

For newer HS referees: Some law/rule differences between FIFA/USSF and NFHS

(this is not an exhaustive list of differences)

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Topic	FIFA/USSF	NFHS
Player inspections	Referees must inspect players (Law 5)	No formal inspection. At pre-game ceremony, the referee must ask and the coaches must confirm if players are properly and legally equipped. See Rule 4, Section 3, Play Ruling 4.3 Situation A.
What choice the winner of the coin toss gets to make	Winner chooses which goal to attack (Law 8)	Winner chooses to kick off or which goal to defend. See Rule 8.
Player improperly equipped	Player asked to leave field and correct problem. May return at stoppage. (Law 4)	The coach is cautioned for the first player found to be improperly equipped. All subsequent players are cautioned directly. All such players must leave the field and may be substituted; they may return at the next substitution opportunity. See Rule 4, Section 3.
Substitution opportunities	Not specified; therefore, at any stoppage of play (Law 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On throw-ins by team in possession; if so, opposing team may also • On corner kicks by team in possession; if so, opposing team may also • By either team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ goal kicks ○ kick-offs ○ after caution or disqualification ○ player is injured and removed ○ end of period ○ blood <p>See Rule 3.</p>
Throw-in does not enter field	Retake (FIFA Interpretations for Law 15)	Throw-in for other team. See 15.1.4 (d).
Restart after referee stops play for injury or unusual situation	Dropped ball (Law 8)	If one team is in clear possession, indirect free kick for that team. Otherwise, drop ball. See <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 9, Section 2, Play Rulings 9.2.2 • Rule 9, Section 3 • Rule 13, Section 2, Article 3 c.
Cooling off period after caution	Not allowed	Required. The player cautioned must leave the field and may be substituted. The cautioned player may return at the next substitution opportunity. See Rule 12, Section 8.
Can a coach or other bench personnel be cautioned or sent off?	No. Misconduct applies only to team members. No cards may be shown. (Law 12 and Advice to Referees 5.10). Such persons can be expelled as per Law 5.	Yes. Treated same as team members. Cards must be shown. See Rule 12, Section 8.