



Memorandum

To: State Referee Administrators  
State Youth Referee Administrators  
State Directors of Referee Instruction  
State Directors of Referee Assessment  
National Referee Instructors and Trainers  
National Assessors  
National Referees

From: Alfred Kleinaitis  
Manager of Referee Development and Education

Subject: Removing the Jersey While Celebrating a Goal

Date: June 29, 2004

With the recently announced approval by the International Football Association Board (IFAB) of a new Decision in Law 12, referees will be required, as of July 1, 2004, to caution and show the yellow card to any player who removes their jersey as part of a goal celebration. Since this player behavior has been the subject of different requirements in the past, U.S. Soccer will be making the attached presentation available at our web site:

<http://www.ussoccer.com/templates/includes/services/referees/Removalofthejerseyel.pps>

This presentation, developed by FIFA and slightly modified by USSF, explains the new decision and how it should be implemented. The presentation is consistent with the “USSF Advice to Referees” provided in Memorandum 2004 on the annual Law changes.

The presentation is a colorful and concise explanation of the following points:

- “Removing the jersey” includes covering the head and pulling the jersey over the head as well as complete removal of the shirt.
- Any player or substitute on the team celebrating a goal must be cautioned if their jersey is removed, not just the player who scored the goal.
- The caution is mandatory even if the player is wearing an undershirt, including an undershirt that appears to be an exact replica of the jersey.
- A player whose jersey removal reveals pictures or text on an undershirt or on the skin must be dealt with in accordance with established guidelines based on what is revealed:
  - A red card is shown if the material is insulting, abusive, or offensive;
  - A yellow card is shown if the material is deemed unsporting; and
  - If the material falls under neither of these categories, the incident is reported to the competition authority.

Players whose behavior stops short of removing the jersey (as defined above) are not required to be cautioned, but they may be cautioned if, in the opinion of the referee, the player’s behavior results in or is a part of an excessively delayed restart of play.

The presentation slides are accompanied by detailed [instructor notes](#).