



MEMORANDUM

August 1, 2018

VIA EMAIL

TO: Conference Commissioners, Directors of Athletics, Senior Woman Administrators and Head Men's and Women's Soccer Coaches.

FROM: John Trask, chair
NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee

Ken Andres, secretary-rules editor
NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: Stricter Suspension Penalties for the 2018 Soccer Season and Other New Playing Rules.

With the 2018 season rapidly approaching, please review the following information:

Stricter Penalties for Illegal Participation: Effective with the 2018 season, the penalty on a head coach for allowing an ejected or suspended player or assistant coach to participate in a game has been doubled to a minimum of four (4) games.

Specifically, if an ejected or suspended player, assistant coach or other bench personnel illegally participates in a game, the head coach will be suspended for double the term of the participant's suspension (which will be a minimum of four (4) games as outlined in Rule 12.8.1 Penalty 1). The enhanced suspension for the head coach applies in all instances when an illegal player participates in a game, including red card or yellow card accumulation suspensions. If an ejected or suspended head coach illegally participates in a game, the head coach will be suspended for four (4) games as outlined in Rule 12.8.1 Penalty 2.

During the 2017 season, the Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee was made aware of three separate occasions when suspensions were not enforced appropriately. As a result, the committee recently approved the two rules changes above to reinforce the expectation that institutions and coaches will apply the rules as written and ensure that ejections and suspensions are enforced appropriately. Note that the appropriate penalty will be imposed regardless of the circumstances and even if the mistake was made unintentionally or if there was a lack of knowledge of the rules. To assist in this regard, the NCAA Soccer Red Card Depository will again track red cards issued (over 1,400 red cards were issued during the 2017 season) and will continue to send notifications to conferences and institutions alerting the conference commissioner, director of athletics and head coach when a red card has been issued. Division I conference soccer administrators will also be included on the email beginning with the 2018 season.

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Other New Rules: In addition to these two changes, the committee approved a number of other rules changes for the 2018 and 2019 seasons that may be viewed by clicking [here](#). The committee would like to draw your attention to the following rules changes in particular:

- Rules 1.3.5 and 1.3.6 – Additional field markings, including commercial logos, are permitted provided they meet size and placement restrictions, do not obscure any of the required lines and are not in the penalty area;
- Rule 4.1.6 – Additional logos/patches and a national flag of the institution are permitted on the front or sleeve of the jersey or shirt provided they meet size restrictions;
- Rules 5.6.9.1 and 5.6.9.2 – Bands may play and musical instruments/artificial noisemakers may be used anytime during the game;
- Rule 12.8.2 – A player serving a game suspension is permitted in the team area provided the player is not in uniform; and
- Rule 12.8.3 – A coach serving a game suspension is not permitted in the venue from 60 minutes before the scheduled start of the game until 30 minutes after the game ends.

Future Forfeit Rule Discussions: While the committee increased the penalty for a head coach for allowing illegal participation by an ejected or suspended player, coach or bench personnel, there are no changes to the current forfeit rules (Rule 7.4.3 and Rule 12.8.1 Penalty 1 and 2). The committee will participate in discussions over the next several months with other NCAA committees to gather more information regarding two rules that currently conflict (i.e., Rule 12.8.1 Penalties 1 and 2 require a postgame forfeit for illegal participation, however, Rule 7.4.3 states the statistics remain the same if a game is forfeited after it has concluded, including the winner and loser as they were decided on the field). The committee will take action to resolve the conflict during its March 2019 annual meeting.

2018 and 2019 Rules Book: Each conference and institution should have received a complimentary copy of the 2018 and 2019 Men’s and Women’s Soccer Rules Book. If you would like to order additional copies or download a free PDF of the rules book, please visit www.ncaapublications.com.

ArbiterSports Center Circle Registration: Head coaches are encouraged to register for the ArbiterSports Center Circle website to view rules clarifications, announcements and interpretations issued during the season. Officiating updates and clarifications are also posted to Center Circle throughout the season. Registration continues to be free for all head coaches and can be accessed through the following steps:

1. Access Center Circle by clicking [here](#).
2. Click on the “Registration” tab.

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3. Click on the “Coaches” icon.
4. Proceed through the registration process.
5. If you have any registration issues or questions please contact ArbiterSports at success@arbitersports.com.

Should you have any questions about the appropriate penalty for an ejection or suspension or any other rules question, please contact Ken Andres, NCAA Men’s and Women’s Soccer Secretary-Rules Editor, at kandres.ncaasre@gmail.com or 856-816-1687.

Thank you in advance for your support.

JT/KA:af

cc: Division I Conference Soccer Administrators
NCAA Men’s and Women’s Soccer Rules Committee
NCAA Registered Soccer Referees
Selected NCAA Staff Members