



MEMORANDUM

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Julie Ilacqua
Managing Director of Federation Services

Alfred Kleinaitis
Manager of Referee Development and Education

UNITED STATES SOCCER FEDERATION, INC.

The 2004 Annual General Meeting of the International Football Association Board (IFAB) took place in London, England on 28 February 2004. The amendments to the Laws of the Game made at the meeting and the various instructions and directives are listed below.

AMENDMENTS TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME AND DECISIONS OF THE BOARD

Law 1 – The Field of Play

New Text

Field surface

Matches may be played on natural or artificial surfaces, according to the rules of the competition.

New International FA Board Decision 7

Where artificial surfaces are used in either competition matches between representative teams of associations affiliated to FIFA or international club competition matches, the surface must meet the requirements of the FIFA Quality Concept for Artificial Turf or the International Artificial Turf Standard, unless special dispensation is given by FIFA.

Reason: Advances in artificial surface technology have created high quality surfaces, which are fully acceptable at all levels of the game. This proposal recognizes the surface of the field in the Laws of the Game for the first time and also the fact that artificial surfaces in identified levels of international competition must meet recognized FIFA standards.

USSF Advice to Referees: The use of an artificial turf surface should be communicated to the referee in advance of a match and, if necessary, the referee should confirm that such a surface is provided for by the rules of the competition. However, the referee may presume that the surface meets the applicable standards established by FIFA for international matches or by USSF for matches at the national level.

New International FA Board Decision 8

Where a technical area exists, it must meet the requirements approved by the International FA Board, which are contained in this publication.

Reason: This new International FA Board Decision gives formal recognition to the text on the technical area, which is published as an appendix to the Laws in the Laws of the Game booklet.

USSF Advice to Referees: This new Decision merely incorporates into Law 1 the dimension and placement requirements described in “The Technical Area” section of the Lawbook. However, many matches are played on fields which have no designated technical area, in which case the referee is advised either to accommodate this lack or, if needed, to sketch out an approximation of team technical areas for game control purposes.

Law 3 – The Number of Players

Present Text

Other matches

In other matches, substitutes may be used, provided that:

- The teams reach agreement on a maximum number
- The referee is informed before the match

If the referee is not informed, or if no agreement is reached before the start of the match, no more than three substitutes are allowed.

New Text

In other matches, up to six substitutes may be used.

Reason: The practice of making large numbers of substitutions in friendly matches devalues the game and creates a farcical situation. The number of substitutes used in friendly matches must be controlled.

USSF Advice to Referees: Referees must remember to distinguish between the number of substitutes allowed on a roster and the number of substitutes which can be used during a match (i.e., the number of substitutions). This change in the Law allows for a maximum of six substitutions. The rules of competition may, however, specify a smaller number and it is the responsibility of the referee to be aware of any such requirement.

Law 5 – The Referee

Present Text

International FA Board Decision 2

In tournaments or competitions where a fourth official is appointed, his role and duties must be in accordance with the guidelines approved by the International Board.

New Text

International FA Board Decision 2

In tournaments or competitions where a fourth official is appointed, his role and duties must be in accordance with the guidelines approved by the International FA Board, which are contained in this publication.

Reason: This additional text using the phrase “which are contained in this publication” is to provide consistent wording with other IFAB Decisions and to formally recognize the guidelines on the fourth official published in the Laws of the Game booklet.

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match

Present Text

Extra Time

Competition rules may provide for two further equal periods to be played. The conditions of Law 8 will apply.

Reason: This text will now be included in “Procedures to determine the winner of a match”.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring

Present Text

Competition Rules

For matches ending in a draw, competition rules may state provisions involving extra time, or other procedures approved by the International F.A. Board, to determine the winner of a match.

New Text

Competition Rules

When competition rules require there to be a winning team after a match has been drawn, only the following procedures, which have been approved by the International FA Board, are permitted:

- Away goals rule
- Extra time
- Kicks from the penalty mark

New International FA Board Decision 1

Only procedures to determine the winner of a match, which are approved by the International FA Board and contained in this publication, are permitted in competition rules.

Reason: These texts confirm the decision taken at the Annual Business Meeting of the IFAB in September 2003 that competition rules to determine the winner of a match may only include procedures that have been approved by the International FA Board.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

New International FA Board Decision 6

A player who removes his jersey when celebrating a goal must be cautioned for unsporting behavior.

Reason: The removal of the jersey after a goal has been scored is unnecessary and players must avoid excessive displays of celebration.

USSF Advice to Referees: The International Board has now returned to the position it took several years ago that removing the jersey as part of a goal celebration is misconduct and should be considered a mandatory caution.

Procedures to determine the winner of a match

Present Text

The Golden Goal and taking kicks from the penalty mark are methods of determining the winning team where competition rules require there to be a winning team after a match has been drawn.

New Text

Away goals, extra time and taking kicks from the penalty mark are methods of determining the winning team where competition rules require there to be a winning team after a match has been drawn.

Away Goals

Competition rules may provide that where teams play each other home and away, if the scores are equal after the second match, any goals scored at the ground of the opposing team will count double.

Extra Time

Competition rules may provide for two further equal periods, not exceeding 15 minutes each, to be played. The conditions of Law 8 will apply.

Kicks from the penalty mark

Text unchanged

Reason: This text confirms the procedures proposed earlier.

USSF Advice to Referees: The changes to Laws 7 and 10, the new International FA Board Decision for Law 10, and the change noted above to the section on “Procedures To Determine The Winner Of A Match” are consistent with the International Board’s determination that only certain methods approved by the Board can be used to break a tie when a game is drawn.

INFORMATION

Radio communication system

It was recognized that this technology could make a positive contribution to match control but it was also recognized that such a system must only be used for communication between the match officials and must not be used for broadcasting purposes.

USSF Advice to Referees: Any use of radio communication technology by officials (except for “beeper flags”) is not permitted unless expressly approved by USSF.

Radio communication between players and technical staff

The Board supported FIFA’s opposition to the use of radio communication between players and technical staff.

Law 4 – The Players’ Equipment

The Board agreed that the use of a one-piece playing suit was contrary to the Laws of the Game.

The amendments to the Laws of the Game take effect as from 1 July 2004 and instructions and directives are introduced with immediate effect.