



2017 Major Rules Changes for Men's and Women's Soccer

The following rules changes were approved by the NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee and the Playing Rules Oversight Panel. They will be in effect for the 2017 season.

Rule 3.6.3.3	<p><u>A player who has a permanent medical condition with the potential to produce serious injury or death through sustained physical exertion (e.g., sickle cell trait) may be substituted at any time when medically necessary and re-enter the game without the limitations imposed by Rule 3.6.1, which limits re-entry.</u></p> <p><u>To be eligible for this medical re-entry exception, the team physician must confirm the medical condition, its potential for producing serious injury or death, and the need for the player to be exempt from Rule 3.6.1. If the condition is established by a duly licensed physician other than the team physician, documentation must be provided to, and approved by, the institution's team physician. Prior to the start of any game, the primary athletics healthcare provider or designee (e.g., coach) shall present documentation to the game officials and opposing coach which establishes that the player has been granted a medical exception to the re-entry rule.</u></p> <p><u>When notified by the documented player, a coach, or the primary athletics healthcare provider that the player requires a substitute for medical reasons related to the identified condition, the referee shall stop the game and permit a substitution. Neither the player nor the substitute shall be charged with a substitution. However, if the documented player replaces a player other than the original substitute, that player shall be charged with a substitution. The documented player may re-enter the game (after being beckoned by the referee) at any stoppage of play or at any of the allowable times for normal substitution, provided they have received clearance from the institution's primary athletics health care provider.</u></p> <p><u>This exception may not be used more than one time by an individual student-athlete in a single competition.</u></p> <p>Rationale: At the request of the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports (CSMAS) and the Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP), the Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee reviewed the substitution and re-entry rules. CSMAS had concerns the current rules may deter a student-athlete from reporting an injury for fear of not being able to re-enter the game after being cleared by medical personnel. Similar to current Rule 3.6.3.2 (bleeding injury, blood on the uniform or signs of a concussion), this rule allows a player who has a permanent medical condition with the potential to produce serious injury or death to be substituted for and re-enter after receiving clearance. This rules change was approved by CSMAS, too.</p>
Rule 8.2	<p>At the referee's signal (whistle), the game shall be started by a player kicking the ball into the opponent's half of the field, <u>which can be kicked in any direction.</u> Every player, <u>except the player kicking the ball</u>, shall be in his or her half of the field, and every player of the team opposing that of the kicker shall remain at least 10 yards from the ball until it is kicked off.</p> <p>Rationale: Currently, NCAA rules require the kickoff to go forward. This verbiage change will be consistent with the FIFA Laws of the Game and allow the kickoff to go in any direction.</p>
Rules 9.1,	In any instance when play is restarted with a free kick, the ball must clearly move as a result

9.3.2 and 17.2	<p>of the first player touching the ball to be in play.</p> <p>Rationale: Currently, NCAA rules require the ball to be touched or traveled forward to be in play. This verbiage change will be consistent with the FIFA Laws of the Game and require the ball to clearly move on restarts.</p>
Rules 12.5.5, 12.5.6 and new 12.5.7	<p>12.5.5 Denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball, <u>wherever the offense occurs.</u></p> <p>12.5.6 Denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity <u>outside the penalty area</u> by an offense punishable by a <u>direct free kick</u> or a penalty kick.</p> <p><u>12.5.7 Denies the opposing team an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing an offense against an opponent in the penalty area and the referee awards a penalty kick, the offending player is cautioned unless:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><u>1. The offense is holding, pulling or pushing;</u><u>2. The offending player does not attempt to play the ball or there is no possibility for the player making the challenge to play the ball; or</u><u>3. The offense is one which is punishable by a red card wherever it occurs on the field of play (e.g. serious foul play, violent conduct etc.).</u> <p><u>In all the above circumstances the player is issued a red card.</u></p> <p>Rationale: Currently, NCAA rules require that if a defender commits any direct free kick offense resulting in denial of an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, the referee must issue a red card. This may lead to an excessively harsh punishment referred to as “double jeopardy” where a penalty kick is awarded and the defender is also issued a red card. In 2016, FIFA changed its Law to allow the referee discretion to issue a caution in certain circumstances, depending on the nature of the foul. The committee recommends this rule change to align with the FIFA Law and fundamental fairness to avoid an excessively harsh penalty.</p>