

Laws of the Game 2016/17

Summary of Law Changes for Competition Organisers and Administrators

The International Football Association Board

May 2016



Introduction

The 130th AGM of The International FA Board (The IFAB) held in Cardiff on 5 March 2016 approved the most comprehensive revision of the Laws of the Game in The IFAB's 130 year history.

One aim was to make it easier for everyone involved with football to read and understand the Laws and, to achieve this, the Law book has been restructured and more than 10,000 words removed.

Another aim was to ensure that the Laws are appropriate for football in the 21st Century and changes have been made so that the Laws are up to date, consistent and promote 'fair play'.

The IFAB believes it would be helpful for competition organisers and administrators of national, regional and local football associations, and clubs to have a summary of those Law changes which affect the organisation/running of matches/competitions.

This document contains:

- Summary of the main 'administrative' changes
- The exact wording in the Laws of the Game 2016/17 for these changes

The electronic version of the Laws of the Game 2016/17 can be downloaded from The IFAB's website (www.theifab.com) which also contains:

- 'Summary of Law Changes: Law by Law' - a summary of the changes in Law order
- 'Summary of Law Changes for Players and Coaches' - a summary which focuses on the Law changes relating to players and match situations
- 'Law changes: Questions and Answers' - the answers to a series of frequently asked questions about the Law changes

All Law changes are effective as from 1 June 2016.

For further information or for the answer to a specific question, please e mail lawenquiries@theifab.com

Summary of 'administrative' Law changes

These Law changes relate to the organisation/running of a match/competition

LAW 1 – Field of Play

- Artificial and natural surfaces can not be combined on the field of play; hybrid systems are permitted
- Competitions may determine the field size (length and width) within Law limits
- All commercial advertising on the ground must be at least 1m from all boundary lines
- Logos/emblems of FAs, competitions etc. are allowed on corner flags (not the posts) but no advertising (same restrictions as for the ball)

LAW 3 – The Players (new title)

- A match may not start or continue if a team has fewer than seven players
- A player can now be sent off (but not cautioned) before the kick-off (see Law 5 below). If this happens:
 - before team lists have been submitted:
 - the player can not appear on the list
 - after the team lists have been submitted but before kick-off:
 - a player can be replaced by a substitute (who can not be replaced)
 - a substitute can not be replaced

In both cases, the team starts the match with 11 players and can still make the maximum number of substitutions permitted

Any other offences or inappropriate behaviour will be reported after the match (no yellow cards, cautions etc.)

LAW 4 – The Players' Equipment

- Any material on/covering the socks must be the same colour as the part of the sock it covers (this applies to all material and not just tape)
- A player who accidentally loses footwear(boot) or shinguard can continue playing until play next stops
- Undershorts/tights must be the same colour as either the main colour of the shorts or the lowest edge/bottom (hem); the team must wear the same colour
- A player can return during play after changing/correcting equipment, once the equipment has been checked (by referee, fourth official or AR) and referee signals

LAW 5 – The Referee

- If a player is injured by a foul which results in a red card (send off) or yellow card (caution) for the opponent, the injured player can have quick assessment or treatment on the field and not have to go off; if the assessment/treatment is not quick the player will have to go off

LAW 7 – The Duration of the Match

- Competition rules may permit (short) breaks for medical reasons (e.g. drinks in hot/humid conditions)

LAW 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match (new title)

Kicks from the Penalty Mark

- The referee will toss a coin to decide which goal to use, unless there are ground, safety or other considerations
- There is no need to tell the referee which players will take kicks or the order
- A player temporarily off the field at the final whistle (e.g. injured, changing equipment) can take part
- If one team loses a player during the kicks (injured, sent off) the other team removes one player
- If a player leaves the field of play during the kicks, the kicks are not delayed and if the player is not back in time to take a kick then their kick is forfeited/missed

LAW 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

- Attempted violence is a sending-off even if no contact is made
- A player who deliberately strikes an opponent on the head or face (when not challenging for the ball) will be sent off unless the force used was minimal/negligible
- A foul off the field of play is penalised with a free kick on the boundary line nearest to where the foul occurred (penalty kick if this is in offender's own penalty area)

Laws of the Game 2016/17

The text of the Law changes outlined is shown below - the main changes are *italicised and underlined*

LAW 1 – Field of Play

The field of play must be a wholly natural or, if competition rules permit, a wholly artificial playing surface, except where competition rules permit an integrated combination of artificial and natural materials (hybrid system).

Competitions may determine the length of the goal line and touchline within the above dimensions.

No form of commercial advertising, whether real or virtual, is permitted on the field of play, on the ground within the area enclosed by the goal nets or the technical area, or on the ground within 1 m (1 yd) of the *boundary* lines from the time the teams enter the field of play until they have left it at half-time and from the time the teams re-enter the field of play until the end of the match.

The reproduction, whether real or virtual, of representative logos or emblems of FIFA, confederations, *national football* associations, *competitions*, clubs or other bodies is forbidden on the field of play, the goal nets and the areas they enclose, the goals, and the flagposts during playing time. *They are permitted on the flags on the flagposts.*

LAW 3 – The Players (new title)

A match is played by two teams, each with a maximum of eleven players; one must be the goalkeeper. A match may not start *or continue* if either team has fewer than seven players.

A player who is sent off:

- *before submission of the team list can not be named on the team list in any capacity*
- *after being named on the team list and before kick-off may be replaced by a named substitute, who can not be replaced; the number of substitutions the team can make is not reduced*
- *after the kick-off can not be replaced*

A named substitute who is sent off before or after the kick-off may not be replaced.

LAW 4 – The Players' Equipment

The compulsory equipment of a player comprises the following separate items:

- a shirt with sleeves
- shorts
- socks – tape or any material applied or worn externally must be the same colour as that part of the sock it is applied to or covers
- shinguards – these must be made of a suitable material to provide reasonable protection and covered by the socks
- footwear

A player whose footwear or shinguard is lost accidentally must replace it as soon as possible and no later than when the ball next goes out of play; if before doing so, the player plays the ball and/or scores a goal, the goal is awarded.

.....undershorts/tights must be the same colour as the main colour of the shorts or the lowest part of the shorts - players of the same team must wear the same colour.

LAW 5 – The Referee

The referee has the authority to take disciplinary action from entering the field of play for the pre-match inspection until leaving the field of play after the match ends (including kicks from the penalty mark). If, before entering the field of play at the start of the match, a player commits a sending-off offence, the referee has the authority to prevent the player taking part in the match (see Law 3.6); the referee will report any other misconduct

An injured player may not be treated on the field of play Except when:

- a goalkeeper is injured
- a goalkeeper and an outfield player have collided and need attention
- players from the same team have collided and need attention
- a severe injury has occurred
- a player is injured as the result of a physical offence for which the opponent is cautioned or sent off (e.g. reckless or serious foul challenge), if the assessment/treatment is completed quickly

LAW 7 – The Duration of the Match

Allowance is made by the referee in each half for all time lost in that half through:

- substitutions
- assessment and/or removal of injured players
- wasting time

- disciplinary sanctions
- stoppages for drinks or other medical reasons permitted by competition rules (...)
- any other cause, including any significant delay to a restart (e.g. goal celebrations)

LAW 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match (new title)

Procedure - Before kicks from the penalty mark start

- Unless there are other considerations (e.g. ground conditions, safety etc.), the referee tosses a coin to decide the goal at which the kicks will be taken *which may only be changed for safety reasons* or if the goal or playing surface becomes unusable
- With the exception of a substitute for an injured goalkeeper, only players who are on the field of play or are temporarily off the field of play (injury, adjusting equipment etc.) at the end of the match are eligible to take kicks
- Each team is responsible for selecting from the eligible players the order in which they will take the kicks. The referee is not informed of the order
- If at the end of the match and before or during the kicks one team has a greater number of players than its opponents, it must reduce its numbers to the same number as its opponents and the referee must be informed of the name and number of each player excluded.....
- Kicks from the penalty mark must not be delayed for a player who leaves the field of play. The player's kick will be forfeited (not scored) if the player does not return in time to take a kick

LAW 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

Violent conduct is when a player uses or attempts to use excessive force or brutality against an opponent when not challenging for the ball, or against a team-mate, team official, match official, spectator or any other person, regardless of whether contact is made.

In addition, a player who, when not challenging for the ball, deliberately strikes an opponent or any other person on the head or face with the hand or arm, is guilty of violent conduct unless the force used was negligible.

However, if a player leaves the field of play as part of play and commits an offence against another player, play is restarted with a free kick taken on the boundary line nearest to where the offence occurred; for direct free kick offences a penalty kick is awarded if this is within the offender's penalty area

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