

BAFA rule changes 2022

This list contains all BAFA rule changes for 2022



With "importance to teams" (ITT) and "importance to officials" (ITO) indicated. 5 is high; 1 is low.

The full text of the rulebook incorporating the changes is available at <https://rules.bafra.info/rulebook/bafa2022/index.htm>.

1 Rule changes

#	Rule	Change	Rationale for change	ITT	ITO
1.	1-2-1 *	Game cannot commence if the field length, field width or end zone depths are not within tolerances.	Ensure validity of game is not compromised by a poorly sized field.	5	5
2.	1-2-4-a	Team Area and Coaching Box extended to 20-yard lines.	Provide more space in team area. Note that this is separate from any COVID-era amendments to the rules.	5	1
3.	1-2-5 *	Game cannot commence if padding on goal posts is absent or less than 6 feet high	Participant safety	5	5
4.	1-2-9 *	Artificial playing surface restrictions brought in. 2G fields prohibited from introduction of new rulebook.	2G surfaces are not appropriate and are now prohibited. Definitions of "recommended" (i.e. rugby standard) and "acceptable" (i.e. soccer standard) 3G fields also introduced.	5	3
5.	1-4-2-a	Player numbering extended to include 0.	Allow a player to wear "0".	3	3
6.	1-4-5-a-1 and 1-4-5-b Penalty	Concurrently worn jersey allowed. Anything below the waistline should be tucked in. Jersey penalty redefined to include charging a timeout each quarter that illegal colour jerseys are worn.	Permit a player to wear two jerseys (for example, if swapping numbers legally during the game). Also adds additional restrictions for safety and uniformity.	5	2
7.	1-4-5-c-1	Numbers must be centred on the back and front of the jersey. No logo must appear within 1 inch of the numerals.	Ensure a player's number is clearly visible on video and on the field to the officials.	5	2
8.	3-1-1	Pregame warmup procedures specified.	Require players warming up pre-game in the playing enclosure to be supervised by a coach and to be identifiable by number.	4	2

#	Rule	Change	Rationale for change	ITT	ITO
9.	3-1-3-e, 3-1-3-f	Beginning with the third extra period, a team's possession series will be one play for a two-point try. Beginning with the second extra period, teams scoring a touchdown must attempt a two-point try.	Shorten the duration of extra periods. A safety measure to protect tired players in long close games.	3	4
10	3-2-3-a-1	Extend periods for fouls on field goals.	Make penalties on field goals the same as penalties on touchdowns when it comes to whether a period gets extended.	2	4
11	3-2-3-a-2	Extend periods when there has been an illegal touching violation.	Illegal touching violations on kick plays should also extend the period, at the option of the offended team. This would prevent a team taking a safety via intentional grounding or illegally kicking a loose ball, then on the succeeding free kick play, just tapping the ball off the tee and recovering, thereby ending the game.	2	4
12	3-3-5-b	Feigning injuries: Review process established for questionable game action.	Process by which teams can report concerns to the relevant disciplinary authority, who have the power to suspend players or coaches.	3	3
13	3-3-5-b & 9-2-2	Make feigning an injury an explicit example of an unsportsmanlike conduct foul.	Emphasise the reprehensibility of the act.	3	3
14	3-5-3-b	Team B substitution altered to live-ball foul. However, if the play clock runs out and Team B has more than 11 players on the field, Team B will be penalised.	Simpler enforcement.	2	5
15	6-3-14	Protection of snapper on scrimmage kicks enhanced	Prohibits Team B lining up immediately across from a long snapper.	5	3
16	9-1-3 and 9-1-4	Remove the wording "When in question, it is a foul" from both targeting rules.	Since 2019, NCAA requires all targeting fouls to be confirmed by replay (NCAA Rule 12-3-5). This is clearly beyond our capabilities at the moment. It is therefore appropriate to amend the wording of our rule to discourage a low standard of certainty among the on-field officials when disqualifying a player.	2	4

#	Rule	Change	Rationale for change	ITT	ITO
17	9-2-2-f	No more than ONE player allowed to be assigned same number in a competitive game.	Simplify the identification of players. There is no good reason why players need to share a number. There are now 100 numbers available and very few teams come anywhere close to having this many players. This change implicitly limits the number of players in a squad to 100. The rule applies only within a game, so a different 100 players could play in a team's next game if desired. The exception allows players to share numbers in non-competitive games.	5	3
18	10-2-5	Penalty enforcement carry over to succeeding spot in extra periods.	Adds extra periods to the times when certain penalties can carry forward.	2	3
19	10-2-7-a	Apply the penalty enforcement carry-over to ALL personal fouls, not just flagrant ones.	Simplify penalty enforcement on special plays (tries and in extra periods). Ensure that there is the opportunity to enforce all personal fouls.	3	3
20	12-3-4-c-4	Instant replay: Clock adjustment at end of half.	Ensure that Team A cannot gain an advantage by having a review with 2 or less seconds left in a half.	1	3
21	13-1 *	Medical provisions revised. New definitions of additional levels of healthcare practitioner. Full members of the Sports Therapy Association or the Sports Therapy Organisation are now likely to be eligible as "first-aid trained therapists" (which is broadly the old standard). Sports massage therapists no longer are. From 2022, higher levels of the game will require each team to have an "emergency first aider" in addition to at least one higher-qualified healthcare professional. From 2023, higher levels of the game will require an "immediate care practitioner", a slightly higher standard.	Start of a gentle process to improve safety by upgrading the quality and quantity of medical provision at BAFA games. Over the next few years, we will step up the level of cover at games, dependent on its level, starting with Adult Premier Division. Most teams already have an emergency first aider on their coaching or support staff. Many teams already use an immediate care practitioner (e.g. a paramedic) at their games.	5	3
22	13-9-7 *	Generalise rule on minimum period between games to exclude small-sided tournaments with a continuous clock where the total playing time is less than 90 minutes.	Brings small-sided tournaments into line with 11-a-side games.	3	2
23	13-10 *	Principles and procedures defined for participants who wish to use prosthetics during games. Prosthetics must not pose an additional risk to the user or other participants and must not convey an unfair competitive advantage.	Makes the game more accessible to prosthetic users. Determined on a case-by-case basis by a panel drawn from relevant committees.	3	1

* BAFA only

2 Editorial changes

In addition to the following, all instances of gender-specific language have been removed.

#	Rule	Change	Rationale for change
1.	1-1-6-b	Adds lighting system operators to persons subject to the rules.	Adds them to the category including audio and video system operators. Prohibits use of these technologies to the advantage of a team.
2.	1-2-4-b	Medical staff exempted from 25 team area credential restriction.	Medical staff do not count against a team's limit of those permitted in the team area.
3.	1-2-6-d	Only parts of a displaced pylon that are in or behind the vertical plane of the goal line are behind the goal line.	Address issues of partially displaced pylons. Ball isn't in the end zone if the pylon isn't.
4.	1-2-9-a	Field surface: Referee's signal change from S27 to S19.	Use an appropriate signal for a 5-yard penalty.
5.	1-4-2-d	Clarify process for jersey number change	Separates out the roles of informing the opposing head coach from announcing the change to everyone else.
6.	1-4-5-a	Undergarments may not extend below the waistline (e.g., T-shirt).	Player appearance.
7.	1-4-10, 1-4-11-c, 1-4-11-d	Add "or recording sound".	Make explicit that microphones can't be used for recording purposes either. There are privacy issues around recording the sounds of other people.
8.	1-4-13-c	Disqualify anyone subject to the rules who eavesdrops officials' radio communication before, during or after the game.	Maintain confidentiality of officiating communication.
9.	2-16-4-b	Clarification for use of a tee on a free kick.	Insists that the ball be touching the tee if a tee is used.
10	3-2-2-f	Play clock operation.	Clarifies that the play clock should remain fixed at 40/25 if there are less than 40/25 seconds remaining in the period.
11	3-2-3-a-1	Offended team option added when a period is not extended.	Gives the offended team the option of whether to extend the period or not if the penalty involves loss of down.
12	3-2-4-a	Game clock: no tenths of seconds.	Avoids clock showing fractions of a second.
13	3-4-3	Guidance on referee authority in starting and stopping the clock.	Increased consistency of application.
14	3-4-5	10-second runoff summary added.	Useful summary of 10-second runoff situations.
15	5-1-3-a	Clarified forward progress point on a catch.	Clarifies that it is where the player gained and maintained firm control of the ball that dictates forward progress.
16	6-1-11	Foul for out of bounds player clarified.	No longer a foul if a Team A player goes out of bounds after the kick has ended.

#	Rule	Change	Rationale for change
17	6-1-2-a	Penalty for illegal kick on a free kick.	Clarification of dead-ball versus live-ball fouls on a free kick.
18	6-3-12	Foul for out of bounds player clarified.	No longer a foul if a Team A player goes out of bounds after the kick has ended.
19	7-1-1	Add "ISP" as a penalty code option.	The penalty code for an illegal snap (ISP) did not appear anywhere in the rules.
20	7-1-3	Remove S20 as a potential penalty signal.	If any of the fouls in 7-1-3 occurs, signal S19 is more appropriate. S20 should be reserved for motion or shift fouls.
21	7-1-6-a	Handing the ball forward clarification.	Makes the restrictions on a forward hander the same as on a forward passer.
22	9-1-11-c	Added apparent punt for leaping foul.	Includes an "apparent" punt alongside punts in consideration of leaping.
23	9-1-11-d	Added apparent kick in leverage and leaping rule.	Includes an "apparent" kick alongside kicks in consideration of leaping.
24	9-2-1-b-5	Clarified video/audio/lighting operators obstructing play.	Adds these operators (who are subject to the rules) to those able to commit this foul.
25	9-2-3-c	Persons subject to the rules interfering with play.	Makes it clearer what interference is.
26	9-4-1 and 9-4-4 Penalty	Change "No loss of down if the foul occurs when a legal scrimmage kick <i>is beyond</i> the neutral zone" to "No loss of down if the foul occurs when a legal scrimmage kick <u>has crossed</u> the neutral zone".	Clarifies that once the kick has crossed the neutral zone, a loss of down cannot be part of the penalty.
27	10-2-5-b	Penalty enforcement for defensive pass interference on the try.	Clarifies that half-distance enforcement for DPI applies <u>on or inside</u> the 3-yard line.
28	10-2-7 (IFAF) (3-1-3-g-3 and 8-3-4-c (NCAA))	Penalty enforcement exception in extra periods.	Clarification of which fouls can carry over to the next play.
29	12-2-2-a-5	Add "whether the ball was passed or fumbled".	Clarifies that pass/fumble decisions are reviewable.
30	12-2-2-a-6	Add "whether the player who caught or recovered a fumble was the fumbler".	Clarifies that 4 th down possession decisions can be reviewed after fumbles.
31	12-2-2-a-7	Add "whether a fair catch signal was made or a player of the receiving team advanced after a fair catch signal".	Clarifies that advancing after a fair catch signal can be reviewed.
32	13-1-2 *	Clarified that the medical requirements must be met at the side of the field.	Some confusion arose in 2021 about the interpretation of this rule.

#	Rule	Change	Rationale for change
33	13-9-8-c *	Minimum period between games does not apply to officials in short-sided football.	Reflects actual practice.

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