



Soccer Referees Playoff Meeting

Monday, January 26, 2026, 6:00 pm

Boca Raton Community Center

Bruce Spidell, Director of Referees

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Meeting Agenda

- Playoff Schedule
- Length of Games & Overtime
- Overtime mechanics
- Penalty Shoot-out Rules
- Reminders
- Feedback and Questions

Playoff Schedule

- Playoffs begin Monday, February 9
- Playoffs end Sunday, February 22
- Tom Cup Finals Saturday, February 28
 - at Spanish River Park
- Playoff Schedule Posted on <https://sabr.soccerref.net/>

Length of Games & Overtime Periods

Age Group	Game Length	Overtime Periods
U9 & U10	Two 25-minute halves	One 10-min Period
U11 & U12	Two 30-minute halves	One 10-min Period
U15	Two 35-minute halves	One 10-min Period
U19	Two 40-minute halves	One 10-min Period

Note: SABR's use of ONE 10-minute OT period instead of two differs from most other tournaments.

Breaks After Regulation

- *Overtime for tied games is the only difference between the regular season and the playoffs.*
- If tied at the end of regulation, a five-minute break should be provided before OT.
- Another five minute-break should be provided before the start of penalty kicks.

No Golden Goal Rule

The whole overtime ten- minute period needs to be played; if still tied at the end of overtime; the game will go to penalty kicks.

If game is tied after overtime period has expired, modified FIFA penalty shoot-out rules will apply

- See IFAB website, “Law 10.3 Penalties (penalty shoot-out).
<https://www.theifab.com/laws/latest/determining-the-outcome-of-a-match/#winning-team>
 - As a reminder, Law 14.1 states, “When the ball is kicked, the defending goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot touching, in line with, or behind, the goal line.”
- Every player on the field of play and substitute in the technical area after balancing the teams at the end of the overtime period are eligible to participate in the penalty kicks. This applies to goalkeeper as well.
- To repeat, players on the bench are eligible, which is a *club exception from FIFA rules*.

Penalty Shoot-Out, cont'd.

- Write down all the players numbers who are **NOT eligible after balancing**.
- Each team shall designate the order of all eligible players in the order they will shoot, to take the penalty kicks, and give the list to the referee.
- The list will be kept by the AR who is managing the players in the center circle.

Penalty Shoot-Out, cont'd.

- At the beginning of overtime, you may suggest to coaches that to save time, they start making out their lists, including jersey numbers.
- Remind coaches that:
 - Players beyond the first five will only shoot if the score is tied after five kicks
 - Goalkeeper may be placed anywhere on the list—they don't have to go last.
- The referee and both ARs should each keep track of goals and check with each other periodically.

Penalty Shoot-Out, cont'd.

- You should use a form something like this (you can make your own) to keep track of penalty kicks.

PENALTY KICK/SHOOTOUT SCORE PAD

HOME	COLORS					FIRST KICK	VISITING	COLORS				
						H ? V						
	1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5
YES	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		YES	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
NO	N	N	N	N	N		NO	N	N	N	N	N
	6	7	8	9	10			6	7	8	9	10
YES	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		YES	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
NO	N	N	N	N	N		NO	N	N	N	N	N
	11	12	13	14	15			11	12	13	14	15
YES	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		YES	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
NO	N	N	N	N	N		NO	N	N	N	N	N

Penalty Shoot-Out, cont'd.– Set Up

- After the players are chosen and you have the list of all those NOT eligible, ask both teams to meet you in the center circle.
- Provide a brief overview of the rules to coaches and players; ask if they have any questions.
- Ask for captains from both teams.
- The team whose captain wins the coin toss shall choose to go first or second.
- Other than the player taking a penalty kick and the two goalkeepers, all players (including the ones not eligible to kick after balancing) shall remain within the center circle while the taking of kicks is in progress.

Penalty Shoot-Out, cont'd. – Suggestions

- Before the game, the referee crew must meet, and the referee will determine which AR is better suited to stand on the goal line and which is better suited to manage the players being sent to kick. Both roles are equally important.
- Discuss with both goalkeepers the rules regarding their positioning and movement.
- As each kicker approaches the penalty spot, hand them the ball and allow them to place it on the spot themselves.
- Tell each kicker sternly to wait for your whistle before kicking.

Penalty Shoot-Out, cont'd. – Process

- The referee shall choose the goal from which penalty kicks will be taken.
 - It is likely that a “Blue Shirt” will already have set cones for one goal.
 - In this case, go with the decision of the “Blue Shirt.”
- If there is no penalty mark on the field:
 - For U11 and above, pace 12 yards from the goal line.
 - For U9 & U10, mark a spot halfway between penalty and goal areas.
 - Mark the penalty spot by placing a coin one foot to the left of the spot.

Penalty Shoot-Out, cont'd. – Process

- The kicks shall be taken alternately by the teams.
- Starting with the first player, AR in the center will call them out to the penalty mark by jersey number, using the lists provided by the coaches.
- If, before both teams have taken five kicks, one team has scored more goals than the other could, even if it were to complete its five kicks, the taking of the kicks shall cease.

If the Number of Goals are Tied

- If, after both teams have taken five kicks, the match remains tied, the taking of kicks shall continue, with different players than the first five players, until such time as both teams have taken an equal number of kicks (not necessarily five more kicks) and one team has scored a goal more than the other team.
- If all eligible players, including the goalkeeper, have taken a kick, and the goals are still tied, then the kicking shall continue in the same order as at the beginning of the process.

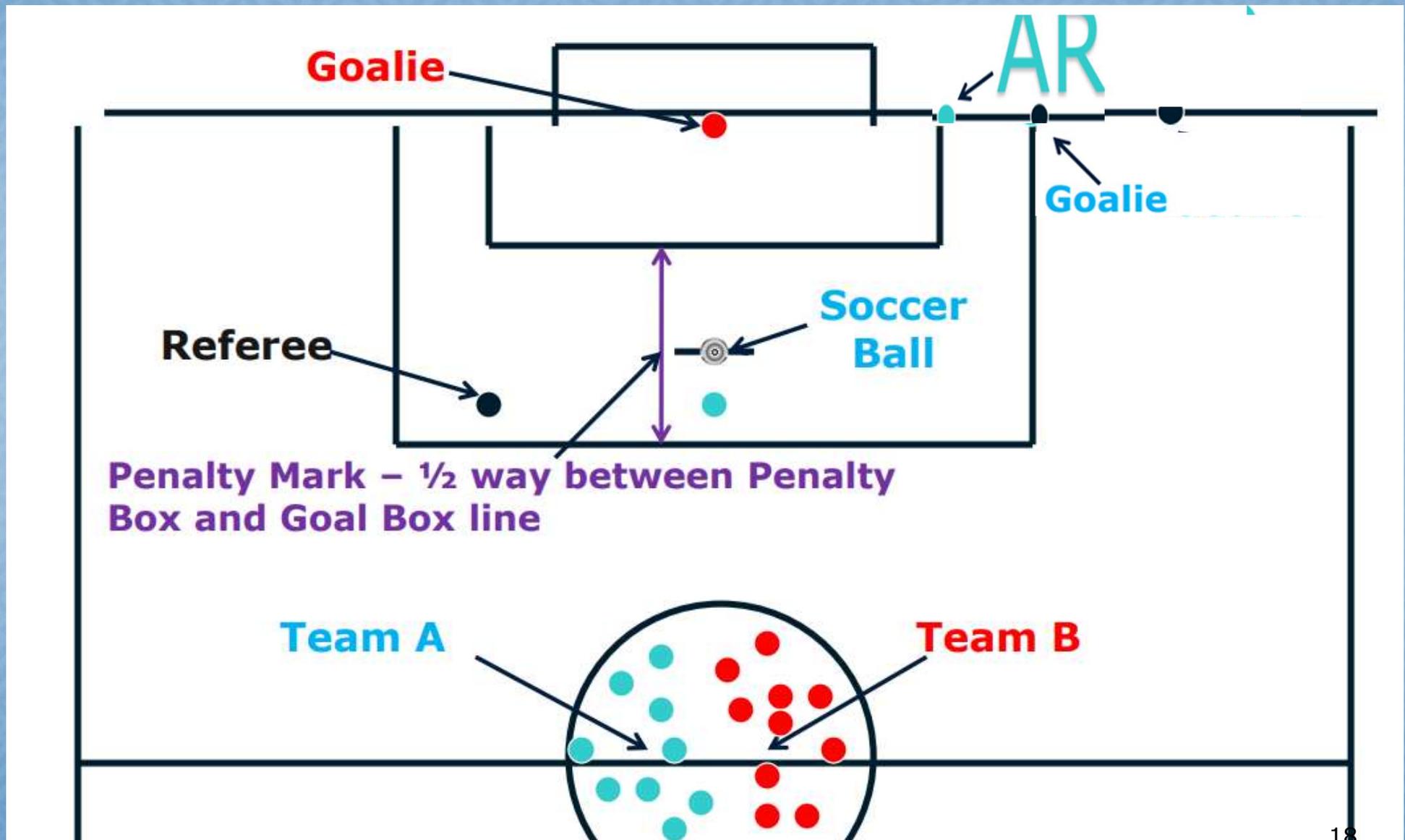
Goalkeeper Positions and Injury

- Goalkeeper must be on the goal line (at least one foot) and cannot move from that position until the ball is kicked. They can only move to side to side before the kick is taken.
- The goalkeeper who is the teammate of the kicker shall stand outside the penalty area at which the kicks are being taken, behind goal line, beyond the penalty area and behind the AR.

Goalkeeper Positions and Injury, cont'd.

- Once the goalkeeper is assigned for the taking of the penalty kicks to determine the winner of the match, they cannot be changed.
 - The exception is if a goalkeeper sustains an injury during the taking of the kicks and who, because of the injury, is unable to continue as goalkeeper; in this situation, they may be replaced by an eligible substitute.

Positions During Kicks from the Penalty Mark



Playoff Reminders

- You must be recertified for 2026.
- Be prepared, professionally dressed, and on time
 - 30 minutes prior to gametime
- 10 Minutes of waiting before forfeit for a 6pm weekday games; otherwise, 5 minutes
- Uniform and equipment check should be strictly enforced.
 - All parts of uniforms must be the right color.

Other Reminders

- "Slide tackles" are permitted for youth games; it is noted that they may often, but not always, result in a foul.
- No band-aids on ears--it will be assumed they are covering earrings.
- For U9 & 10, the goalie may not bounce the ball and kick it.
- U9 gets one do-over for throw-ins, U10 does not.
- U11 may not head the ball; U12 may head.

Questions?

