

Substitutions

- When a game is stopped for an apparent injury, the injured player **MUST** leave the field. This rule now pertains to **BOTH** field players and goalkeepers. Both the field player or goalkeeper may be substituted. The substitute may come from the bench or the field. A team may choose to play short, but there **MUST** always be a goalkeeper.
- If an injured player is **NOT** substituted, the injured player may return, with the official's permission, at any stoppage of play, which may not be a proper substitution opportunity.
- If the injured player is **NOT** replaced at time of injury, a substitute from the bench can only enter at the next proper substitution opportunity.
- If an injured player is replaced at the time of injury, that injured player may only return at a proper substitution opportunity.

We all need to be consistent when handling substitutions as a result of an injury.

Remember that player safety is our number one responsibility – don't hesitate to stop the game if you suspect a serious injury.

Jewelry & Adornments

- Rule 4.2, Art. 4 prohibits any jewelry of any kind. Players are now wearing many forms of adornments from paper or string wristbands to soft rubber bands. We can and must prohibit anything that we think to be unsafe. However, if a team is supporting and wearing an adornment for a cause or purpose, then common sense (Rule 18) applies and we should make an exception. Examples of this include the Twellman Concussion Awareness and breast cancer awareness for the month of October. If there is one player on a team wearing a bracelet then it needs to come off. The team's support of a cause is your reasoning for the exception.

Team Properly & Legally Equipped

- A reminder that we all **MUST** be asking both coaches this before each game" Will your team be properly and legally equipped at kick off?" It is in the handbook (pg. 29) that the coach is to be responsible for ensuring that his/her players are properly and legally equipped. By asking the coach we are confirming that he is responsible.
- If there were a problem due to illegal equipment and the coach was not asked pregame then technically that coach should not be cautioned because the question was not asked. **MAKE SURE THIS IS PART OF EVERY PRE-GAME !!**

Position, Position, Position

Speaking with several coaches (varsity and JV) over the past few weeks, I asked for feedback on we are doing as an officials group. The comments were generally positive with the one common complaint being official not being in a good position to make a correct call, in particular lead officials not being as close to the goal line as possible.

- Where you are on the field in relation to the location of the ball is vital in determining whether you made the right call or the wrong call. As the lead, we all need to make the effort to be even with the second to last defender OR even with the goal line depending on where the ball is located. Should we be signaling a goal kick or corner kick while we are standing even with the top of the penalty area, watching the action on the goal line? Absolutely not. Will we always be in the perfect position on the end line or even with the second to last defender? No, but we always need to strive to be in that perfect position. Don't put yourself in a situation where you have to convince a coach that the ball did not cross completely over the goal line when you were not in the correct position to make that determination. Your credibility is immediately gone if you are questioned. As the trail, make sure you follow the play into the corner of your side of the field. Things happen in these corners and being 35 yards away instead of 60 allows you to more clearly observe the action.

Advantage

- The other issue I heard about was officials not allowing play to continue when advantage should be applied. Players that had been fouled retained control of the ball and had clear paths towards the goal when officials whistled for the foul and brought the ball back for a free kick. Our instincts in a fast-paced game is to react immediately to fouls and blow our whistle. Instead, be patient, allow the play to develop and see if the attacking player makes it through the foul. Use both verbal and physical signals to allow a "play on" situation.

Re-starts after Injury Timeouts

- Many players and some coaches have been questioning why the opposing team was given an indirect free kick after one of their own players went down with an injury and play was stopped. NFHS is different from FIFA in this instance. When play is stopped with a whistle for an injury, and one team has clear possession of the ball when the whistle was blown, the re-start is an indirect free kick for that team at the spot where the ball was when play was stopped. If neither team had possession, then the re-start is a drop ball. Ask your partner for help if you are unsure about whether a team had possession.