

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is twofold:

1. Elaborate on rules and regulations of FIFA, FFA and Football NSW Limited (FNSW) in relation to playing equipment during matches;
2. Emphasise the recent decision made by the International Football Association Board's (IFAB) to allow the wearing of the Hijab in football matches.

Scope of Policy

FNSW has the power under its By-Laws to create and issue Policies from time to time.

Safety

The overarching rules in respect of any playing equipment or any items worn are set out in Law 4 of FIFA's Laws of Game which is as follows:

"A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewellery)."

All items of clothing or equipment other than the basic equipment must be inspected by the referee and determined not to be dangerous.

If an item of clothing or equipment that has been inspected at the start of a match and determined not to be dangerous becomes dangerous or is used in a dangerous manner during the match, its use must no longer be allowed.

Usage of Equipment

Caps

Unless otherwise exempted or allowed by a referee, goal keepers are the only players who are permitted to wear caps as they may constitute a danger to opponents.

Glasses

Players are permitted to wear sports goggles, sports glasses or sports sunglasses as long as, in the opinion of the referee, they pose no danger to the player or other players. The Optometrists Association of Australia has stated that children involved in sport, requiring assisted vision, should wear protective eyewear such as sports goggles or sports glasses with soft or flexible frames fitted with a plastic or polycarbonate lens.

Head bands and wrist bands

The wearing of cloth head and wrist sweat bands are permitted.

Hair ties

Material and elastic hair ties are only permissible.

Undershirts

Long sleeved undershirts must be the same tonal colour as the player's shirt.

For the avoidance of doubt, if a player's shirt contains more than 1 colour (for example red and white) then the tonal colour of the undershirts must be the dominant colour of the player's shirt and that colour must be worn by all players that are wearing undershirts.

Moreover, if a player's shirt contains more than 1 colour and those colours are equal (for example red and white stripes) then the tonal colour of the undershirts must be one of the colours on the player's shirt and that colour must be worn by all players.

Undershorts

Undershorts must be the same tonal colour as the main colour of the player's shorts. Players are permitted to wear full length undershorts provided it is the same tonal colour as the main colour of the shorts.

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Moreover, if a player's undershorts contain more than 1 colour and those colours are equal (for example red and white stripes) then the tonal colour of the undershorts must be one of the colours on the player's undershorts and that colour must be worn by all players.

Jewellery

All items of jewellery (necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, leather bands, rubber bands, etc.) are strictly forbidden and must be removed. Using tape to cover jewellery is not acceptable.

Referees are also prohibited from wearing jewellery (except for a watch or similar device for timing the match).

However, if in the opinion of the Referee, a medical bracelet or necklace presents no danger, then it may be allowed on the condition that it can be taped or bandaged to the body to provide protection. A medical bracelet can be covered by a tight wrist guard and similarly, a medical necklace can be sufficiently padded.

Hijab

On 3 March 2012, IFAB agreed in principle to overturn the decision it took in 2007 and will now allow women footballers to wear a Hijab or headscarf when they play football. A final ruling will be made on or about 2 July 2012.

The Hijab or headscarf may be worn by female players subject to the following:

1. That the Hijab is the same tonal colour as the main colour of the player's shirt;
2. It shall not create a danger to either the wearer or any other player; and
3. Referees are not permitted to check the affixing of the Hijab and under no circumstances touch the garment.

Other

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

Responsibility for Compliance

The individual player, team coach and the club have the responsibility for player equipment and should be fully aware of the requirements set out in this Policy, other FNSW, FFA and FIFA rules and regulations adopted from time to time.

Disciplinary Sanctions

Except for the inspection of the use of the Hijab, the players are to be inspected by the referees before the match and substitutes before they enter the field of play.

If a player is discovered to be wearing unauthorised clothing or jewellery during play, the referee must:

1. Inform the player that the item must be removed;
2. Order the player to leave the field of play at the next stoppage if he or she is unable or unwilling to comply;
3. Caution the player if he or she wilfully refuses to comply or, having been told to remove the item, is discovered to be wearing the item again.

If play is stopped to caution the player, an indirect free kick must be awarded to the opposing team from the position of the ball when play was stopped.

Review

This Policy is to be reviewed by FNSW as required.