
RULE 1

The Field of Play

1.1 Dimensions

1.1.1 The field of play shall be rectangular, the width of which shall not be more than 75 yards [68.58 m] or less than 70 yards [64.01 m] and shall not exceed the length. The length shall not be more than 120 yards [109.73 m] or less than 115 yards [105.16 m].

Note: The optimum size is 75 yards [68.58 m] by 120 yards [109.73 m]. Facilities in use before 1995 need only to be rectangular the width of which shall not exceed the length.

1.1.2 Facilities constructed after 1995 shall be a minimum of 70 yards in width [64.01 m] by 115 yards [105.16 m] in length.

Note: It is the responsibility of the home team to notify the visiting team, before the date of the game, of any changes in field dimensions (for example, greater or lesser than minimal requirements), playing surface (for example, from grass to artificial or vice versa) or location of the playing site. Further, it is recommended that teams agree on any changes in facility issues before confirming contests or signing game contracts.

1.1.3 Indoor Facility. It is permissible to conduct collegiate soccer games in an indoor facility provided the dimensions are in compliance with Rule 1.1.1. Balls striking any part of the upper edifice shall result in one of the two following actions:

- 1) If the ball lands “in touch” (out of bounds), the opposing team shall be awarded a throw-in from the nearest point where the ball crossed the touchline.
- 2) If the ball makes contact with any part of the overhead edifice, the referee’s whistle shall indicate a dead ball and the suspension of play. Play shall be restarted with a drop ball at a point nearest where the ball made contact in the field of play.

Exception: *If the ball falls inside the goal area, play shall be restarted with a drop ball at the nearest corner of the penalty area where the 18- and 44-yard lines meet.*

Note: Corner kicks and goal kicks shall be awarded accordingly. (See Rules 9.3.1 and 9.3.2.)

1.2 Boundary Lines

The field shall be marked with distinctive lines, in accordance with the diagram on Page 8, the longer boundary lines being called the touch lines and the shorter the goal lines. The lines shall meet at the corners; that is, the goal lines shall extend completely across the field of play, including the area between the goal posts, and the touch lines shall extend the entire length of the field.

The home team is responsible for proper marking of the field.

PENALTY—The game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.3 Field Markings and Measurements

All lines, which are part of the areas they define, shall be the same width and measure not less than 4 inches [10.16 cm] in width or more than 5 inches [12.7 cm] in width.

Measurements shall be taken from the outside of the line to the outside of the line with which it interfaces. However, when measuring the width of the goal and penalty areas, the measurements shall be taken from the inside of the goal post to the outside of the six- and 18-yard lines, respectively.

In the case of a field that is playable but on which, during the course of the game, the lines and markings have become invisible due to snow or other such conditions, the lines and markings shall be assumed to be present and decisions rendered accordingly.

All lines shall be clearly marked but may not be of a form (for example, grooves, curbs or other items) that could prove dangerous to players. During the regular season, painted logos or other noncommercial field markings are at the discretion of the host institution.

A.R. 1.3. May an institution place markings of a commercial nature on the field?

RULING: No.

1.4 Halfway Line, Center Circle

A halfway line shall be marked out across the field of play. The center of the field shall be indicated by a suitable mark, and a circle with a 10-yard [9.14 m] radius shall be marked around it.

PENALTY—The game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.5 Goal Area

At each end of the field of play, two lines shall be drawn at right angles to the goal line, 6 yards [5.49 m] from the inside of each goal post. These shall extend into the field of play for a distance of 6 yards [5.49 m] and shall be joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. Each of the spaces enclosed by these lines and the goal line shall be called a goal area.

PENALTY—The game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.6 Penalty Area

At each end of the field of play, two lines shall be drawn at right angles to the goal line, 18 yards [16.46 m] from the inside of each goal post. These shall extend into the field of play for a distance of 18 yards [16.46 m] and shall be joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. Each of the spaces enclosed by these lines and the goal line shall be called the penalty area.

At each end of the field, a 2-foot [60.96cm] line or 9-inch [22.86cm] spot shall be placed at a point 12 yards [10.97m] from the midpoint of, and parallel to, the goal line. The line shall extend 1 foot [30.48cm] on either side of the undrawn center line. The spot shall extend 4½ inches on either side of the

undrawn center line. The penalty kick may be taken from any position on this line or spot.

Using the center of this penalty-kick line or spot, describe a 10-yard [9.14 m] arc outside the penalty area and closing on the penalty-area line. This is the restraining line for penalty kicks.

PENALTY—The game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.7 Corner Area, Hash Mark

From each corner, a quarter circle, having a radius of 1 yard [.914 m], shall be drawn inside the field of play. In addition, a hash mark 1 yard [.914 m] in length, situated 6 inches beyond (but not touching) the field of play and 11 yards [10.05 m] from the touch line shall be marked perpendicular to the goal line at each corner of the field. (See Plan of Field, Page 8.)

PENALTY—The game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.8 Corner Flags

A flag on a post not less than 5 feet [1.53 m] high and having a nonpointed top shall be placed at each corner; a similar flagpost may be placed opposite the halfway line on each side of the field of play, at least 1 yard [.914 m] outside the touch line.

The post shall be approximately 1½ inches [3.81 cm] in diameter. The corner flag shall not be removed for any purpose during the game. The flag shall be of some bright color, easily distinguishable from the surroundings, and shall be about 2 feet [60.96 cm] long by 1 foot [30.48 cm] wide and securely fastened to the post or staff.

The flagpost shall be implanted in the ground or shall rise from a pylon that measures not more than 8 inches [20.32 cm] across at its base, providing the post itself rises directly above the center of the intersection of the touch line and goal line.

A.R. 1.8. Upon inspecting the field, the referee discovers the absence of corner flags on the corner flagposts. **RULING:** The home team shall obtain appropriate flags for the corner flagposts. If unsuccessful, the game shall begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.9 Goals

The goals shall be anchored, secured or counterweighted. The goal posts, which shall be superimposed on goal lines of the same width and depth, shall consist of two posts, equidistant from the corner flags and 8 yards [7.32 m] apart (inside measurement), joined by a horizontal crossbar of similar material, the lower edge of which shall be 8 feet [2.44 m] from the ground.

The width or diameter of the goal posts and crossbar shall not be less than 4 inches [10.16 cm] nor more than 5 inches [12.7 cm]. The posts and crossbar may be square, rectangular, round or elliptical in shape, and shall be painted white.

In addition, no markings other than a single manufacturer's identification/logo of appropriate size may appear on the goal posts or the crossbar.

PENALTY—The game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

A.R. 1.9.a. The goal line is 4 inches wide and the depth of the goal post is 2 inches.

RULING: Illegal. The goal line and goal post shall be the same width and depth.

A.R. 1.9.b. Goal posts are 5 inches in depth and the goal line 4 inches in width.

RULING: Illegal. The goal posts and goal line shall be the same dimensions.

1.10 Goal Nets

Nets shall be attached to the uprights and crossbars and secured behind each goal.

The goal nets shall be properly and firmly secured and put in order before every match, and care taken that there are no holes or possible openings for the ball to escape. The nets shall be properly supported so that the top of the net will extend backward on a level with the crossbar for a distance of about 2 feet [.609 m].

Nets may be multicolored; however, no markings other than a single manufacturer's identification/logo of appropriate size may appear on the net. Further, banners shall not be hung from the goals or nets and the nets shall not be lettered, nor reflect school names, logos, slogans or any commercial design.

PENALTY—The game shall not begin and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.11 Displaced Crossbar, Goal Post

If any part of the goal becomes displaced during the game, play shall be suspended, and every effort shall be made to repair or replace the goal. If, in the referee's opinion, it cannot be repaired to its original condition within a reasonable period of time, the game shall be suspended. When the goal is repaired or replaced, the referee shall restart the game by dropping the ball where it was when play was suspended; or, if the ball was inside the goal area, it shall be dropped at the nearest point outside the goal area.

1.12 Coaching and Team Areas

1.12.1 There shall be a coaching and team area. Team benches shall be on the same side of the field, separated by a 10-yard neutral zone, and shall be at least 10 feet [3.05 m] (whenever possible) from the touch line.

1.12.2 Each coaching and team area shall be marked parallel to the touch line and situated at least 10 feet [3.05 m] from the touch line and extending 20 yards [18.29 m] from the five-yard neutral zone measured from the halfway line in both directions.

PENALTY—The game shall begin but the coach shall be reminded that in the future, proper markings are to be provided, and the referee shall file a report with the governing sports authority. (See Page 6.)

1.13 Photographers' Line

There shall be a designated photographers' area. (See Plan of Field, Page 8.)

1.14 Scorekeeper's/Timekeeper's Table

If not using a press box for timekeeping, the scorekeeper's/timekeeper's table shall be placed on the same side of the field as the team benches, situated

equidistant between the two team benches and at least 10 feet [3.05 m] (whenever possible) from the touch lines.

1.15 Spectator Restraining Line

It is recommended that a rope, fence or some form of demarcation be used to keep spectators a minimum of 20 feet [6.10 m] (whenever possible) away from the touch lines and goal lines.

1.16 Scoreboard and Clock

It is recommended that an electronically controlled clock and scoreboard, which can be seen by spectators and both benches, be provided and maintained in proper working order. (See Rule 6.3.1.)

1.17 Lighting

The field should be uniformly and adequately lighted. Lighting engineers shall be placed in charge of this important factor when planning new installations. For information on recommended specifications for lighting, contact the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America, 120 Wall Street, 17th Floor, New York, New York 10005; telephone 212/248-5000.

According to the NCAA Broadcasting Manual, the target light of NCAA championships for television broadcasting shall be a range of 125 to 150 maintained vertical foot-candles. The minimum levels shall read 125 foot-candles.

1.18 Grading, Slope of Field

The rules of conduct in the NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules do not specify, nor do they legislate matters pertaining to the slope or grading of playing facilities. The rules specify only maximum and minimum dimensions of fields constructed after September 1995. New field construction minimum dimensions are 115 yards [105.16 m] (length) by 70 yards [64.01 m] (width). New maximum dimensions are 120 yards [109.73 m] by 75 yards [68.58 m].

The following guidelines appear to be generally accepted standards for new facilities: A field with not greater than a 2 percent slope at the declining edges of the touchlines, provided that the outer lines of demarcation do not abut with hazardous curbing or boundary materials, is considered preferable. Architectural engineers shall be consulted with reference to the actual height references that pertain to grading percentages or broken-back construction.