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Laws of the Game 2018-19

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Revision for 2018/19

The major revision of the Laws of the Game for 2016/17 was very well received as were the further adaptations and clarifications for 2017/18.

The Law changes for 2018/19 are mainly further refinements to the major revision and the inclusion, after rigorous testing, of 2 major options for competitions:

- the use of an additional substitute in extra time
- the use of video assistant referees (VARs), subject to permission from The IFAB and FIFA

All Law changes are mandatory for competitions starting after 1st June 2018; they are optional for competitions starting before that date.

Laws of the Game 2018/19

This presentation focuses on the main changes to the Laws of the Game for 2018/19 and consists of the following sections:

- Changes to the Laws (*excluding those related to VARs*) and to the Modifications to the Laws
- Clarifications
- Changes to the Glossary
- Changes to the Practical Guidelines
- Summary of VAR-related Law changes
- The future – The IFAB '*play fair!*' strategy

For an electronic version of the Laws of the Game 2018/19 visit: www.theifab.com

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Main changes

(excluding those relating to VARs)

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Modifications

Modifications to the Laws of the Game

Modifications

- There is no limit on the number of substitutes that competitions can allow in youth football

Temporary dismissals – System B

- A player who receives 2 temporary dismissals and a non-temporary dismissal caution (YC) may not be substituted/replaced

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Law 3 – The players

Law 3 – The players

Number of substitutes - Official competitions

The competition rules must state:

- (...)
- *whether one additional substitute may be used when a match goes into extra time (whether or not the team has already used the full number of permitted substitutes)*

Explanation

The two-year experiment with a 4th substitute being available in extra time has been successful. Regardless of the maximum number of substitutes allowed during 'normal time', this change gives competition organisers the authority to permit each team to use one additional substitute during extra time.

Law 3 – The players

Number of substitutes - Other matches

- *In national 'A' team matches, a maximum of twelve substitutes may be named of which a maximum of six may be used.*

Explanation

Clarifies that for national 'A' team friendly matches, a maximum of twelve substitutes can be named. This is consistent with the restriction for competitive matches and prevents there being insufficient seating in the technical area.

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Law 4 – The players' equipment

Law 4 – The players' equipment

Electronic equipment

The use of electronic or communication equipment by team officials is permitted where it directly relates to player welfare or safety or for tactical/coaching reasons but only small, mobile, hand-held equipment (e.g. microphone, headphone, ear-piece, mobile/smartphone, smartwatch, tablet, laptop) may be used. A team official who uses unauthorised equipment or who behaves in an inappropriate manner as a result of the use of electronic or communication equipment will be dismissed from the technical area.

Explanation

As it is impossible to prevent communication to/from the technical area and it is reasonable to have an exchange of information relating to coaching/tactics or player welfare (but not match officials' decisions), the focus has moved to the behaviour resulting from the use of such equipment.

Law 4 – The players' equipment

Electronic performance and tracking systems (EPTS)

- *Where electronic performance and tracking systems (EPTS) are used (subject to the agreement of the national football association/competition organiser) the competition organiser must ensure that the information and data transmitted from EPTS to the technical area during matches played in an official competition are reliable and accurate.*
- *A professional standard was developed by FIFA and approved by The IFAB in order to support the competition organisers with the approval process of reliable and accurate electronic performance and tracking systems. The professional standard will be implemented in the transition period until 1 June 2019. The following mark indicates that an EPTS device/system has been officially tested and meets the requirements in terms of reliability and accuracy of positional data in football:*



Law 4 – The players' equipment

Electronic performance and tracking systems (EPTS) – contd

Where wearable technology (WT) as part of electronic performance and tracking systems (EPTS) is used in matches played in an official competition organised under the auspices of FIFA, confederations or national football associations, the competition organiser must ensure that the technology attached to the player's equipment is not dangerous and must bear the following mark:

This mark indicates that it has been officially tested and meets the minimum safety requirements of the International Match Standard developed by FIFA and approved by The IFAB.

The institutes conducting these tests are subject to the approval of FIFA.



Explanation

Outlines the changes to the use of EPTS data and the development of a FIFA Quality standard.

Law 4 – The players' equipment

Slogans, statements, images and advertising

Principles

- Law 4 applies to all equipment (including clothing) worn by players, substitutes and substituted players; its principles also apply to all team officials in the technical area
- The following are (usually) permitted:
 - the player's number, name, team crest/logo, initiative slogans/emblems promoting the game of football, respect and integrity as well as any advertising permitted by competition rules or national FA, confederation or FIFA regulations
 - the facts of a match: teams, date, competition/event, venue
- Permitted slogans, statements or images should be confined to the shirt front and/or armband
- In some cases, the slogan, statement or image might only appear on the captain's armband

Law 4 – The players' equipment

Slogans, statements, images and advertising

Interpreting the Law

- When interpreting whether a slogan, statement or image is permissible, note should be taken of **Law 12 (Fouls and Misconduct)**, which requires the referee to take action against a player who is guilty of:
- using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
- gesturing in a provocative, derisory or inflammatory way

Any slogan, statement or image which falls into any of these categories is not permitted.

Law 4 – The players' equipment

Slogans, statements, images and advertising

Interpreting the Law (contd)

Whilst 'religious' and 'personal' are relatively easily defined, 'political' is less clear but slogans, statements or images related to the following are not permitted:

- any person(s), living or dead (unless part of the official competition name)
- any local, regional, national or international political party/organisation/group, etc.
- any local, regional or national government or any of its departments, offices or functions
- any organisation which is discriminatory
- any organisation whose aims/actions are likely to offend a notable number of people
- any specific political act/event

Law 4 – The players' equipment

Slogans, statements, images and advertising

- *When commemorating a significant national or international event, the sensibilities of the opposing team (including its supporters) and the general public should be carefully considered.*
- *Competition rules may contain further restrictions/limitations, particularly in relation to the size, number and position of permitted slogans, statements and images. It is recommended that disputes relating to slogans, statements or images be resolved prior to a match/competition taking place.*

Explanation

This guidance is to help competition organisers, national FAs, confederations and FIFA decide what can be visible on players' equipment.

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Law 5 – The referee

Law 5 – The Referee

Referee's equipment - Other equipment

- *Referees and other 'on-field' match officials are prohibited from wearing jewellery or any other electronic equipment, including cameras.*

Explanation

Clarifies that referees and other 'on-field' match officials (as opposed to the 'video' match official = VAR/AVAR) are not permitted to use or wear cameras.

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Law 7 – The duration of the match

Law 7 – The duration of the match

Half-time interval

- (...) *; a short drinks break (which should not exceed one minute) is permitted at the interval of half-time in extra time. (...)*

Allowance for time lost

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

- (...)
- *stoppages for drinks (which should not exceed one minute) or other medical reasons permitted by competition rule*

Explanation

To avoid drinks breaks becoming lengthy coaching (or commercial) breaks, their length is limited/defined. This restriction does not apply to medical 'cooling breaks'.

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Law 12 – Fouls and misconduct

Law 12 - Fouls and misconduct

Direct free kick

A direct free kick is awarded if a player commits any of the following offences:

- (...)
- bites or spits at someone
- throws an object at the ball, opponent or match official, or makes contact with the ball with a held object

Explanation

- Reference to biting (a rare offence) as a direct free kick offence (also added to sending-off offences)
- Throwing an object at the ball or making contact with the ball with an object held in the hand have become a separate category of offence and no longer part of handball – this means that a goalkeeper can now be penalised for such conduct in their penalty area.

Law 12 - Fouls and misconduct

Indirect free kick

A goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball when:

- *the ball is between (...) or by touching it with any part of the hands or arms except if it rebounds **accidentally** from the goalkeeper or the... (...)*

Explanation

Removal of 'accidentally' means that if a goalkeeper unsuccessfully attempts to catch/hold/stop or 'parry' the ball, the goalkeeper is still allowed to pick it up.

Law 12 - Fouls and misconduct

Disciplinary action - Advantage

- *If the referee plays the advantage for an offence for which a caution / send off would have been issued had play been stopped, this caution / send off must be issued when the ball is next out of play, except for the denial of an obvious goal-scoring opportunity when the player is cautioned for unsporting behaviour."*

Explanation

If the referee plays advantage for a DOGSO and a goal is scored it is a YC but technically if no goal results the Law said it should be a RC. This is never applied and is not seen as 'fair' as applying the advantage effectively means that a goal-scoring opportunity remains; consequently, a YC is the fairest sanction, whether or not a goal is scored.

Law 12 - Fouls and misconduct

Disciplinary action - Cautionable offences

- Where two separate cautionable offences are committed (even in close proximity), they should result in two cautions, for example if a player enters the field of play without the required permission and commits a reckless tackle or stops a promising attack with a foul/handball, etc.

Explanation

Clarifies the action the referee should take where 2 clearly separate cautionable (YC) offences occur which may be linked, particularly when someone enters the field without permission (where needed) and then commits a cautionable offence. This principle also applies if there is a caution (or sending off) offence quickly followed by a separate sending-off offence i.e. both offences must be reported.

Law 12 - Fouls and misconduct

Restart of play after fouls and misconduct

When the ball is in play:

- *If an offence is committed outside the field of play against a player, substitute, substituted player, or team official of the player's team, play is restarted with an indirect free kick on the boundary line closest to where the offence occurred*
- *If a player makes contact with the ball with an object (boot, shinguard etc.) held in the hand play is restarted with a direct free kick (or penalty kick)*

Explanation

- Clarifies how the game is restarted if a player commits an offence off the field of play against someone from their own team (including a team official).
- Additional confirmation that hitting the ball with an object held in the hand is a separate offence and no longer part of handball.

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Law 15 – The throw-in

Law 15 – The throw-in

Procedure

At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower must:

- *stand facing* the field of play

Explanation

Clarifies that a player must stand to take a throw-in i.e. sitting or kneeling positions are not permitted.



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Clarifications

Changes to *text (clarifications)*

LAW 1 – THE FIELD OF PLAY

- Reference to substituted players being permitted to be in the technical area

LAW 2 -THE BALL

- Reference to previous ball quality marks has been deleted as these are now out of date

LAW 4 – THE PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT

- Player who has left the field because of an equipment issue and returns without permission and interferes is penalised with a direct free kick (or penalty kick)

LAW 10 – DETERMINING THE OUTCOME OF A MATCH

Kicks from the penalty mark

- A replacement for a goalkeeper cannot take a kick in that 'round' if the goalkeeper has already taken a kick

Changes to text (*clarifications*)

LAW 11 – OFFSIDE

- The first point of contact of the ‘play’ or ‘touch’ of the ball should be used to judge offside (e.g. when using slow motion TV replays)
- Amended text to maintain gender neutrality

LAW 13 – FREE KICKS

- Update of text to confirm that direct and indirect free kicks can be awarded to the opposing team of a player, substitute, substituted or sent off player, or team official guilty of an offence.

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Glossary

Glossary – changes

Football terms

Kick

- The ball is kicked when a player makes contact with the foot and/or ankle

Referee terms

'on-field' match officials:

- Referee, Assistant referees, 4th officials, AARs, Reserve AR

'video' match officials:

- Video assistant referee (VAR)
- Assistant VAR (AVAR)

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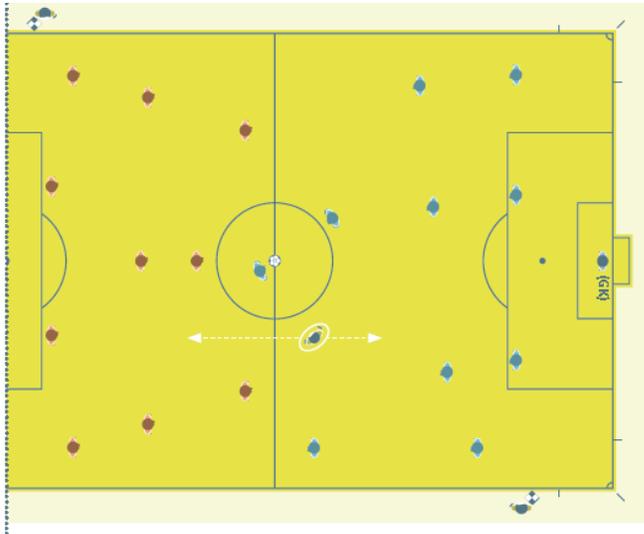
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Practical guidelines

Practical Guidelines – changes

Position at kick-off

Changes in kick-off tactics (following the Law change) require referees to be more flexible with their position at the kick-off position to be ready for a quick attack.





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VAR-related changes

VAR-related Law changes + VAR protocol

The following summarises the main additions to the Laws of the Game 2018-19 related to the use of video assistant referees (VARs)

VAR protocol

- The full VAR protocol is located immediately after Law 17

Law 1

- Commercial advertising is not permitted on the ground in the referee review area (RRA)
- Reference to the video operation room (VOR) and referee review area (RRA)

Law 5

- Reference to video assistant referees (VARs) and assistant VARs (AVARs) and the ability of a referee to use video replays for decision-making as part of the VAR system
- Distinction between 'on-field' match officials and 'video' match officials
- Some serious sending-off offences (e.g. violent conduct) can be VAR reviewed even if play has restarted
- Inclusion of the referee 'check' and 'review' signals which are used in the VAR process

VAR-related Law changes + VAR protocol

Law 6

- Duties of the video assistant referee (VAR) and assistant VAR (AVAR)

Law 7

- Allowance must be made for VAR checks/ reviews

Law 12

- Entering the referee review area (RRA) or excessively showing the TV signal are cautionable (YC) offences
- Entering the video operation room (VOR) is a sending-off (RC) offence



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The future

The future

The IFAB, in association with FIFA, is continuing to make progress with the '*play fair!*' strategy which aims to develop the Laws of the Game for the next 5 year through a series of discussions and tests/trials which will focus on:

- *Improving player behaviour and increasing respect*
- *Increasing playing time*
- *Increasing fairness and attractiveness*

Extensive testing in approved competitions of the AB-BA system for kicks from the penalty mark (KFPM) and the use of red cards (RCs) and yellow cards (YCs) for offences by team officials will take place in the coming months.

Full details of the '*play fair!*' strategy can be found at: www.play-fair.com