

Guidance for Referees and Clubs when managing repeat substitutions

In March 2012, The International Football Association Board permitted The Football Association to undertake a 2 year pilot where Leagues, who apply for a licence, can adopt repeat substitutions for all affiliated matches within their competition. This document should be used as an 'aide memoire' and guidance for clubs and match officials when competitions adopt the repeat substitution policy.

Law 3 states that in all matches, the names of the substitutes must be given to the referee prior to the start of the match. Any substitute whose name is not given to the referee at this time may not take part in the match.

To replace a player with a repeat substitution, the following conditions must be observed:

- The referee must be informed before any proposed substitution is made
- The substitute only enters the field of play after the player being replaced has left and after receiving a signal from the referee
- The substitute only enters the field of play at the halfway line and during a stoppage in the match
- The substitution is completed when a substitute enters the field of play
- From that moment, the substitute becomes a player and the player he has replaced becomes a substituted player
- The substituted player may under this experiment then take further part in the match and replace a player
- There is no limit on the number of repeated substitutions that can be made. However, if the match official believes that a team is delaying the restart of play, then appropriate action will be taken
- All substitutes are subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the referee, whether called upon to play or not

Referees are advised to control the 'repeat substitution' procedure and manage it effectively, ensuring they have a record of which players are on the field at any one time. This is especially important if a cup competition match requires a result from Kicks from the Penalty Mark, where only players who complete the match i.e. are on the field at the final whistle are permitted to participate.

Referees are reminded that the Laws of the Game must be enforced and repeat substitutions cannot be used as a form of disciplinary action to replace a caution or dismissal.

Clubs are advised that they are responsible for informing the referee when they wish to make a substitution.