



# Welcome to the 2020-21 Soccer Season



*The interscholastic soccer season is has arrived! Here are a few items about which coaches and officials should be aware before the season begins.*

Rules modifications include, but are not limited to, the following items. Visit [www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org) to view the complete NFHS rules changes, editorial changes and points of emphasis.

## MHSA/MOA Reporting

All cards (yellow and red), regardless of the reason the card was issued, must be reported to the MHSA/MOA office. The reporting form is on the MOA Central Hub, or you can contact the office and a copy will be emailed to you.

When completing the forms, please be thorough and specific when referencing the rule(s) violation(s) and/or unusual situations. All reports should be emailed to the MHSA office and both administrators of the schools participating. The emails of the administrator will be sent out to officials and is available on the MHSA website.

## Rules Changes

**2-2-4 ART. 4...** If the ball becomes deflated during play, it is declared dead ~~where it was last played~~ and the game is resumed by a drop ball ~~between any two opposing players~~ at the spot where it was last played. If the ball becomes deflated within the goal area, then the ball is dropped ~~between two opposing players~~ subject to the provisions of Rule 9-2-2 and 9-2-3. Ball deflated during a penalty kick results in retaken kick.

**Rationale:** The provisions for a drop ball have changed, refer to 9-2.

**4-1-1a: ART. 1a...** The visiting team shall wear solid white jerseys and solid white socks, and the home team shall wear dark jerseys and socks (dark is defined as any color which contrasts with white). ~~Prior to and during the game, jerseys shall be tucked into the shorts, unless manufactured to be worn outside.~~

**Rationale:** Manufacturing practices have changed.

**4-2-7e, f ART. 7...** A tooth and mouth protector (intraoral), if worn, shall:  
~~e. not to be completely white; and~~  
~~f. not to be completely clear.~~

**Rationale:** SMAC no longer recommends the mouth protector meet these two criteria; dropping these two requirements brings soccer in line with the other sports that allow mouth guards.

**9-1-1b ART. 1...** The ball is out of play when:  
a. it has completely crossed the goal line or touch line, whether on the ground or in the air.  
b. the ball touches an official and remains on the field; and  
1. a team starts a promising attack.  
2. goes directly into the goal.  
3. possession changes

**Rationale:** This is to address situations where the ball touches a referee and a team gains an advantage.

- 9-2-1: ART. 1...**The game is restarted with a drop ball:
- when the ball is caused to go out-of-bounds by two opponents simultaneously.
  - when the ball becomes deflated; ~~(2-2-4)~~
  - following a temporary suspension of play for an injury or unusual situation; (except as noted in 14-1-7) and the goalkeeper is not in possession of the ball.
  - when simultaneous fouls of the same degree occur by opponents; or
  - when the ball touches an official as per 9-1-1b.

**Rationale:** This proposal prevents an opponent from gaining an advantage.

- 9-2-3: ART. 3...**The ball is dropped by an official from waist level to the ground. The referee drops the ball to one player of the team that last possessed the ball at the position where it was last touched by a player(s), an outside agent or match official. If when play was stopped, the ball was in the penalty area or the last touch, by either team, was in the penalty area, the ball is dropped to the defending team's goalkeeper with all opposing players outside the penalty area. In all cases, all other players must remain at least 4 yards from the ball until it is in play. Any number of players may contest a dropped ball (including the goalkeeper); a referee cannot decide who may contest a drop ball or its outcome.

**Rationale:** This addition helps to provide clarity in the application of this rule.

- 9-2-2: ART. 2...**The ball should be dropped at the location where it became dead unless this is within the goal area, in which case, it shall be dropped on that part of the goal-area line which runs parallel to the goal line nearest the location where the ball was when play was stopped. If the ball was caused to go out of bounds by two opponents simultaneously, the ball is dropped five yards inside the boundary line to one player of the team in possession of the ball prior to the simultaneous touch, unless this is the goal area. ~~(See 9-3)~~ (See 9-2-3)

**Rationale:** This simplifies the drop ball procedure.

- 13-3-1: ART. 1...**Players opposing the kicker shall be at least 10 yards from the ball until it is kicked, unless they are standing on their own goal line between the goal posts. If the free kick is awarded to the defending team in its penalty area, players opposing the kicker shall be outside the penalty area at least 10 yards from the ball and ~~shall must~~ remain there until the ball is in play clears the penalty area. Where 3 or more defending team players form a wall, all attacking team players must remain at least 1 yard from the wall until the ball is in play.

**Rationale:** This will allow the ball to be put back into play quicker and will lead to a decrease in confrontational moments during free kicks.

- 13-3-2: ART. 2...**The ball shall be kicked while it is stationary on the ground at the spot specified by the official. To be in play, the ball shall be moved in any direction. ~~If the free kick is awarded to the defending team in its penalty area, the ball is not in play until it is beyond the penalty area and into the field of play.~~ Failure to kick the ball as specified shall result in a rekick.

**Rationale:** Allows the ball to be put back into play quicker.

- 13-3-4: NEW ART. 4...**For indirect kicks, the referee shall signal an indirect kick (using Official NFHS Soccer Signals Rule 5-3-1b) by raising an arm above the head; this signal shall be maintained until the kick is taken and the ball touches another player or goes out of play. If the referee fails to signal the kick is indirect and the ball goes directly into the opponent's goal, the kick shall be retaken.

**Rationale:** This clarifies the need to make the signal and prevents punishing the team taking the kick when the referee fails to give the proper signal.

**14-1-3: ART. 3...**The opposing goalkeeper shall stand with at least one foot on or in-line with the goal line, facing the kicker, between the goal posts, and shall not be touching the goal posts, crossbar, or nets, until the ball is kicked. Lateral or forward movement is allowed, but the goalkeeper is not permitted to come off the line with both feet ~~by stepping or lunging forward~~ until the ball is in play.

**Rationale:** This clarifies the goalkeeper's position during the taking of a penalty kick.

**16-1-2: ART. 2...**Players opposing the kicker shall remain outside the penalty area until the ball is in play ~~has cleared the penalty area.~~

**Rationale:** Clarifies when the ball is in play.

**16-1-3: ART. 3...**Once spotted, the ball shall be kicked from the ground from any point within the goal area by a player of the defending team. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. ~~A goal kick shall clear the penalty area and enter the field of play. If the ball is not kicked beyond the penalty area, the goal kick shall be repeated.~~

**Rationale:** Clarifies when the ball is in play.

**16-1-4: ART. 4...**After the goal kick is properly taken ~~leaves the penalty area~~, the ball may be played by any player except the one who executes the goal kick. The kicker may not play the ball until it has been touched by another player.

**Rationale:** Clarifies how the kick is taken and when it is in play.

### **2020-21 Soccer Editorial Changes**

- 12-5-1; 12-5-2** Obstruction is the deliberate act of a player, that moves into the path of an opponent to block, slow down or force a change in direction when the ball is not within playing distance. Being in the way of an opponent is not an offense and is different than moving into the way.  
A player may legally place him/herself between opponents and the ball provided the ball is within playing distance. This player may legally be challenged from behind.
- 12-5-2 situation (new)** A player dribbles the ball to a corner and while the ball is within playing distance, uses his/her body to block opponents from reaching the ball. **Ruling:** Legal as this is shielding.
- Rule 12-8-2d, 4** Foul Play; disqualified: a player commits a foul inside the penalty area while not attempting to play the ball, denying the opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, and the referee awards a penalty kick.

### **2020-21 NFHS Points of Emphasis**

1. Correct field markings and appropriate uniform
2. Understanding the Difference Between Fair, Hard Play and a Foul
3. Education-Based Soccer