

**To:** OHSAA Soccer Officials

**From:** Don Muenz, Director of Soccer Officiating Development

**Re:** Soccer Bulletin - 8/13/20

Good day, everyone.

I hope that you are doing well.

Let's take a look at a nuts and bolts item.

NF 7.1.5 permits state associations to adopt a "Mercy Rule." By state association adoption, a goal differential may be established whereby at the end of the first half if one team has gained the established goal differential or if it secures such differential during the second half, the game shall be ended."

Ohio has chosen a middle ground, by having the clock run continuously in the second half, once the goal differential of six has been reached.

2020 OHSAA Soccer Regulation 12(A)(1.7): "Goal Differential/Running Clock – During any regular season or tournament contest, any time the score differential reaches 6 goals or more AFTER the first half of the contest, a running clock shall be used. After the 6-goal differential has been met but the score drops below 6 goals, the clock reverts to regular timing. The clock shall be stopped only for an injured player on the field or when there is any unusual delay deemed necessary by the officials."

Re-familiarize yourself with the regular timing rules: NF 3.4.3; NF 7.1.1; NF 7.1.2; NF 7.1.3; NF 7.1.4; NF 7.4.1; NF 7.4.2 and NF 7.4.2.

Let's look at some situations.

**1.)** Team Nonesuch trails Team Pedestrian, 5-0, at the half. In the seventy-seventh minute, Player Sinistra scores for Team Pedestrian.

A. Though the clock continues to run after this goal, it stops as soon as Team Pedestrian substitutes before Team Nonesuch kicks off.

B. The clock continues to run after the goal, even during Team Pedestrian's substitution and through Team Nonesuch's kick-off.

A. NF 3.4.3 and NF 7.4.3 are part of regular timing rules and are trumped by the Ohio Mercy Rule. The clock continues to run, even during a substitution in the last five minutes by the team in the lead.

B. NF 3.4.3 and NF 7.4.3 are part of regular timing rules and are trumped by the Ohio Mercy Rule. The clock continues to run, even during a substitution in the last five minutes by the team in the lead.

**2.)** Team Festus trails Team Invictus, 6-0, at halftime. In the forty-first minute, Dillon scores for Team Festus.

A. The clock is stopped until Team Invictus properly kicks off.

B. The clock continues to run after the goal.

A. Because the goal differential is now below the threshold of the Ohio Mercy Rule, the match reverts to regular timing rules.

B. See answer to A.

**3.)** Team Derecha trails Team Izquierda, 6-0, during the fiftieth minute. Player Mongson of Team Izquierda goes down with an injury.

- A. The clock continues to run under the Ohio Mercy Rule.
- B. The clock is stopped under the Ohio Mercy Rule.

- A. Under the Ohio Mercy Rule, "The clock shall be stopped only for an injured player on the field or when there is any unusual delay determined by the officials."
- B. See answer in A.

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