

Oregon School Activities Association

Soccer Bulletin #5

2017

We are coming into crunch time. Now the outcome of today's game may have a big impact on who makes the playoffs and who doesn't. It also may determine who ends up in last place in the league. I would encourage you to check before the game how the games have been doing so far. Let's step it up, so the players determine the outcome and not referee mistakes. That means showing up at least 30 minutes before scheduled kickoff and going through all of our pre-game responsibilities. It means wearing a proper, complete, professional uniform because we never get a second chance to make a good first impression. It means running, sometimes running very fast, and getting where we can see play, particularly seeing contact between players. And it definitely means calling the fouls that are there and giving the cards that identify misconduct, without feeling bad that we had to give the free kick or the card.

It is important that we call the game that the players expect. Girls games, by and large, should be called tighter than boys games. JV games should be called tighter than varsity games and JV2 tighter than JV. 6A games will normally want more physical play than 3A/2A/1A. All of that, of course, is within overall limits of what's safe and fair. Use your previous experience at the level of today's game to guide your calls and then adjust, based on the feedback you get. The most difficult games are those in which one team wants more physical play than normal and the other team wants less than normal. In that case, we try to call what's normal for this level of game. We also know that one team is going to end up complaining that we wouldn't let them play and the other team is going to complain that we aren't calling anything. It just goes with the territory.

In 2016, the IFAB (FIFA) changed the rule to make some DOGSO offenses in the penalty area a yellow card and not a red. Just so we're all on the same page, literally, that has NOT been changed in the high school rules. Any foul that you determine is denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity is still punished with a red card disqualification in high school games. If it is not DOGSO, it may still be a tactical foul, deserving a yellow card, but only if it is not DOGSO.

The number of coaches receiving red cards this year seems to be down, even from a very low number last year. That tells me that referees and coaches are treating each other with respect, communicating as adult to adult. However, there have been some incidents in which coaches came to the referee crew after a game to complain about decisions that were made during the game.

First, by OSAA policy, referees are to leave the field immediately after the final horn/whistle. Some people call this "ref and run." I don't think that the rule literally wants us to run, but leaving without delay is expected. Don't be a temptation for coaches, players or spectators to do or say something that will make their school look bad. At the same time, if you're, say, putting on your jacket (now that it's jacket weather), and players come over to thank you, be polite and shake their hand/fist

bump. Quite a few coaches want their players to do this in order to teach their players lessons about courtesy and respect. Second, if a player or a coach wants to engage in dissent at that point, they should be issued a yellow card without hesitation. Dissent, of course, is different from asking, politely, what you saw or why you did what you did.

We did have a coach who tried to remove a referee from the game even before the game started! This is NOT appropriate behavior. Coaches do not get to make those decisions. However, if you have prior recent issues with a particular coach, whether as a coach or as a player in an adult game, you should consider not accepting the assignment. Most associations have so many games that you can easily be reassigned and potential problems avoided.

There have, unfortunately, been a few threats against referees from spectators, either during games or after games. After games, you are, of course, supposed to be heading towards your car. Just keep moving, with the game administrator, if they are available. During the game, we do not have direct jurisdiction over spectators, whether teenagers or adults. However, loud and clear threats (as opposed, say, to simple dissent) should cause you to talk to the game administrator at the next stoppage. If there is no athletic director or other administrative person present, you should talk to the home team's head coach. Do not restart the game until the problem is resolved. And, of course, report all of what happened in your game report.

Similarly, occasionally we have comments from players directed towards opposing spectators. Please remember that taunting is a red card offense in high school. This specifically includes any racial, ethnic, gender, religious or "gender preference" prejudicial language. The schools do not want that kind of thing going on. General negative comments, like "You're all losers!" also constitute taunting.

Most game reports are communicating very well what happened at the game. There are a few referees who report that they gave a caution "for a wreckless foul." First, the word is spelled "reckless." Second, that doesn't tell the reader enough. Was it a trip? A push? Holding a player who was trying to dribble past? Finally, if you have comments about other crew members, those do not belong in your game report. They are not information about the teams. You should call or e-mail your assignor about such issues.

Finally, there is no OSAA policy about behavior during the national anthem. The coaches and schools will deal with any inappropriate behavior during the anthem.

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