

Laws of the Game – updates Fall 2019

Goal Kick

- The ball is in play once the kick is taken; it can be played before leaving the penalty area

Explanation

The experiment that at a goal kick the ball is in play once it is kicked, and does not have to leave the penalty area, has created a faster and more dynamic/constructive restart to the game. It has reduced the time 'lost/wasted' including stopping the tactic of 'wasting' time when a defender deliberately plays the ball before it leaves the penalty area knowing that all that will happen is the goal kick will be retaken. Opponents must remain outside the penalty area until the ball is in play

Dropped ball - Laws 8 & 9

Changes

- If play is stopped inside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for the goalkeeper
- If play is stopped outside the penalty area, the ball will be dropped for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the point of the last touch
- In all cases, all the other players (of both teams) must be at least 4m (4.5yds) away
- If the ball touches the referee (or another match official) and goes into the goal, team possession changes or a promising attack starts, a dropped ball is awarded

Explanation

- The current dropped ball procedure often leads to a 'manufactured' restart which is 'exploited' unfairly (e.g. kicking the ball out for a throw-in deep in the opponents' half) or an aggressive confrontation. Returning the ball to the team that last played it restores what was 'lost' when play was stopped, except in the penalty area where it is simpler to return the ball to the goalkeeper. To prevent that team gaining an unfair advantage, all players of both teams, except the player receiving the ball, must be at least 4m (4.5 yds) away.
- It can be very unfair if a team gains an advantage or scores a goal because the ball has hit a match official, especially the referee.

Kick-Off - Law 8

Changes

- The team that wins the toss can now choose to take the kick-off or which goal to attack (previously they only had the choice of which goal to attack)

Explanation

- Recent Law changes have made the kick-off more dynamic (e.g. a goal can be scored directly from the kick-off) so captains winning the toss often ask to take the kick-off.