

INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL
ASSOCIATION BOARD

1903

LAWS
of the
GAME

LAWS OF THE GAME.

Alterations made by International Football Association Board at Ayr on 15th June, 1903, indicated in italics.

Number of players. 1.—The game should be played by 11 players on each side. The field of play shall be as shown in the plan at the end of these Laws, subject to the following provisions; the dimensions of the field of play shall be—

Dimensions of field of play, and how marked out. Maximum length, 130 yards; minimum length, 100 yards; maximum breadth, 100 yards; minimum breadth, 50 yards. The field of play shall be marked by boundary lines. The lines at each end are the goal-lines, and the lines at the sides are the touch-lines. The touch-lines shall be drawn at right angles with the goal-lines. A flag with a staff not less than 5 feet high shall be placed at each corner. A half-way line shall

be marked out across the field of play. The centre of the field of play shall be indicated by a suitable mark, and a circle with a ten yards radius shall be made round it. The goals shall be upright posts fixed on the goal-lines, equi-distant from the corner flagstaffs, 8 yards apart, with a bar across them 8 feet from the ground. The maximum width of the goal-posts and the maximum depth of the cross-bar shall be 5 inches. Lines shall be marked 6 yards from each goal-post at right angles to the goal-lines for a distance of 6 yards, and these shall be connected with each other by a line parallel to the goal-lines; the space within these lines shall be the goal area. Lines shall be marked 18 yards from each goal-post at right angles to the goal-lines for a distance of 18 yards, and these shall be connected with each other by a line parallel to the goal-

The goals.

The goal area.

The penalty area.

- lines; the space within these lines shall be the penalty area. A suitable mark shall be made opposite the centre of each goal, 12 yards from the goal-line; this shall be the penalty-kick mark.
- The ball.** The circumference of the ball shall not be less than 27 inches, nor more than 28 inches. In International matches, the dimensions of the field of play shall be—Maximum length, 120 yards; minimum length, 110 yards; maximum breadth, 80 yards; minimum breadth, 70 yards; and at the commencement of the game the weight of the ball shall be from 13 to 15 ounces. [Decision of International Board :—Touch and goal-lines must not be marked by a V-shaped rut.]
- Duration of game.** 2.—The duration of the game shall be 90 minutes, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon. The winners of the toss shall have the option of kick-off or choice of goals.
- Choice of goals.**

The game shall be commenced by a place-kick from the centre of the field of play in the direction of the opponents' goal-line; the opponents shall not approach within 10 yards of the ball until it is kicked off, nor shall any player on either side pass the centre of the ground in the direction of his opponents' goal until the ball is kicked off. [Decision of International Board : — *If this Law is not complied with, the kick-off must be taken over again.*]

3.—Ends shall only be changed at half-time. The interval at half-time shall not exceed five minutes, except by consent of the Referee. After a goal is scored the losing side shall kick-off, and after the change of ends at half-time the ball shall be kicked off by the opposite side from that which originally did so; and always as provided in Law 2.

The
kick-off.

Ends to be
changed at
half-time.

The interval

Re-starting
the game.

How a goal
is scored.

4.—Except as otherwise provided by these Laws, a goal shall be scored when the ball has passed between the goal-posts under the bar, not being thrown, knocked on, nor carried by any player of the attacking side. If from any cause dur-

If bar
displaced.

ing the progress of the game the bar is displaced, the Referee shall have power to award a goal if in his opinion the ball would have passed under the bar if it had not been displaced. The ball is in play if it rebounds from a goal-post, cross-bar, or a corner flagstaff into the field of play. The ball is in play if it touches the Referee or a Linesman when in the field of play. The ball is out of play when it has crossed the goal-line or touch-line, either on the ground or in the air.

If ball
rebounds
from goal-
posts, etc.
Ball cross-
ing lines,
out of play.

The throw-
in.

5.—When the ball is in touch, a player of the opposite side to that which

played it out shall throw it in from the point on the touch-line where it left the field of play. The player throwing the ball must stand on the touch-line facing the field of play, and shall throw the ball in over his head with both hands in any direction, and it shall be in play when thrown in. A goal shall not be scored from a throw-in, and the thrower shall not again play until the ball has been played by another player. (NOTE.—This Law is complied with if the player has any part of both feet on the line when he throws the ball in.)

6.—When a player plays the ball, or throws it in from touch, any player of the same side who at such moment of playing or throwing-in is nearer to his opponents' goal-line is out of play, and may not touch the ball himself, nor in any way whatever interfere with an opponent *or* “Off-side.”

with the play, until the ball has been *again* played, unless there are at such moment of playing or throwing-in at least three of his opponents nearer their own goal-line. A player is not out of play in the case of a corner-kick, or when the ball is kicked off from goal, or when it has been last played by an opponent.

Goal-kick.

7.—When the ball is played behind the goal-line by a player of the opposite side, it shall be kicked off by any one of the players behind whose goal-line it went, within that half of the goal area nearest the point where the ball left the field of play; but, if played behind by any one of the side whose goal-line it is, a player of the opposite side shall kick it from within 1 yard of the nearest corner flag-staff. In either case an opponent shall not be allowed within 6 yards of the ball until it is kicked off.

Corner-flag
kick.

8.—The goal-keeper may within his own half of the field of play, use his hands, but shall not carry the ball.

The goal-keeper shall not be charged, except when he is holding the ball or obstructing an opponent, or when he has passed outside the goal area. The goal-keeper may be changed during the game, but notice of such change must first be given to the Referee. [Decision of International Board:—If a goal-keeper has been changed without the Referee being notified, and the new goal-keeper handles the ball within the penalty area, a penalty kick must be awarded.]

Goal-keeper handling.
Charging goal-keeper.

Changing goal-keeper.

9.—Neither tripping, kicking, nor jumping at a player shall be allowed. A player (the goal-keeper excepted) shall not intentionally handle the ball under any pretence whatever. A player shall not use his hands to hold or push an opponent. A

Kicking, jumping.

Handling.

Holding or pushing.

Charging
behind.

player shall not be charged from behind, unless he is facing his own goal, and is also intentionally impeding an opponent. [Decision of International Board :—Cases of handling the ball, and tripping, pushing, kicking, or holding an opponent, and charging an opponent from behind, may so happen as to be considered unintentional, and when this is so, no penalty must be awarded.]

Goal not to
be scored
from a free-
kick, etc.

10.—*A goal may be scored from a free kick which is awarded because of any infringement of Law 9, but not from any other free kick. When a free kick has been taken, the ball shall not be again played by the kicker until it has been played by another player. The kick-off, corner kick, and goal kick shall be free kicks within the meaning of this Law.*

Bars, studs,
etc.

11.—A player shall not wear any nails, except

such as have their heads driven in flush with the leather, or metal plates or projections, or gutta percha, on his boots, or on his shin-guards. If bars or studs on the soles or heels of the boots are used, they shall not project more than half-an-inch, and shall have all their fastenings driven in flush with the leather. Bars shall be transverse and flat, not less than half-an-inch in width, and shall extend from side to side of the boot. Studs shall be round in plan, not less than half-an-inch in diameter, and in no case conical or pointed. Any player discovered infringing this Law shall be prohibited from taking further part in the match. The Referee shall, if required, examine the players' boots before the commencement of a match.

12.—A Referee shall be Duties and appointed, whose duties shall powers of be to enforce the Laws and the Referee.

decide all disputed points ; and his decision on points of fact connected with the play shall be final. He shall also keep a record of the game, and act as timekeeper. In the event of any ungentlemanly behaviour on the part of any of the players, the offender or offenders shall be cautioned, and if the offence is repeated, or in case of violent conduct without any previous caution, the Referee shall have power to order the offending player or players off the field of play, and shall transmit the name or names of such player or players to his or their (National) Association, who shall deal with the matter. The Referee shall have power to allow for time wasted, to suspend the game when he thinks fit, and to terminate the game whenever, by reason of darkness, interference by spectators, or other cause, he may deem necessary ; but in

all cases in which a game is so terminated he shall report the same to the Association under whose jurisdiction the game was played, who shall have full power to deal with the matter. The Referee shall have power to award a free kick in any case in which he thinks the conduct of a player dangerous, or likely to prove dangerous, but not sufficiently so as to justify him in putting in force the greater powers vested in him. The power of the Referee extends to offences committed when the play has been temporarily suspended, or the ball is out of play. [Decision of International Board :— *All reports by Referees to be made within three days after the occurrence.*]

13.—Two Linesmen shall be appointed, whose duty (SUBJECT TO THE DECISION OF THE REFEREE) shall be to decide when the ball is out of play, and which side is entitled to

Duties and powers of the Linesmen.

the corner-kick, goal-kick, or throw-in; and to assist the Referee in carrying out the game in accordance with the Laws. In the event of any undue interference or improper conduct by a Linesman the Referee shall have power to order him off the field of play and appoint a substitute, and report the circumstances to the National Association having jurisdiction over him, who shall deal with the matter.

Ball in play until decision is given.

14.—In the event of a supposed infringement of the Laws, the ball shall be in play until a decision has been given.

Re-starting the game after temporary suspension.

15.—In the event of any temporary suspension of play from any cause, the ball not having gone into touch or behind the goal-line, the Referee shall throw the ball up where it was when play was suspended, and the ball shall be in play when it has

touched the ground. If the ball goes into touch or behind the goal-line before it is played by a player the Referee shall again throw it up. The players on either side shall not play the ball until it has touched the ground.

16.—In the event of any infringement of Laws 5, 6, 8, 10, or 15, a free kick shall be awarded to the opposite side, from the place where the infringement occurred. In the event of any intentional infringement of Law 9 outside the penalty area, or by the attacking side within the penalty area, a free kick shall be awarded to the opposite side from the place where the infringement occurred. In the event of any intentional infringement of Law 9 by the defending side within the penalty area, the Referee shall award the opponents a penalty kick which shall be taken from

Free kicks are awarded for.

The penalty kick.

the penalty kick mark under the following conditions:— All players, with the exception of the player taking the penalty kick and the opponents' goal-keeper shall be outside the penalty area. The opponents' goal-keeper shall be within the goal area. The ball must be kicked forward. The ball shall be in play when the kick is taken, and a goal may be scored from a penalty kick; but the ball shall not be again played by the kicker until it has been played by another player. If necessary, time of play shall be extended to admit of the penalty kick being taken. A free kick shall also be awarded to the opposite side if the ball is not kicked forward, or is played a second time by the player who takes the penalty kick, until it has been played by another player. *The Referee may refrain from putting the provisions of this Law*

into effect in cases where he is satisfied that by enforcing them he would be giving an advantage to the offending side.
 [Decision of International Board : -- A penalty kick can be awarded irrespective of the position of the ball at the time the offence is committed. *In the event of the ball touching the goal-keeper before passing between the posts when a penalty kick is being taken at the expiry of time, a goal is scored.*]

DEFINITION OF TERMS.

A place kick is a kick at the ball while it is on the ground in the centre of the field of play. Place kick

A free kick is a kick at the ball in any direction the player pleases, when it is lying on the ground, none of the kicker's opponents being allowed within 6 yards of the ball, unless they be standing on their own goal-line. The Free kick.

ball must at least be rolled over before it shall be considered played; *i.e.*, it must make a complete circuit or travel the distance of its circumference. A place kick or a free kick must not be taken until the Referee has given a signal for the same.

Carrying.

Carrying by the goal-keeper is taking more than two steps while holding the ball, or bouncing it on the hand.

Knocking-on.

Knocking-on is when a player strikes or propels the ball with his hands or arms.

Handling and Tripping.

Handling is intentionally playing the ball with the hand or arm, and Tripping is intentionally throwing, or attempting to throw, an opponent by the use of the legs, or by stooping in front of or behind him.

Holding.

Holding includes the obstruction of a player by the hand or any part of the arm extended from the body.

Touch.

Touch is that part of the ground on either side of the field of play.