



Summary of the 2006 Changes To the Laws of the Game

This year's Annual General Meeting of the International Football Association Board (IFAB) was held March 4th in Lucerne, Switzerland. The 2006 revisions to the *Laws of the Game* and *Decisions of the IFAB* become mandatory on **June 1st** (rather than the usual July 1st). A summary of this year's changes follows. (Law and IBD quotations are italicized; new or revised wording is in bold text; deleted text, when shown, has a strikethrough; comments are the author's.)

Law 4 – The Players' Equipment; Basic Equipment

“The basic compulsory equipment of a player comprises the following separate items:

- *a jersey or shirt;*
- *shorts – if thermal undershorts are worn, they are of the same main colour as the shorts;*
- *stockings;*
- *shinguards;*
- *footwear”*

IFAB reason: Adding “... the following separate items:” ensures that the basic equipment must consist of individual garments and therefore a player's jersey and shorts may not be joined together in any way.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring; Competition Rules

*“When competition rules require there to be a winning team after a match **or home-and-away tie** has been drawn, only the following procedures, which have been approved by the International F.A. Board, are permitted*

- *Away goals rule*
- *Extra time*
- *Kicks from the penalty mark”*

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct; Cautionable Offences

The 5th cautionable offence has been changed to read:

*“fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick **or throw-in**”*

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct; Cautionable Offences (continued)

The following text has been added immediately after the seven cautionable offences:

“A substitute or substituted player is cautioned and shown the yellow card if he commits any of the following three offences:

- 1. is guilty of unsporting behaviour*
- 2. shows dissent by word or action*
- 3. delays the restart of play”*

Comment: A substitute or substituted player is also cautioned and shown the yellow card if he or she enters the field of play without the referee's permission (Law 3).

Since the IFAB intentions were to indicate which of the cautionable offences also apply to substitutes and substituted players, for consistency “enters the field of play without the referee's permission” should have been included. (For players this is part of the sixth cautionable offence.)

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct; Sending-Off Offences

The first sentence has been changed to read:

*“A player, **substitute or substituted player** is sent off and shown the red card if he commits any of the following seven offences:”*

Comment: As written this implies that substitutes/substituted players can be guilty of serious foul play. But serious foul play is only committed by a player. (However, listing the six offences separately, similar to what was done with the cautionable offences, would only further clutter up the Laws.)

The sentence following the seven sending-off offences has been changed to read:

*“A player, **substitute or substituted player** who has been sent off **and shown the red card** must leave the vicinity of the field of play and the technical area”*

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick; Infringements/Sanctions

The IFAB did some cleaning up of the Infringements/Sanctions in Law 14. (To better understand these changes in context, the complete text is provided on page 3.) The following three situations (bullet points) summarize the changes:

- Referee signals for PK to be taken, before the ball is in play the kicker infringes the Laws, the referee allows the kick to proceed, and the ball does not enter the goal. The referee stops play and awards an IFK to the defending team *“**from the place where the infringement occurred**”*.

Comment: The previous wording did not give the location of the IFK.

- Referee signals for PK to be taken, before the ball is in play the kicker’s teammate *“**infringes the Laws of the Game**”*, the referee allows the kick to proceed, and the ball does not enter the goal. The referee stops play and awards an IFK to the defending team *“**from the place where the infringement occurred**”*.

Comment: “infringes the Laws of the Game” replaces “enters the penalty area or moves in front of or within 9.15 m (10 yds) of the penalty mark”, and the previous wording did not give the location of the IFK.

In addition, the following was made redundant (by last year’s addition of bullet point three) and has been (belatedly) deleted: “if the ball rebounds from the goalkeeper, the crossbar or the goalpost and is touched by this player, the referee stops play and restarts the match with an indirect free kick to the defending team.”

- Referee signals for PK to be taken and before the ball is in play teammate of the goalkeeper *“**infringes the Laws of the Game**”*, the referee allows the kick to proceed, and the ball does not enter the goal. The referee stops play and has the PK retaken.

Comment: “infringes the Laws of the Game” replaces “enters the penalty area or moves in front of or within 9.15 m (10 yds) of the penalty mark”.

IFAB reason for these changes: To be consistent with the other infringements of Law 14.

Comment: “Infringes the Laws of the Game” refers to the various Law 14 infringements.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick; Procedure (third bullet)

The Law now states *“opponents remain at least 9.15 m (10 yds) from the **corner arc** until **the ball is in play**”*. The previous requirement was 10 yards from the ball.

IFAB reason: To be consistent with Law 1.

Additional Instructions for Referees, Assistant Referees and Fourth Officials

In the section “Dealing with the restart of play” a new (sixth) bullet point has been added. Referees must now also caution players who delay the restart of play by:

- *“**provoking a confrontation by deliberately touching the ball after the referee has stopped play**”*

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick; Infringements/Sanctions

(Showing the 2006 revisions to Law 14)

If the referee gives the signal for a penalty kick to be taken and, before the ball is in play, one of the following situations occurs:

The player taking the penalty kick infringes the Laws of the Game:

- the referee allows the kick to proceed
- if the ball enters the goal, the kick is retaken
- if the ball does not enter the goal, the referee stops play and restarts the match with an indirect free kick, **from the place where the infringement occurred**, to the defending team

The goalkeeper infringes the Laws of the Game:

- the referee allows the kick to proceed
- if the ball enters the goal, a goal is awarded
- if the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is retaken

A team-mate of the player taking the kick **infringes the Laws of the Game** enters the penalty area or moves in front of or within 9.15 m (10 yds) of the penalty mark:

- the referee allows the kick to proceed
- if the ball enters the goal, the kick is retaken
- if the ball does not enter the goal, the referee stops play and restarts the match with an indirect free kick, **from the place where the infringement occurred**, to the defending team
- ~~If the ball rebounds from the goalkeeper, the crossbar or the goalpost and is touched by this player, the referee stops play and restarts the match with an indirect free kick to the defending team~~

A team-mate of the goalkeeper **infringes the Laws of the Game** enters the penalty area or moves in front of or within 9.15 m (10 yds) of the penalty mark:

- the referee allows the kick to proceed
- if the ball enters the goal, a goal is awarded
- if the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is retaken

A player of both the defending team and the attacking team infringe the Laws of the Game:

- the kick is retaken

If, after the penalty kick has been taken:

The kicker touches the ball a second time (except with his hands) before it has touched another player:

- an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team, the kick to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred *

The kicker deliberately handles the ball before it has touched another player:

- a direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team, the kick to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred *

The ball is touched by an outside agent as it moves forward:

- the kick is retaken

The ball rebounds into the field of play from the goalkeeper, the crossbar or the goalposts, and is then touched by an outside agent:

- the referee stops play
- play is restarted with a dropped ball at the place where it touched the outside agent *

* Unless covered by the Special Circumstances listed in Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play