



To: Chair, State Referee Committee
State Referee Administrators
State Directors of Referee Instruction
State Directors of Referee Assessment
National Referees
National Assessors
National Instructors

From: Alfred Kleinaitis
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**Re: Kicks from the Penalty Mark
The “Reduce to Equate” Principle**

Date: June 11, 2002

The *Laws of the Game* provide for the taking of kicks from the penalty mark as one way to decide which team will advance when, after regulation play and any extra periods of play required by the rules of competition are ended, the score remains tied.

The specific rules governing the match (“**the rules of competition**”) can differ in this regard. For example, FIFA requires up to two fifteen minute periods of play with the first goal ending the match.

The purpose of this position paper is to focus on one particular element of the taking of kicks which has recently been introduced and remains subject to some uncertainty – the “**reduce to equate**” principle. Introduced into *The Laws of the Game* in 2001, the principle ensures that teams begin the procedure with the same number of players.

The following guidelines are to be used in implementing “**reduce to equate**” in those matches for which the rules of competition mandate the taking of kicks from the penalty mark. “**Regulation play**” includes any extra periods of play called for by the rules of competition. “**Kicks**” will refer generally to the taking of kicks from the penalty mark.

- The kicks phase of the match begins at the moment regulation play ends (including any overtime periods of play.)
- A team might have fewer than eleven players eligible to participate at the end of regulation play due to injury or misconduct or because the team began the match with fewer players.
- The captain of the team with more players must identify which of its players will not participate if regulation play ends with the team at unequal sizes.

- “Players eligible to participate” includes those players who are legally on the field at the end of regulation play, plus any other players off the field temporarily (e.g., to correct equipment, bleeding, or having an injury tended).
- Only the goalkeeper may be substituted in the case of injury during the kicks phase and only if the team has a substitution remaining from its permitted maximum.
- Once kicks begin (following any “reduce to equate” adjustment), a player may become unable to participate due to injury or ineligible to participate due to misconduct.
- Under no circumstances will a team be required to “reduce to equate” if the opposing team loses one or more players due to injury or misconduct occurring during the kicks phase of the match.
- Until a result is produced, both teams must continue to use their eligible players without duplication until all (including the goalkeeper) have kicked, at which time players who have already kicked may kick again. If one team has fewer players than the other, it will need to begin using again its players who have already kicked sooner than will the opposing team.