



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SOCCER RULES COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 7-8, 2017, MEETING**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **None.**

2. Nonlegislative items. The NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee approved the following rules change proposals for the 2017 season. The three recommended changes have been made to align with FIFA Laws of the Game changes made in 2016. Although 2017 is a non-rules change for soccer, the rules committee requests permission to do so since aligning with new international rules is one of the five reasons a rules committee may request a rule change during a non-rules change year. In this regard, the committee requests approval from the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) for the following items:

a. Kickoff (Rule 8.2).

(1) Recommendation. At the referee's signal (whistle), the game shall be started by a player kicking the ball ~~into the opponent's half of the field, which can be kicked in any direction.~~ Every player, except the player kicking the ball, shall be in his or her half of the field, and every player of the team opposing that of the kicker shall remain at least 10 yards from the ball until it is kicked off.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Currently, NCAA rules require the kickoff to go forward. This verbiage change will be consistent with the FIFA Laws of the Game and allow the kickoff to go in any direction.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. Allows more flexibility when kicking off.

b. Ball in Play (Rules 9.1, 9.3.2 and 17.2).

(1) Recommendation. In any instance when play is restarted with a free kick, the ball must clearly move as a result of the first player touching the ball to be in play.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Currently, NCAA rules require the ball to be touched or traveled forward to be in play. This verbiage change will be consistent with the FIFA Laws of the

- Game and require the ball to clearly move on restarts.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. More clearly defined and easier to understand.
- c. Denial of an Obvious Goal-Scoring Opportunity (DOGSO) (Rules 12.5.5, 12.5.6 and new 12.5.7).**
- (1) Recommendation.
12.5.5 Denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball, wherever the offense occurs.
12.5.6 Denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity outside the penalty area by an offense punishable by a direct free kick or a penalty kick.
12.5.7 Denies the opposing team an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing an offense against an opponent in the penalty area and the referee awards a penalty kick, the offending player is cautioned unless:
 1. The offense is holding, pulling or pushing;
 2. The offending player does not attempt to play the ball or there is no possibility for the player making the challenge to play the ball; or
 3. The offense is one which is punishable by a red card wherever it occurs on the field of play (e.g. serious foul play, violent conduct etc.).In all the above circumstances the player is issued a red card.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. Currently, NCAA rules require that if a defender commits any direct free kick offense resulting in denial of an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, the referee must issue a red card. This may lead to an excessively harsh punishment referred to as “double jeopardy” where a penalty kick is awarded and the defender is also issued a red card. In 2016, FIFA changed its Law to allow the referee discretion to issue a caution in certain circumstances, depending on the nature of the foul. The committee recommends this rule change to align with the FIFA Law and fundamental fairness to avoid an excessively harsh penalty.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Eliminates a double jeopardy situation when penalizing a DOGSO offense.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome, Introductions and Announcements.** The chair welcomed the committee and thanked them for their time. Committee members introduced themselves and provided a brief overview of their background.
2. **Review Schedule, Agenda and Committee Operations Manual.** The meeting schedule and agenda were reviewed. The committee reviewed the Committee Operations Manual, which included the NCAA conflict of interest policy, guidance for committee members regarding meeting reports, notes and email, voting procedures, principles for rules writing, and experimental playing rules guidelines.
3. **Approval of October 10, 2016, Teleconference Report.** The committee approved the October 10, 2016, teleconference report as written.
4. **Review Reports.** The committee heard reports on the following topics:
 - a. **Injury Surveillance Program.** Erin Wasserman from the Datalys Center for Sports Injury Research and Prevention presented to the committee on various aspects of injuries in men's and women's soccer. Overall participation numbers are up within the Injury Surveillance Program with additional programs being added in the fall. Half of all injuries in men's and women's soccer result in time loss, with the majority of injuries occurring to the lower extremities. Concussions are more prevalent in women's soccer, however, sprains, strains and contusions account for most of the injuries in both men's and women's soccer, which is consistent with other sports. As requested by the committee last year, Datalys was able to break down injuries by game segment, with almost half of all injuries in men's and women's soccer occurring in the second half. The committee requested Ms. Wasserman gather data on the following points and report to the rules committee via email: 1) rate of injuries in first overtime vs. second overtime by looking at result of game; 2) breakdown of injuries occurring in beginning, middle or end of the season; 3) turf vs. grass; and 4) average number of games per week and how that relates to injuries.
 - b. **Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP).** NCAA staff presented the experimental guidelines to the committee noting PROP requested each rules committee review and provide feedback. The rules committee did not have a strong feeling that experimental rules be included in the comment period, however, they established a June 1 deadline for any experimental rule requests for the subsequent season. NCAA staff also reported on a request from the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports (CSMAS) to PROP that each rules committee review the appropriateness of any

playing rule that might discourage a student-athlete from reporting an injury or illness for fear of not being allowed to re-enter the contest if they are removed for medical evaluation purposes. NCAA Soccer Rule 3.6 prohibits a player from being substituted for and re-entering in the first half and both overtimes, which CSMAS saw as a possible deterrent for a student-athlete to seek timely medical evaluation. The discussion during CSMAS' December 2016 meeting was the result of a physical disability waiver request from an Autonomy Conference for a student-athlete who is sickle cell trait positive. Their request was to allow sickle cell trait to be categorized the same as possible concussion, blood on the uniform or bleeding under Rule 3.6.3.2, therefore allowing this student-athlete to be substituted for and re-enter without penalty. Mr. Parsons, NCAA staff liaison to CSMAS, attended a portion of the rules committee meeting and provided valuable input regarding the discussion at the CSMAS meeting. In addition, he offered to facilitate a call with members of CSMAS and the rules committee to further discuss concerns surrounding the substitution rules and possible solutions.

- c. Secretary-Rules Editor/Interpretations and Protest Logs.** The committee reviewed the interpretations issued by the secretary-rules editor during the season. The secretary-rules editor outlined the 46 protests that were filed during the season noting nine were granted. All nine of the granted protests were the case of misapplication of a rule. After discussing the protest rule, the committee agreed language should be added in the next rules book emphasizing protests based on referee judgment will not be considered and the secretary-rules editor can provide a standard response denying these protests. The secretary-rules editor reviewed those rules receiving the most questions during the season and provided specific recommendations for the committee to consider for the next rules book, including the following: 1) Rule 1.1.1 – grandfather clause; 2) Rule 1.4 – halfway line; 3) Rule 1.15 – spectator restraining line; 4) Rule 3.5.8 – equipment change; 5) Rule 5.6.9 – artificial noisemakers; 6) Rule 5.7 – video review; and 7) Rules 12.5.2 and 12.5.3 – violent behavior and fighting.
- d. National Coordinator of Officials.** The national coordinator recapped the 2016 season and noted roughly 900 officials registered and were eligible to work NCAA postseason. Ninety percent of those officials were needed in the first and second weekends of the postseason. Divisions II and III conferences were requested to submit feedback on officials for the first time this season. NCAA Soccer Officiating Clinics will be offered at two locations during Summer 2017 for the first time. The national coordinator is continuing to upgrade the Center Circle website to entice more officials to register.
- e. Statistical Trends and Red Card Data.** The committee reviewed the statistical trends presentation, which included reports on goals, assists, overtime/tie games, yellow and red cards, and fouls. The committee was pleased that the percentage of red cards being reported through the NCAA Red Card Depository has continued to increase since it was first implemented in 2013. 91 percent of red cards reported through NCAA statistics were

also reported through the Depository. At last year's annual meeting, the active official offered to compare the red cards reported to NCAA stats and the Depository to find missing reports. The active official worked with another individual to accomplish this during the 2016 season. They reached out to those officials that did not submit a red card to the Depository to remind them this is a requirement by rule.

5. **Review of 2016 Rules Survey.** The committee reviewed the 2016 rules survey and were pleased with the results. Sixty-six percent of coaches responded to the survey, which was up from 47 percent last year. All new rules changes from last year were supported with the exception of requiring game rosters to be exchanged 30 minutes before the game (majority of the membership had no opinion). Many committee members noted the reason for "no opinion" was most likely because the procedure wasn't always being followed. The committee agreed to re-evaluate this rule during the 2018 annual meeting.
6. **Review of Rules Proposals and Discussion Items.** The committee approved three rules changes for the 2017 season, as noted above in the Action Items section. These three changes are based on changes made by the international rules body after the rules committee meeting in January 2016. In addition, the committee approved a request from the Atlantic Coast Conference to experiment with no re-entry in the second half for men's conference games. Subsequently, the rules committee voted by email to deny the request based on concerns from the CSMAS relative to the overarching issues related to the substitution rules and the appropriateness of playing rules that might deter a student-athlete from seeking timely medical evaluation. The secretary-rules editor suggested assigning each committee member rules to review before the 2018 annual meeting.
7. **Invited Guest Reports.** The committee heard reports from the following individuals:
 - a. **Theresa Wynns – Director of Sports and Officiating, National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).** Ms. Wynns presented the eight rules changes recommended by the rules committee to the NFHS Board of Directors, including allowing kickoffs to go in any direction. She also reported participation numbers are on the rise in both boys and girls soccer. The NFHS rules committee ruled the Genie Pro is illegal for use in high school soccer.
 - b. **Rob Kehoe – College Programs Director, National Soccer Coaches Association of America.** Mr. Kehoe asked questions of the committee on the following topics: 1) rules separated by gender; 2) rules separated by division; 3) key issues on substitution rules and overtime; 4) conducting a spring survey to gather feedback on key issues; and 5) committee meeting schedule and timeline. The committee noted it did not believe the rules need to be separated by gender, and separating rules by division is not an option until there is a change to the NCAA Bylaws. The committee agreed to conduct a spring survey to gather feedback on the following areas: 1) eliminating overtime during the

regular season; 2) eliminating substitution re-entry in the second half; 3) allowing institutional bands to play at any time; 4) requiring bench personnel (except the head coach) to be seated at all times; 5) requiring the referee to act as the official timekeeper; 6) prohibiting assistant coaches to speak to officials; and 7) designating one team captain as the only individual permitted to speak to officials. This survey will only be sent to head coaches in early March. Mr. Kehoe agreed to send reminders to the coaches and work to have full participation in the survey. The committee reviewed its 2017-18 schedule and timeline and agreed to move its annual meeting to mid-March to allow membership survey feedback to occur once the season is completed.

8. Future Teleconference and Meeting Dates. The committee agreed to move their meeting to mid-March 2018 after The International Football Association Board's (IFAB) meeting. This will allow the committee to review the IFAB's rules changes before making any recommendations.

9. Selection of Chair. The committee elected John Trask, men's soccer head coach at University of Wisconsin, Madison, as chair for the 2017-18 academic year.

10. Other Business. The committee reviewed the Genie Pro Foot Guard Technology and agreed it is not prohibited by current NCAA rules. Rule 4.5.1, which prohibits players from wearing anything that is dangerous to another player, is still in effect and officials must determine on-site if the device will be permissible during the game. The national coordinator will reach out to US Soccer to ascertain US Soccer's position on the device.

11. Adjournment. The committee adjourned at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, February 8.

Committee Chair: Gary Dunda, Geneva College, Presidents' Athletic Conference

Staff Liaison(s): Ashlee Ferguson, Championships and Alliances

| NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee February 7-8, 2017, Meeting | |
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| Attendees: | |
| Ken Andres, secretary-rules editor. | |
| John Daly, College of William and Mary; Colonial Athletic Conference. | |
| Gary Dunda, Geneva College; Presidents' Athletic Conference. | |
| Evan Fiffles, Lewis University; Great Lakes Valley Conference. | |
| Adam Hertz, Swarthmore College; Centennial Conference. | |
| Brian Lee, Louisiana State University; Southeastern Conference. | |
| Aileen Nasypany, California State University, Dominguez Hills; California Collegiate Athletic Association. | |

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| John Trask, University of Wisconsin, Madison; Big Ten Conference. |
| Absentees: |
| Mike Kemp, University of Nebraska Omaha; The Summit League. |
| Guests in Attendance: |
| Todd Abraham, active official. |
| Ryan Cigich, national coordinator of officials. |
| Rob Kehoe, National Soccer Coaches Association of America. |
| Erin Wasserman, Datalys Center for Sports Injury Research and Prevention. |
| Theresia Wynns, National Federation of State High School Associations. |
| NCAA Staff Liaison in Attendance: |
| Ashlee Ferguson. |
| Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance: |
| Dan Calandro, Ty Halpin, Greg Johnson and John Parsons. |