

Soccer: Volume I, Bulletin 2  
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September 26, 2018

### Obstruction vs. Shielding

Obstruction is the deliberate act of a player, not in possession of the ball and/or not attempting to play the ball, of running between an opponent and the ball or moving the body to become an obstacle to an opponent (12-5-1). This tactic is often used when a player attempts to block an opponent from reaching the ball in order for his keeper to retrieve it. There have been some instances, however, where obstruction has been called when a player is simply between the ball and the opponent while in the vicinity of the ball, but not actively dribbling it. A rule of thumb is that as long as the player is within playing distance of the ball, he/she should be considered as “attempting to play the ball.” This is a judgment decision and blatant attempts to block out the opponent with no effort to play the ball whatsoever should be penalized.

### How Long Do We Wait?

Early fall still brings those late spring showers. Officials should be aware of the delay policy for contests, and should consult with the home and visiting team administration and coaches in making the decision as when/whether to resume a suspended contest. Delays shall not exceed three hours for contests scheduled before 3 p.m. on night before school days, nor exceed one and one half hour if scheduled to start after 3 p.m.

When contests are scheduled for nights not followed by school the next day, competing teams may determine by mutual agreement how long to delay before cancellation of a contest, and the officials in consultation with school staffs will determine how long to keep a contest suspended before completing or cancelling it.

### Speaking of...

If a game must be suspended because of unplayable field or game conditions, it shall be a complete game if one half (or more) has been played. If a game is not considered complete, the teams in most instances will resume play from the exact point of suspension. However, if both teams agree, the game may be restarted from its beginning provided it would not be the fourth contest played within a week and would not give them more than 18 games for the season. A resumption of a contest would not be considered an additional game, but a full restart would. **POSTSEASON ONLY – If suspended during a one-goal game, a minimum of 60 minutes must have been played in order to be “complete”.**

### Something to Consider

A2 kicks a low line drive pass to his teammate. B2, who is standing between the A teammates, moves his hand to protect his groin and touches the ball. What’s the ruling? Check back in the next Soccer Bulletin for the answer.

### Last Week’s Consideration

A defensive player within the penalty area and in possession of the ball stops the ball with his foot and leaves it. His goalkeeper walks up from behind and picks up the ball from the ground. The ball is then drop kicked down field.

Ruling: Indirect Free Kick. 12-7-3 provides for a penalty in the case when the goalkeeper handles a ball that has been deliberately directed to him/her by a teammate. This is the case in this scenario.