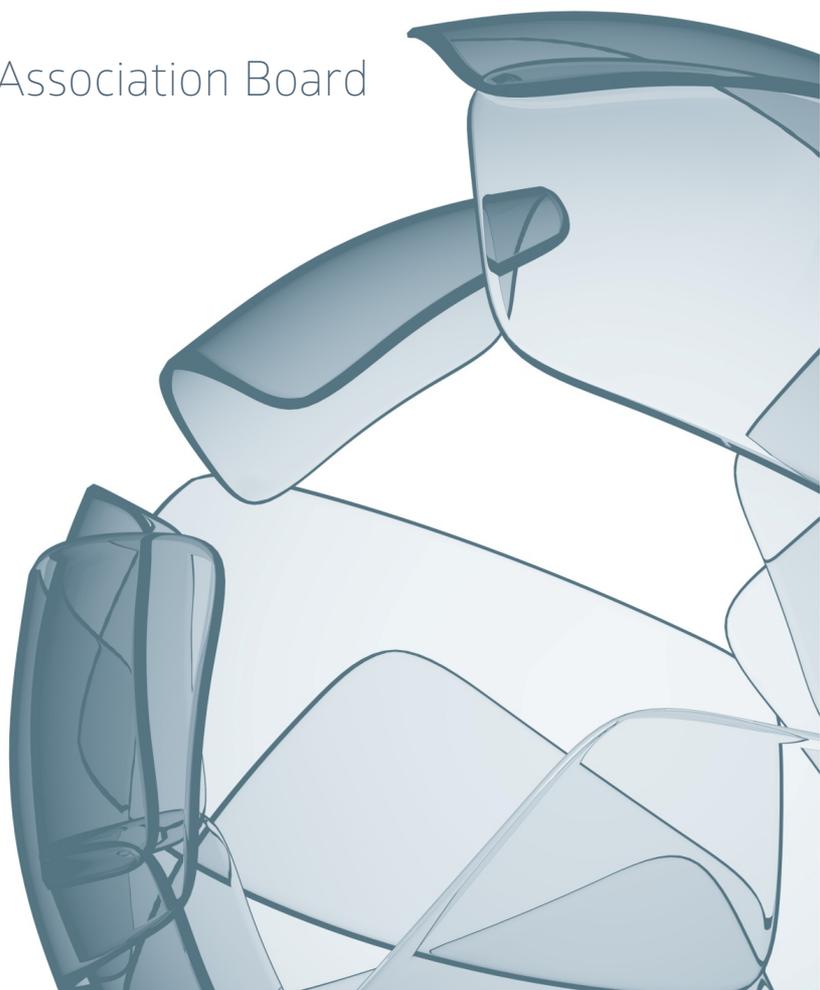


Laws of the Game 2017/18

Summary of Law Changes for Players, Coaches and the Media

The International Football Association Board

April 2017



Introduction

The 131st AGM of The International FA Board (The IFAB) held in London on 3 March 2017 approved 'a second stage' of changes and clarifications to the Laws of the Game for 2017/18 to complete last year's major Law revision.

An important change is an increase in the flexibility of national FAs to modify parts of the 'organisational' Laws to benefit their domestic football - they now have more options for the football for which they are responsible.

The IFAB and FIFA also expressed a strong commitment to a major focus on improving player behaviour, including increasing the role of the captain.

This document contains a summary of the main changes will affect players and match situations

An electronic version of the Laws of the Game 2017/18 can be downloaded from The IFAB's website (www.theifab.com) which also contains the following summary documents:

- *'Summary of Law Changes for Organisers and Administrators'* - a summary which focuses on the Law changes relating to the organisation of matches and competitions.
- *Guidelines for Temporary dismissals (sin bins)*
- *Guidelines for Return substitutes*

Reminders

The IFAB and FIFA would like to remind everyone of two very important aspects of the game:

Captains

- The Laws of the Game state that the captain has '*a degree of responsibility for the behaviour of their team*' - captains are expected to use this responsibility to help calm/positively influence the behaviour of their players, especially in controversial/confrontation situations involving opponents or match officials

Respect for Referees

- Players must respect all decisions made by the referee and other match officials, even when they may appear to be wrong.

Respect for the Laws of the Game and the match officials who apply the Laws is paramount to the fairness and image of football

Key

YC = yellow card

RC = red card

Summary of Law changes for 2017/18

The following summarises the main Law changes relating to players, coaches and match situations:

Electronic and communication equipment

- Players are forbidden to wear/use any electronic or communication equipment, except electronic performance and tracking systems (EPTS)
- All EPTS equipment must have a minimum safety standard mark; systems already in use have a transition period to obtain this mark which ends on 31 May 2018
- Team officials in the technical area may only use communication equipment for player safety/welfare
- There will be a consultation about other electronic communication in the technical area

Extra-time

- A short drinks break is allowed at half time of extra-time; the break is not for coaching

Goal celebration

- A player will get a YC if a goal celebration causes a safety/security problem

Kick-off

- The kicker is permitted to stand in the opponents' half to take the kick-off

Offences off the field (ball in play)

- If a player commits an offence off the field against an opposing player, substitute or team official, or a match official, it is a free kick on the boundary line*
- If a substitute or team official commits an offence off the field against an opponent or match official, it is a free kick on the boundary line*

**penalty kick if direct FK offence in the offender's penalty area*

Offside

- When a player who is in an offside position is fouled, the foul is awarded only if the player is not already attempting to play or challenge for the ball
- Players in an offside position who interfere with (or 'block') defenders will be penalised

Penalty kick for a foul which 'stops a promising attack'

- A player who commits a foul which 'stops a promising attack' in the penalty area will not receive a YC if the foul was an attempt to play the ball

Penalties at the end of a match (Kicks from the Penalty Mark)

- A goalkeeper who is unable to continue may be replaced by a player excluded to equalise the numbers (e.g. opponents had a player sent off), even if all substitutes have been used
- A goalkeeper who causes a kick to be retaken will get a YC

Referees

- Law 5 now contains an important statement that decisions made by match officials must always be respected (even when they seem to be wrong) – The IFAB and FIFA hope this will be publicised and supported by everyone in the game

Returning to the field without permission

- If a player who has gone off the field and needs the referee's permission to return (e.g. injured, changing footwear etc.) comes back onto the field without the referee's permission and interferes with play it is a YC and a direct free kick*

Substitutes

- National FAs can now allow teams to use a maximum of five substitutes (but not in competitions involving teams from 1st (top) division clubs or in 'A' international competitions)
- National FAs have the option to use 'return substitutes' in youth, veterans, disability as well as grassroots (lowest levels) football

Temporary dismissals (sin bins)

- National FAs have the option to use temporary dismissals (sin bins) for all/some YCs in youth, veterans, disability and grassroots football

Throwing objects

- If a player, substitute or team official throws/kicks an object (including a ball) onto the field it is a direct free kick* if it interferes with play or a match official
- If a player throws/kicks an object (including a ball) off the field at an opposing player, substitute or team official, or a match official, it is a direct free kick on the boundary line*

**penalty kick if direct FK offence in the offender's penalty area*

For further information or for a specific question, please e mail lawenquiries@theifab.com