

Soccer Rules Interpretations - 2020-21

By NFHS on July 22, 2020 [soccer](#)

[Share](#)

[Print](#)

Publisher's Note: The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.

Dr. Karissa L. Niehoff, Publisher, NFHS Publications © 2020

SITUATION 1: Player A2 kicks the ball forward and the ball is simultaneously played out-of-bounds by A3 and B3. The game will be restarted with a drop ball 5 yards from the boundary line where the ball was simultaneously touched, to a player of the team that last played the ball. **RULING:** Legal. Play is restarted with a drop ball if simultaneously touched by the opponent at the spot where the ball was touched. (9-2-1, 9-2-3)

SITUATION 2: Player A2 kicks the ball forward and the ball is simultaneously played by A3 and B3, both of whom commit simultaneous fouls. The referee restarts play with a drop ball at the spot of the fouls for a player of the team that last played the ball prior to the fouls being committed. **RULING:** Legal. The game will be restarted with a drop ball. (9-2-1, 9-2-3)

SITUATION 3: Player A kicks the ball while in the opponent's penalty area. The ball deflects off the referee in the penalty area and (a) goes into the goal, (b) goes to A2's teammate who then scores a goal, (c) goes to defender B2, (d) goes directly back to A2 at the spot where he/she kicked the ball or (e) deflects to a spot where A2 now has a scoring opportunity. **RULING:** In (a), (b), (c) and (e), play is restarted with a drop ball to the goalkeeper on Team B where the ball touched the referee. In (d), play continues as there was no change in possession, no goal was scored and there was no development of a promising attack.

SITUATION 4: While taking a goal kick, Player A kicks the ball and it moves. Before another player from either team plays the ball, Player A plays the ball. **RULING:** Illegal. Play is restarted with an indirect free kick awarded to the opponent from the spot of the second touch. Because Player A put the ball in play, he/she may not play the ball until it has been touched by another player.

SITUATION 5: The referee has ruled that a drop ball to Player A1 shall be used to restart the game following an unusual situation. Where must the Team A and B members be located? **RULING:** All Team A and B members other than A1 must be 4 yards from the ball until it is back in play. (9-2)

SITUATION 6: While placing the ball on the field for a free kick using his/her foot, Player B2: (a) moves the ball forward to the spot, (b) moves the ball to the side to the spot, (c) drags the ball backward to the spot and is ready to take the kick. **RULING:** Legal in (a), (b) and (c). Simply tapping or stepping on the top of the ball or moving the ball to position it for the free kick with the foot is not sufficient to put the ball into play. The ball is in play when it has been kicked and moves.

SITUATION 7: In calling for an indirect free kick for Team A, the referee does not signal by raising an arm above the head. A1 kicks the ball and (a) the ball goes directly into Team B's goal, (b) the goalkeeper for Team B makes a play and touches the ball and it enters the goal. **RULING:** Rekick in (a) and goal in (b). For indirect kicks, the referee shall signal an indirect kick (using Official NFHS Soccer Signals Rule 5-3-1b) by raising an arm above the head; this signal shall be maintained until the kick is taken and the ball touches another player or goes out of play. If the referee fails to signal that the kick is indirect and the ball goes directly into the opponent's goal, the kick shall be retaken. Webinar Dates: Fall – September 17, 2020 at 2:00 p.m., EST Spring – April 8, 2021 at 2:00 p.m., EST Rule Change Proposal Portal is now open for Soccer. Proposals due date: November 1, 2020