2016 AND 2017 NCAA MEN’S AND WOMEN’S SOCCER RULES CHANGES

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The following rules changes have been approved by the NCAA Soccer Rules Committee and Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) for the 2016 and 2017 seasons:

RULE 1 – The Field of Play

1.8 Corner Flags
It is permissible to have the institution, conference or NCAA name or logo on corner flags.

- No other names, logos or markings are permitted. All other requirements (dimensions, placement) remain unchanged and must be adhered to according to Rule 1.8.

1.10 Goal Nets
Nets may be multicolored and include the institution, conference or NCAA name or logo. Additionally, a single manufacturer’s identification/logo of appropriate size may appear on the net.

- Permits an institution, conference or the NCAA to place name or logo on goal nets. All other requirements (dimensions, placement, condition) are unchanged and must be adhered to according to Rule 1.10.

RULE 4 – Players’ Equipment

4.2 Contrasting Colors
4.2.4 It is required that any visible garment worn under the jersey or shorts be a solid color. The same color must be worn by all team members wearing undergarments. It is recommended the undergarment match the dominant color of the respective garment.

- Team uniforms must be consistent for all field players, including undergarments.

4.2.5 Players warming up outside the coaching and team areas shall wear colored jerseys/vests that distinguish them from all other field players.

- Colored jerseys/vests are required for players warming up outside the coaching and team areas. Previously this was a recommendation but is now a requirement.
RULE 5 – The Referee

5.6 Discretionary Power
5.6.9 Suspend the game, stop the clock and direct the game management personnel to remove whistles, air horns, electronic amplifiers and any other items that are not permitted from the spectators’ areas.

A.R. 5.6.9.a. Are institutional bands or amplified music permissible? RULING: Yes, during pregame, period intervals, and anytime the clock is stopped and the ball is not in play.

A.R. 5.6.9.b. Are artificial noisemakers permissible? RULING: Yes, provided they are not one of the prohibited items under Rule 5.6.9 and do not interfere with the administration of the game.

- Clarifies that institutional and pep bands, and other music is permissible when the clock is stopped and the ball is not in play.

- Spectators are permitted to use artificial noisemakers at any time, provided they do not interfere with the administration of the game. If the referee determines prohibited noisemakers are interfering with the game, game site administrators are required to intervene.

- These changes are an effort to encourage fans to become engaged in the game and participate by supporting their teams.

5.7 Video Review
Video review is permissible (not required) in three specific situations. The use of video review must be agreed upon by both head coaches before the start of the game. During the game, video review can be initiated by the referee only. In order to use video review, the review equipment must be provided by the home institution and available at the scorekeeper’s table or field level. Indisputable video evidence, in the judgment of the referee, must be present for the call on the field to be overturned. The three situations in which video review is permissible are:
1. Determine whether a goal has been scored;
2. Identify players for disciplinary matters; and
3. Determine whether a fight occurred and identify all participants.

A.R. 5.7.a. The venue provides an electronic tablet or other device for video review by the referee on the field. RULING: Legal. There is no specific equipment required as long as it demonstrates the video in a manner which can be used by the referee.

A.R. 5.7.b. The video review is unclear or does not show the incident under review in a definitive manner. RULING: If the available video does not show indisputable evidence to overrule the decision made on the field by the referee, the decision stands.

A.R. 5.7.c. Can the referee initiate video review to determine whether or not a penalty kick should have been awarded? RULING: No. Video review can only be used for the three (3)
specific situations stated in Rule 5.7.

**A.R. 5.7.d.** Can the referee initiate video review to determine whether or not a foul warrants issuance of a caution or an ejection? **RULING:** No. Video review can only be used for the three (3) specific situations stated in Rule 5.7.

**A.R. 5.7.e.** Can a coach or team representative initiate a video review? **RULING:** No. The referee has sole discretion to initiate video review.

**A.R. 5.7.f.** Can a referee initiate a video review after play has been restarted following a stoppage of play? **RULING:** No. Video review must be initiated before play is restarted. Exception: Player identification issues only.

**A.R. 5.7.g.** The referee awards a goal on the field and initiates a video review. The video review provides indisputable video evidence that the entire ball did not entirely cross the goal line. **RULING:** Reverse the decision and take away the goal. Restart play with a drop ball outside the penalty area at a corner at the top of the penalty area.

**A.R. 5.7.h.** The referee is unsure if a good goal has been scored and allows play to continue. The referee determines that video review is warranted to determine whether a good goal has been scored. **RULING:** Allow play to continue until the goal scoring opportunity or offensive advantage is completed, the ball goes out of play or an infraction occurs; and stop the game. If the video review confirms a good goal, award the goal. Reset the clock to the time the goal was scored and restart with a kick off. If the video review confirms no goal, restart the game based upon the reason for the stoppage (e.g., throw-in, corner kick, goal kick or free kick). If the game was stopped with the ball in play on the field of play restart with a drop ball at the spot where the ball was located at the time of stoppage, unless the stoppage occurred while the ball was in the penalty area. In that case, restart with a drop ball outside the penalty area, at a corner at the top of the penalty area.

**A.R. 5.7.i.** The referee is unsure if a good goal has been scored and allows play to continue. The referee determines that video review is warranted to determine whether a good goal has been scored. While dynamic play continues, A1 commits a cautionable offense. The referee stops the game and issues a caution. Does the card stand as issued? **RULING:** Yes. Disciplinary cards are not rescinded regardless of the outcome of video review.

**A.R. 5.7.j.** Can a protest be granted based upon the decision of a referee: (1) not to use video; or (2) a decision involving the use of video review? **RULING:** No. This is a matter of referee judgment and/or the accuracy of a decision.

**A.R. 5.7.k.** The referee determines that a red card offense has occurred and may constitute a fighting infraction. What are the permissible parameters of video review? **RULING:** The referee can review any misconduct directly involved with the fighting offense and assess appropriate penalties against any individual(s) involved in the fighting incident. For instance, the video shows indisputable evidence that A1 spits at opponent B1. B1 retaliates by punching A1. Issue a red card to A1 for violent conduct. Issue a red card to B1 for fighting.

**A.R. 5.7.l.** The referee issues a red card for a fighting offense. Video review demonstrates that conduct of the participant did not constitute a fight. **RULING:** Correct the error and punish the participant appropriately.

**A.R. 5.7.m.** The referee issues a yellow card to A1 at the 15th minute and a second yellow card (and red card for a second cautionable offense) at the 30th minute. The Team A coach complains
to the referee or the AR brings to the referee’s attention that the yellow card issued at the 15th minute should have been issued to A2. May the referee use video review to determine the correct player after play has restarted? **RULING:** Yes, the referee may use video review after a restart for player identification issues and to correct any errors.

- **Video review will be permitted in any game where both coaches agree prior to the start of the game and technology is available on the field and easily accessible by the referee. The referee is the only person who can initiate video review. Video review is strictly limited to the three situations set forth in Rule 5.7.**

### RULE 6 – Other Officials and Their Duties

#### 6.3 Timekeeper

6.3.4 The timekeeper shall be responsible for managing the timing sheet used in pregame administration for both regular-season and postseason contests. Language to be included in the regular timing sheet is: At 30 minutes, game rosters shall be exchanged; at 10 minutes, teams clear the field and then captains and officials meet for coin toss. Officials, coaches and players are introduced. National anthem is played, if applicable; and at 0:00, game begins.

- Clarifies timing issues to assure the timely start of the game. The recommended timing sheets have been updated to reflect that 30 minutes prior to the start of the game, rosters should be exchanged and the 15 minute half-time begins as soon as the first half ends.

### RULE 7 – Duration of the Game

#### 7.1 Length of Game

A.R. 7.1.1.1. Are coaches permitted in the center circle during the taking of kicks from the penalty line or mark? **RULING:** No. Designated kickers are the only personnel permitted on the field and are required to be in the center circle. If a goalkeeper is a designated kicker, the referee must be notified before the taking of the first kick. Coaches, nonparticipating players and all other bench personnel shall remain beyond the touch line in the coaching and player area.

- Clarification to insure no coaches or players, who are not designated kickers, are on the field during tie-breaker penalty kicks.

#### 7.6 Inclement Weather Policy, Expiration of Time

The purpose of the inclement weather policy is to provide information to those responsible for making decisions about suspending and restarting games based on the presence of lightning. The NCAA provides detailed guidance on lightning (and other environmental hazards) in the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook. Please consult the latest version of this handbook, which is available at www.NCAA.org.
No game may be started more than three hours after the originally scheduled start time unless the referee has been notified and mutually agreed upon before the start of the game by the teams or determined by the governing sports authority. (See Page 7.)

Once a game has been started and suspended, it must be restarted no later than three hours after the actual start time unless mutually agreed upon before the start of the game by the teams or determined by the governing sports authority. (See Page 7.)

Note: For example, a game started at 2 p.m., if interrupted, shall be suspended if it cannot be resumed before 5 p.m. unless mutually agreed upon before the start of the game or by conference policy. (See Rule 7.1.)

- Clarifies that weather related decisions to delay or restart a game must be made before the game starts. The referee must be notified before the start of the game if the teams or the governing sports authority agree to delay the start or restart of a game for more than three hours.

**RULE 11 - Offside**

11.3 When Not Offside
A player shall not be declared offside by the referee under the following situations:
11.3.1 Merely because of being in an offside position;
11.3.2 If the player receives the ball directly from a goal kick, corner kick or throw-in; or
11.3.3 If the player receives the ball from a deliberate play from a defender (except a save).

11.3.3.1 A deliberate act is one in which a player chooses to act, regardless of the outcome of that action. This deliberate act is neither a reaction nor reflex. A deliberate action may result in the opponent benefiting from the action (e.g., a deliberate, but misplayed ball that goes directly to an opponent). A reaction or reflex may result in that player benefiting from the action (e.g., a ball inadvertently contacting the arm and falling directly to the player’s feet).

Note: A deliberate play by the defender may result in an opponent in an offside position receiving the ball directly. This is not to be penalized as offside.

A.R. 11.3.3. An attacker in an offside position receives the ball from a misplayed clearance by a defender (e.g., the ball skims off the head of a defender or is “shanked” during a clearance). Should the attacker be penalized for offside? RULING: No, the attacker received the ball from a deliberate play by a defender and even though the attacker is in an offside position and gained an advantage from being in that position, he or she is not offside as it was last played by a defender in a deliberate manner.
Clarifies that an offensive player is not offside when receiving a ball from a deliberate act by an opponent. Deliberate plays are defined.

**RULE 15 - The Throw-In**

15.2 How Taken
The thrower, at the moment of delivering the ball, shall face the field of play and part of each foot shall be either on the touch line or the ground outside the touch line. The thrower shall use both hands equally and shall deliver the ball from behind and over his or her head. The throw-in shall be taken from the point where the ball crossed the touch line, being thrown in any direction by a player of the team opposite to that of the player who last touched the ball. All opponents shall be a minimum of two yards from the touch line when a throw-in is attempted. The ball shall be in play from the throw as soon as it enters the field of play. If, on the throw-in, the ball fails to enter the field of play before it touches the ground, the ball is awarded to the opponent at the spot of the initial throw-in. A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in. The thrower shall not play the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player.

- Provides the thrower with adequate space to get the ball back into play, without delay or interference by an opponent.