



From the U.S. Soccer Communications

Memorandum

To: State Referee Administrators
State Youth Referee Administrators
State Directors of Referee Instruction
State Directors of Referee Assessment
National Referee Instructors and Trainers
National Assessors
National Referees

From: Alfred Kleinaitis
Manager of Referee Development and Education

Subject: Players Wearing Non-Compulsory Equipment

Date: September 3, 2003

On August 25, 2003, FIFA issued Circular #863, regarding the legality of players wearing non-compulsory equipment.

FIFA notes that, under the "Powers and Duties" of the referee in Law 5 -- The Referee, he or she has the authority to ensure that the players' equipment meets the requirements of Law 4, which states that a player must not wear anything that is dangerous.

Modern protective equipment such as headgear, facemasks, knee and arm protectors made of soft, lightweight, padded material are not considered dangerous and are therefore permitted.

FIFA also wishes to strongly endorse the statement on the use of sports spectacles made by the International F.A. Board on March 10, 2001, and subsequently in FIFA Circular #750, dated April 10, 2001. New technology has made sports spectacles much safer, both for the player himself or herself and for other players. This applies particularly to younger players.

Referees are expected to take full account of this fact and it would be considered extremely unusual for a referee to prevent a player taking part in a match because he or she was wearing modern sports spectacles.

Referees are reminded of the following points which can assist in guiding their decisions on this matter:

- Look to the applicable rules of the competition authority.
- Inspect the equipment.
- Focus on the equipment itself – not how it might be improperly used, or whether it actually protects the player.
- Remember that the referee is the final word on whether equipment is dangerous.