



Commonwealth Soccer Officials Association  
10 McHenry Street, Vienna VA 22180

May 2022

MEMORANDUM FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Subj: PLAYOFFS 2022

We are nearing the end of the regular season and the playoffs are close at hand with that in mind, this is where we need to focus our attention. We will be fully engaged in the District/Regional/Conference playoffs with all of our public and private schools. State Playoffs will return to their pre-COVID format with quarterfinals at the higher seeded school, semifinals and finals at Jubilee sites June 10 and 11. (Class 3 & 4 in Spotsylvania Courtland and Chancellorsville HS; Class 5 & 6 in Loudon County at Briar Woods, Riverside, John Champe and Freedom SR). Games are normally played every weekday night, so please keep your schedules open. Assignments will be made via Arbiter, and they will come fast and furious, and may be at the 11th hour so please be patient, supportive, and most of all available.

Here are several reminders about the playoffs:

- Player safety and game control are primary concerns of the referee team- make sure goals are properly anchored.
- **Do not over-officiate. Be firm, fair and consistent.** Work with the players, coaches and game administrators with respect to game and man management by being proactive using preventative refereeing techniques to make the game flow smoothly. Please let the players decide the outcome of the game on the field
- Eight goal mercy rule is in effect all playoff games **except** State Semis and Finals.
- All games must have a winner; therefore, **the following procedures will be used to break a tie:**
  - 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 SD 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. (This is different than the NFHS rulebook) Note: **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.**
- The NFHS permits the identified kicker to use a stutter step or a hesitation move towards the stationary ball, **provided 1) there is no stopping motion and 2) it is a continuous movement.** The change also specifically states that a stutter step is **NOT** an interruption of forward movement.
- Submit game reports for all games ASAP. **All red cards need to be reported immediately in case there is an appeal.**
- **Weather** – Weather can be a factor and we need to take it into consideration. Due to the limited time frame for District and Regional playoffs, we will need to try and get the games in. **Work closely with the game administrators/coaches in this respect, keeping in mind that player safety is the key factor.** Games suspended prior to half-time will be picked up from where they ended. Games that reach half-time will be considered completed games, if there is a winner. Games tied after half-time, will be picked up from the point the game was suspended. Tournament Directors will sort this issue out for us. Be sure to include the details of the restart in the reports as directed as the crew may change.
- **Water Breaks** – Use only **if appropriate.** Due to high heat/humidity make sure this issue is **decided prior to the start of the game** and the break comes at an appropriate stoppage between the 20-22<sup>nd</sup> minute and 60-62<sup>nd</sup> minute. This is a **Game Administrator/Trainer and coaches' decision** whether to use a water break **prior to the match.**
- **OFFICIAL TIME** – Official time will be kept by the referee team on the field with the clock stopped at two minutes as in the regular season. There is **NO** added time in NFHS (**except for a penalty kick that occurs as time runs out.**)
- **Always contact your partners at least 24 hours prior, look sharp, and be the best team on the field.**

BE SAFE

BE CONSISTENT

BE FAIR

BE FIRM