

Commonwealth Soccer Officials Association memo to DSAs and Assistant Principals

Ladies and Gentlemen – Playoffs are just around the corner and players, coaches, and officials will be getting geared up for the competition. We understand that this period will become more intense with the “do or die” nature of the competition. It is our hope that the game can be decided on the field by the players, with the coaches and officials working in concert to control the tempo of the match, allowing the players to play the game and determine the outcome. Since each playoff game needs to have a winner, there are several important items to keep in mind.

First – the weather may become more of a factor, so we may have weather related interruptions. Below is the VHSL procedures for suspended/interrupted matches:

SUSPENDED/INTERRUPTED MATCHES (Regular and post-season) (VHSL Handbook 78-3-1) page 139

In the event a regular season game must be suspended by the head referee because of conditions that make it impossible to continue play, the director shall:

1. Declare it an official match if one complete half or more of the match has been played and one team is ahead;
2. At any point after completion of the first half if the score is tied, resume the match from the point of interruption unless both teams agree to the tie;
3. If less than one complete half of the match has been played, resume from the match from the point of interruption.

Second – The eight-goal mercy rule is in effect for all playoff games except for the State Semis (21 June) and the State Finals (23 June).

Third – Tie Breaking Procedure:

- STEP ONE - Two five-minute regular overtimes are played to completion. (Coin toss at start and teams change ends between periods). If no winner – STEP TWO
- STEP TWO - Five-minute sudden death (SD) overtimes - first score ends the game. Start SD with a coin toss. If there is NO score in the first SD overtime, then teams change ends and play the second sudden death overtime. If still tied STEP THREE
- STEP THREE - Penalty kick tie breaker - Coaches designate 5 kickers to alternate kicks (these five different players can kick in any order) - if still tied after five kicks, we go to one-on-one Sudden Death kicks - coaches again designate five kickers (NOTE THESE CAN BE THE SAME FIVE KICKERS AS THE FIRST GROUP AND AGAIN CAN KICK IN ANY ORDER, BUT ONLY ONCE IN EACH ROUND OF FIVE. FIRST TEAM TO GAIN A ONE GOAL ADVANTAGE WINS. If still tied after 10 kicks, continue with the sudden death kicking procedure in another round of five sudden death kicks. (Note 1 - This is different than the NFHS rulebook) Note 2: **Remember that a coin toss is done prior to each set of five kicks to determine who kicks first and who kicks second, the goal being used is not changed.**

Fourth – Please keep our assignor, Dena Morrison, informed on any changes so we can make sure that we have referee crews available for the matches. Her info is as follows:

CELL: 703 357 7921

CELL: 703 346 6820

CSOAassignor@gmail.com

Fifth – It is our understanding that the State Semis and Finals will be played at the higher seeded schools. If that is the case, please let us know ASAP if you are going to have a home game. It appears that the dates have changed to 21/23 June, which is a Monday/Wednesday. With Regionals ending on the previous Friday, it will be imperative to let us know ASAP if you will be hosting a game on Monday the 21st.

Sixth -- Red Cards – If you have a player receive a red card in a match and your team is continuing to play, we need to resolve the player's status ASAP. If you are going to appeal the red card, then it is a matter between the two school principals' and the Soccer Officials Association to which the official is affiliated with. If we are the source of the red card, you will have it ASAP after I see the report. I also have access to game film through the NFHS network.

Red Card Summary to Date:

Gender	Junior Varsity	Varsity
Boys	5	51
Girls	1	8

Seventh – COVID Protocols/Ball Handlers/Water Breaks Please make sure that any COVID protocols that remain in place are discussed and understood by teams, coaches, and referees prior to the match. Every effort should be made to have ball handlers in place to keep the match moving along with minimum disruption. Finally, if the weather is hot and humid, please consider a water break at the mid-point in each half like the COVID sanitation breaks. If this is to happen, please make sure that this is agreed to prior to the start of the match.

Eight – Lightning – Please ensure that this is discussed prior to the match, and everyone (teams/officials) have a designated place to go. Also, ensure that the home game administrator has designated someone to monitor the thunder/lightning situation.

We know that the spring has been hectic for everyone, and we want to work closely with you to make the playoff a successful and enjoyable experience for everyone, especially the student athletes who missed last year. We wish everyone continued success and are ready to provide any support that you may need. Thanks again for your support.

Pete Stenner – Commissioner CSOA