

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**



NEWS RELEASE

“Soft Red” Eliminated in High School Soccer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (February 15, 2012) — In a continued emphasis on improving sportsmanship, the “soft red” has been eliminated in high school soccer.

Effective with the 2012–13 season, a second yellow card not only will disqualify a player, but the team will not be permitted to substitute for the disqualified player. Previously, a team was permitted to replace a player who had received a second yellow card.

This significant change was one of three rules revisions passed by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Soccer Rules Committee at its January 23–25 meeting in Indianapolis. These changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

Another change in Rule 12–8–1f now will disqualify a player who deliberately handles a ball in his/her own penalty area to prevent it from going

in the goal **only** when the attempt to deny the goal is successful. If a goal is scored, the penalty is now a caution. Previously, a player was disqualified for trying to stop a goal from being scored, whether the try was successful or not.

“Obviously, with two of our three changes this year in Rule 12 (Fouls and Misconduct), the Soccer Rules Committee continues to focus on improving the level of sportsmanship in high school soccer,” said Mark Koski, NFHS director of sports and events and liaison to the Soccer Rules Committee.

The other change approved by the committee involves the taking of a penalty kick. If some unusual situation occurs after the penalty kick is properly taken and before the ball is played or touched by another player, or before the ball hits the goalpost or crossbar, which necessitates a temporary suspension in play, the penalty kick shall be retaken. Previously, this would have resulted in a drop ball.

“As an example, if the ball deflated immediately after a penalty kick was taken and play was suspended, the player now will have the opportunity to attempt the penalty kick again,” Koski said.

Soccer is the fifth-most popular sport for boys and girls at the high school level. According to the 2010-11 High School Athletics Participation Survey, 398,351 boys are involved in soccer and 361,556 girls participate in the sport.

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About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.6 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org.

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