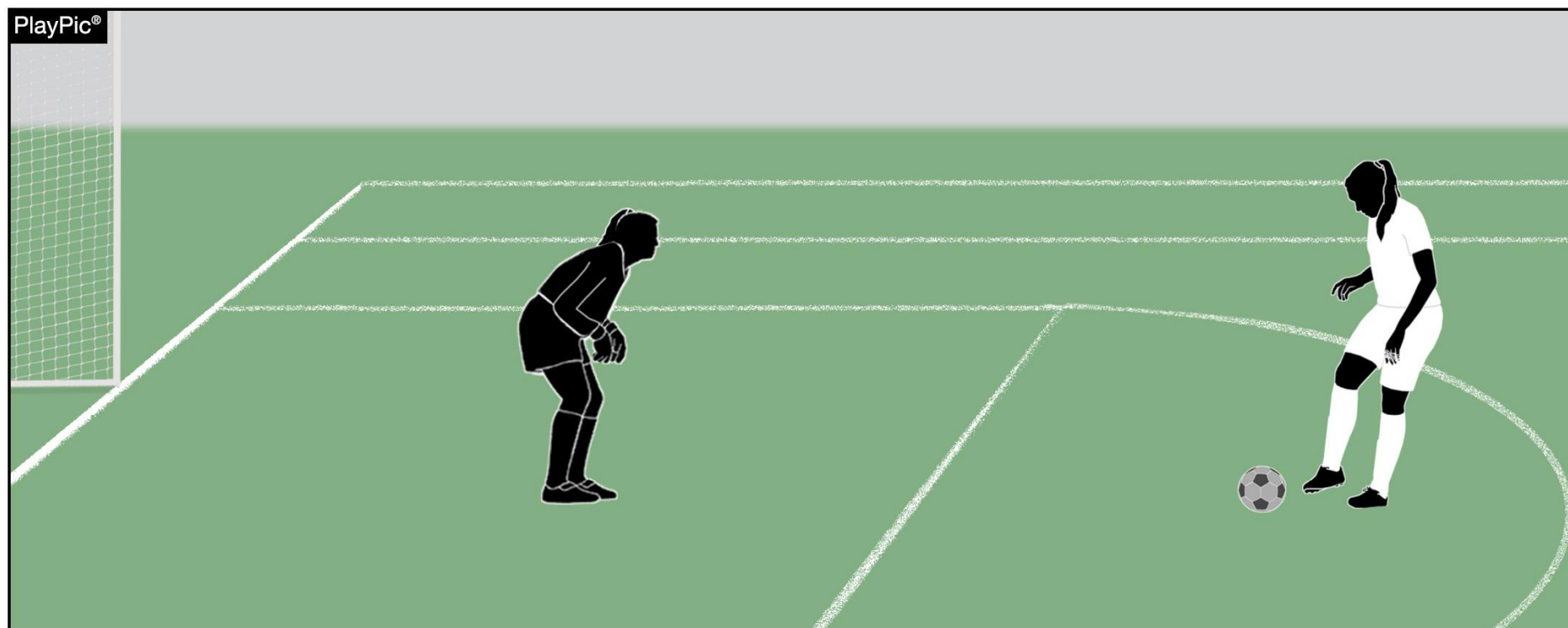


Rule 18, which previously contained the rulebook's definitions, has been eliminated. The terms and definitions have been relocated to their respective rules sections within the rulebook. They also remain accessible via the index for quick reference. This change aims to reduce redundancy.



2025-26 EDITORIAL CHANGES

3-3-7 Substitutions



If a player is being replaced during a penalty kick situation, the substitute may not take the penalty kick.

REQUIRED UNIFORM

RULE 4-1-1c



A school's nickname and/or mascot are **permitted on a uniform**, in addition to the school's name, logo and/or player's name.



5-1-2 Officials

SECTION 1 GENERAL

ART. 2 . . . The jurisdiction of the officials shall begin on arrival at the field of play and its immediate surroundings (to begin official responsibilities), which shall be no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the game and end with the officials leaving the field of play and its immediate surroundings.

- a. The officials shall enforce the rules, and their decisions on points of fact are final.
- b. The officials can only correct a decision so long as the game has not been restarted.
- c. The officials retain clerical authority over the contest through the completion of any reports, including those imposing ejections, that are responsive to actions occurring while the referees had jurisdiction.
- d. State associations may intercede in the event of unusual incidents that occur before, during or after the officials' jurisdiction has ended or in the event that a contest is terminated prior to the conclusion of regulation play.
- e. Protests of NFHS rules are not recognized.
- f. The officials shall not use any form of alcohol, tobacco, or controlled or illicit substance(s) for non-medicinal purposes beginning with arrival at the competition site until departure following the completion of the contest.



2025-26 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS ARE EDUCATION-BASED



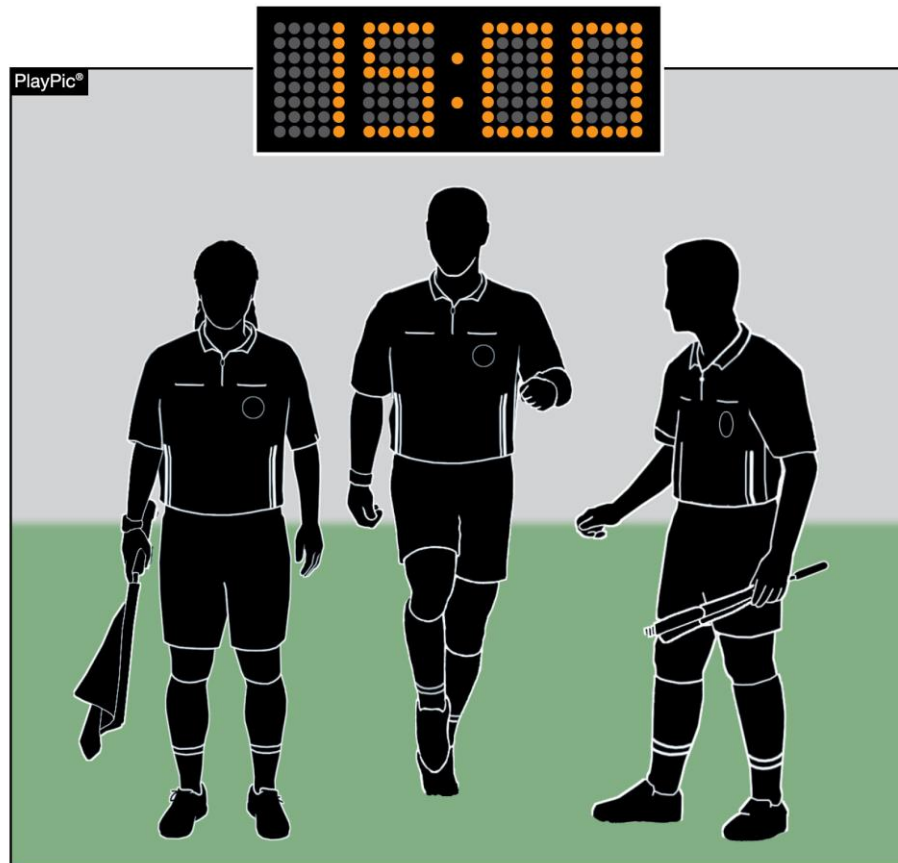
- High school athletics play a vital role in the overall growth of student-athletes, providing opportunities to develop physically, mentally, and emotionally.
- Soccer serves as a platform for building essential life skills such as teamwork, discipline, leadership, and resilience.
- Coaching priorities focus on fundamental skills, strategic gameplay, and decision-making while instilling respect for opponents, officials, and teammates.
- As the game evolves, a strong understanding and application of the rules are essential to maintaining fair and safe competition, making rule education a key responsibility for players, coaches, and officials.



HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS ARE EDUCATION-BASED

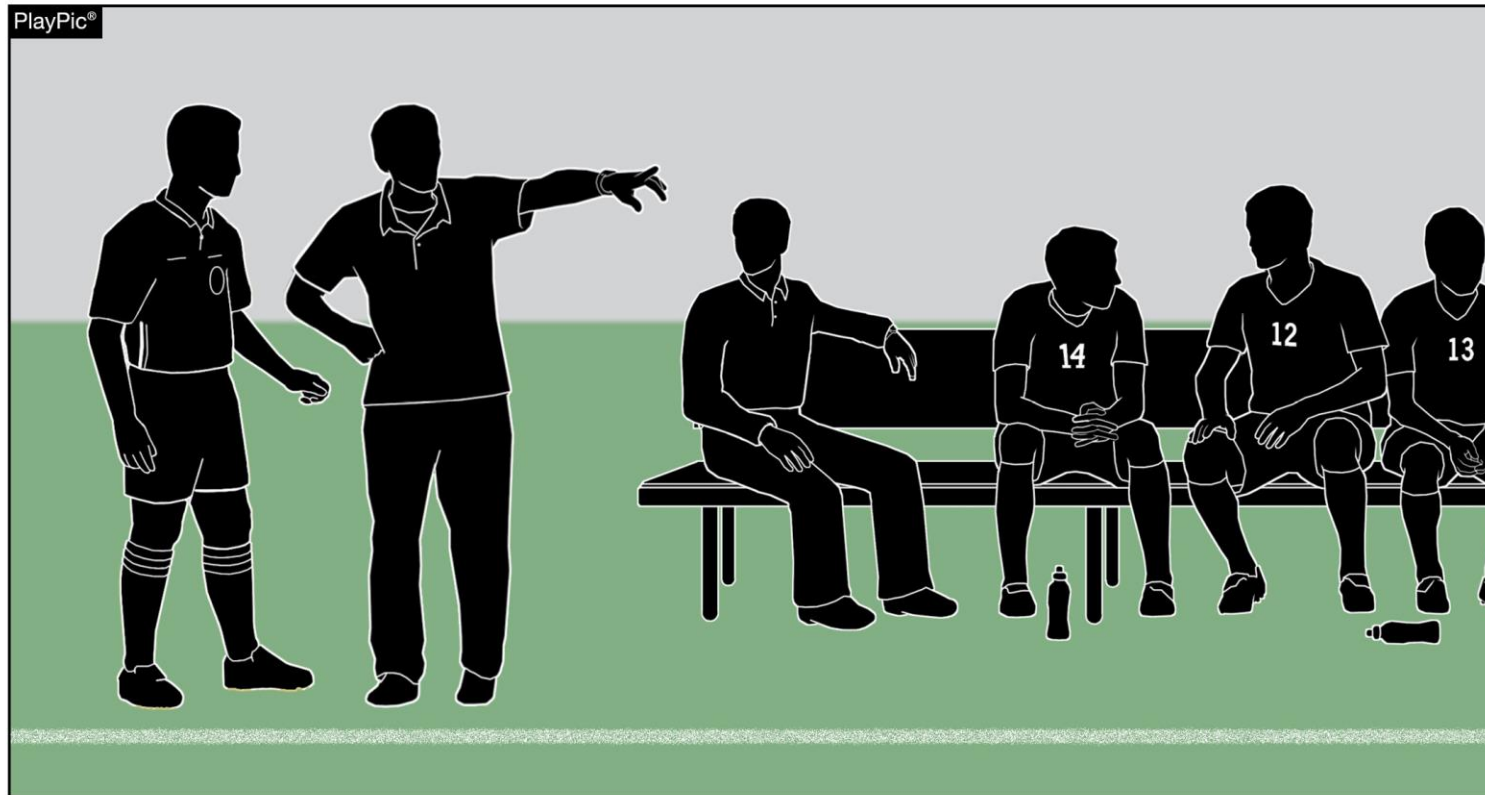
- A well-rounded high school soccer program should emphasize both athletic and academic development, reinforcing the importance of discipline, time management, and perseverance.
- Education-based athletics prepare students not only for success in sports but also for their future endeavors by teaching valuable life lessons through competition.
- Schools, coaches, and administrators must work together to ensure that high school soccer fosters growth, responsibility, and leadership, creating a positive experience that supports student success both on and off the field.

COURAGE, CHARACTER AND CONSISTENCY



It is important for contest officials to conduct themselves in a professional manner that upholds the dignity of the position. This includes arriving on time, conducting the proper pregame, knowing and applying the **NFHS rules** properly, speaking to players and coaches in a professional manner, and completing any necessary postgame reports.

TEAM AREAS AND BENCH DECORUM

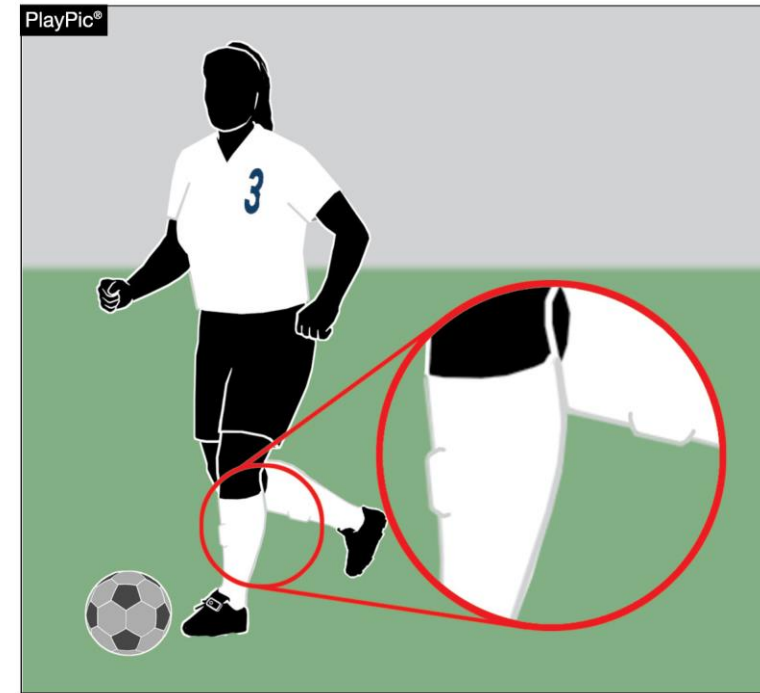
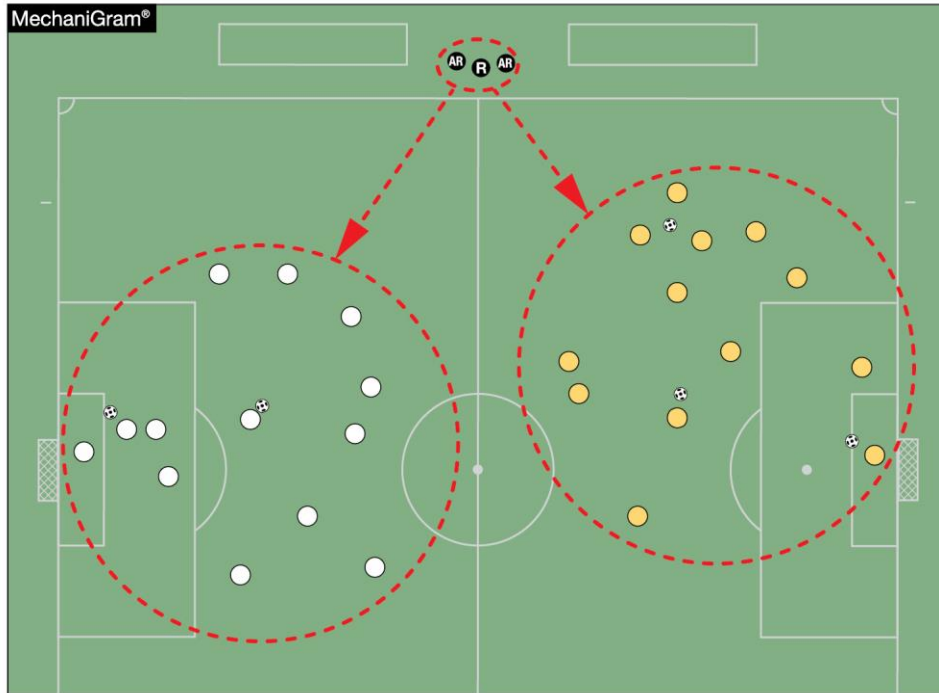


Effective communication and game management are essential. Recognizing and addressing dissent early is crucial — public, provocative and/or persistent complaints must be dealt with decisively.

The official's role is to keep the game safe and fair.

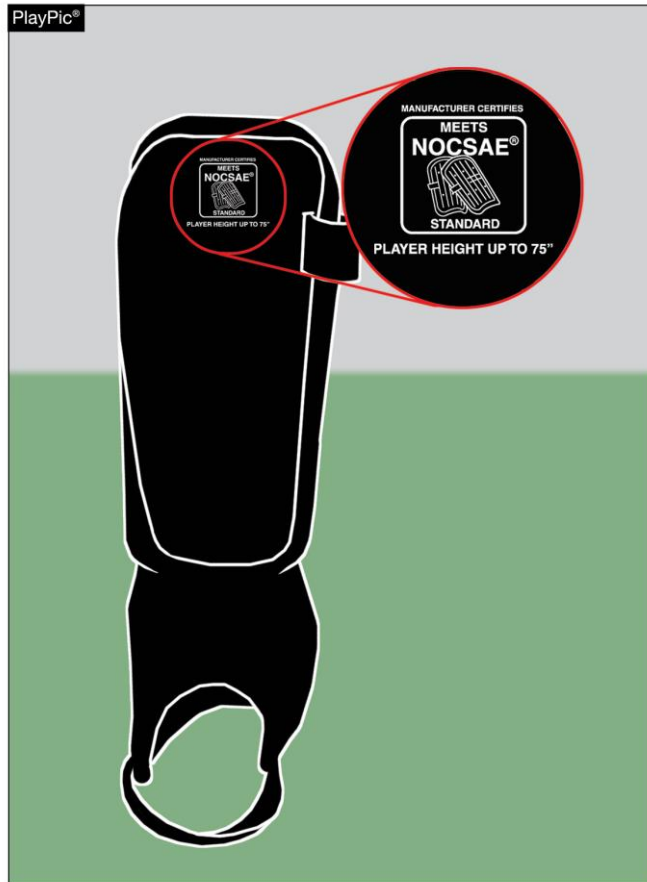
Coaches set the tone for their teams. Adult leaders must be champions of character.

UNIFORM/EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS



Student-athlete safety is a priority, and that starts with players wearing proper uniforms and equipment. Specifically, **players are required to wear shinguards** suitable for their age and size. **This is a non-negotiable item in the NFHS**, not a player's or coach's decision.

UNIFORM/EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS



Shinguards must have a NOCSAE seal and information about height requirement. The coach is responsible for ensuring their players adhere to this and referees must enforce the rule. Referees should inspect and, if needed, correct the issue in a professional manner. Officials should also be on the lookout for players with micro guards. **No one is to play at the NFHS level with illegal or improper shinguards.**



FLORIDA

QUESTIONS?

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