



To all national football associations
and confederations

Circular no. 24

136th Annual General Meeting of The International Football Association Board

Amendments to the Laws of the Game 2022/23

Zurich, 25 March 2022
SEC/2022-C390/bru

Dear Sir or Madam,

As communicated on 2 March 2022, due to exceptional circumstances, The International Football Association Board (The IFAB) postponed its 136th Annual General Meeting (AGM), which was scheduled to take place by videoconference on 3 March 2022.

Ahead of the rescheduled AGM, and due to the importance of communicating changes to the Laws of the Game to all stakeholders as early as possible prior to the next edition entering into force, the members of The IFAB have today confirmed in writing their full support for the proposed Law changes and clarifications detailed in the enclosure, Law Changes 2022/23 (<https://downloads.theifab.com/downloads/changes-to-the-laws-of-the-game-2022-23>).

Please note that, in accordance with the Statutes of The IFAB, these proposed changes will require formal ratification at the rescheduled AGM, at which the members' delegations will also consider all the topics listed on the original AGM agenda (<https://downloads.theifab.com/downloads/annual-general-meeting-2022-agenda?l=en>).

Amendments to the Laws of the Game for the 2022/23 edition

Law 3 – The Players: increased number of substitutions

Regarding the pandemic-related temporary amendment introduced to give top-level competitions the option of increasing the number of substitutions permitted to a maximum of five per team, the members decided that this option, including the limit of three substitution opportunities per team (excluding half-time), would be incorporated into Law 3 proper from 1 July 2022.

This follows strong support from across the football community as well as a clear recommendation to this effect from The IFAB's Football and Technical Advisory Panels (FAP-TAP), which was subsequently endorsed at The IFAB's most recent Annual Business Meeting.

Please note that the limit of three substitution opportunities only applies to competitions involving the first teams of clubs in the top division or senior 'A' international teams.

The full details of this change, together with the other changes and clarifications approved for inclusion in the Laws of the Game 2022/23, are set out in the aforementioned enclosure.

Laws of the Game 2022/23 effective from 1 July

The Laws of the Game 2022/23 will come into effect on **1 July 2022**. Competitions that start before that date may implement the changes earlier or delay their implementation until no later than the start of the next competition.

Downloadable versions of the full Laws of the Game 2022/23 book will be available on our website soon, while printed copies will be distributed in June.

As communicated on 30 June 2021, for environmental reasons, FIFA will no longer supply any copies of the Laws of the Game to its member associations and the confederations; however, all FIFA match officials will receive a copy of the Laws book.

While we encourage everyone to take advantage of the digital Laws of the Game as well as the Laws of the Game app, which are both available on our website (www.theifab.com), you can pre-order hard copies of the Laws of the Game 2022/23 through our webshop at shop.theifab.com from 25 March, at the unchanged price of CHF 3.00 per copy. To ensure that the correct number of copies is produced, please place your pre-order by **23 April 2022**. Please note that late orders may incur greater production costs and thus the price per copy may be higher.

Thank you for taking note of the amendments and clarifications that will be contained in the 2022/23 edition of the Laws of the Game. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or enquiries.

Yours sincerely,
The IFAB



Lukas Brud
Secretary

Cc: FIFA
Encl.: as mentioned



Law
changes
2022/23

Outline summary of Law changes

Law 3 – The Players

- The temporary amendment giving ‘top’ competitions the option of allowing teams to use up to five substitutes (with limited substitution opportunities) becomes part of Law 3

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play

- Clarification that the referee tosses the coin to determine the ‘ends’ and kick-off

Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match

- Clarification that a team official may be cautioned or sent off during kicks from the penalty mark (KFPM)

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

- Clarification about handball offences by the goalkeeper in their own penalty area

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

- Clarification about the position of a free kick awarded when a player leaves the field of play without the referee’s permission and then commits an offence against an outside agent

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

- Clarification about the position of the goalkeeper before and when a penalty kick is taken

Details of all Law changes

The following are the changes to the Laws of the Game for the 2022/23 edition. For each change, the new/amended/additional wording is given, together with the old wording, where appropriate – followed by an explanation of the change.

Law 3 – The Players: additional substitutes for top competitions

2. Number of substitutions

Amended text

Official competitions

The number of substitutes, up to a maximum of five, which may be used in any match played in an official competition will be determined by FIFA, the confederation or the national football association, ~~except~~

For men's and women's competitions involving the 1st teams of clubs in the top division or senior 'A' international teams where ~~the maximum is three substitutes~~ competition rules permit a maximum of five substitutes to be used, each team:

- has a maximum of three substitution opportunities*
- may additionally make substitutions at half-time

*Where both teams make a substitution at the same time, this will count as a used substitution opportunity for both teams. Multiple substitutions (and requests) by a team during the same stoppage in play count as one used substitution opportunity.

Extra time

- If a team has not used the maximum number of substitutes and/or substitution opportunities, any unused substitutes and substitution opportunities may be used in extra time
- Where competition rules permit teams to use one additional substitute in extra time, each team will have one additional substitution opportunity

- Substitutions may also be made in the period between full-time and the start of extra time, and at half-time in extra time – these do not count as used substitution opportunities

(...)

Explanation

The temporary amendment to Law 3 giving competitions involving the 1st teams of clubs in the top division or 'A' international teams the option of allowing teams to use up to five substitutes in a match (with a limit on substitution opportunities) now becomes part of Law 3.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play: referee tosses a coin

1. Kick-off

Amended text

Procedure

- the referee tosses a coin and the team that wins the toss ~~of a coin~~ decides (...)

Explanation

The toss of a coin to determine the 'ends' and kick-off is the responsibility of the referee and the wording should be consistent with Law 10.

Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match: team officials

3. Kicks from the penalty mark

Amended text

Substitutions and sendings-off during kicks from the penalty mark

- A player, substitute, ~~or~~ substituted player or team official may be cautioned or sent off

Explanation

Confirmation that a team official may be cautioned or sent off during kicks from the penalty mark.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: goalkeeper handball

3. Disciplinary action

Denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO)

Additional text

Where a player denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a handball offence, the player is sent off wherever the offence occurs (except a goalkeeper within their penalty area).

Explanation

The reference to handball offences in the DOGSO section of Law 12 could be misinterpreted as meaning that a goalkeeper can be sent off for a handball offence in their own penalty area, so the ‘caveat’ used in the ‘Sending-off offences’ section of Law 12 has been added.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: leaving the field of play to commit an offence against an outside agent

4. Restart of play after fouls and misconduct

Amended text

(...)

If the referee stops play for an offence committed by a player, inside or outside the field of play, against an outside agent, play is restarted with a dropped ball unless a an indirect free kick is awarded for leaving the field of play without the referee’s permission; the indirect free kick is taken from the point on the boundary line where the player left the field of play.

Explanation

The Law is clear that a free kick cannot be given for an offence against an outside agent. However, if a player leaves the field of play without the referee’s permission and then commits such an offence while the ball is in play, an indirect free kick is awarded for the offence of leaving the field of play without the referee’s permission at the point on the boundary line where the player left the field of play.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick: position of the goalkeeper

1. Procedure

Amended text

(...) When the ball is kicked, the defending goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot touching, ~~or~~ in line with, or behind, the goal line.

Explanation

Previously, the goalkeeper was required to have part of at least one foot on/above the goal line at the moment when a penalty kick (or kick from the penalty mark) was taken. Consequently, if the goalkeeper had one foot in front of the goal line and one behind it, this was technically an offence even though no unfair advantage is gained. The text has been amended to avoid such a position being penalised.

Explanation of this amendment should emphasise that the ‘spirit’ of the Law requires the goalkeeper to have both feet on/above the line until the moment when the kick is taken, i.e. the goalkeeper may not stand behind (or in front of) the goal line.