

MEMORANDUM

TO: CYSA Board of Directors, Ric Olivas, President CSAN, David Jones, SRA, Bob Martinez SYRA

FROM: John Murphy, Chairman

RE: Player Equipment

DATE: September 9, 2003

At its September 7, 2003, meeting the California Youth Soccer Association's Board of Directors made several significant decisions concerning the equipment players may wear, if but only if, in the opinion of the referee the equipment is not dangerous to the player wearing it or to any other player. The Board's decisions do not change the basic obligations of parents, coaches, and referees concerning player safety.

With respect to headgear, the Board decided to follow the positions adopted by FIFA as reported in the September 3, 2003, Memorandum from Alfred Kleinaitis, United States Soccer's Manager of Referee Development and Education. That memorandum reported that FIFA, in its circular # 863, stated: "FIFA notes that, under the 'Powers and Duties' of the referee in Law 5 – The Referee, he or she has the authority to ensure that the player's equipment meets the requirements of Law 4, which states that a player must not wear anything that is dangerous. [¶] Modern protective equipment such as headgear, facemasks, knee and arm protectors made of soft, lightweight, padded materials are not considered dangerous and are therefore *permitted*." (Emphasis added.) The word "permitted" does *not* mean mandatory or required. The referee, as well as the coach, parents, and player, continue to have responsibility for player safety ***and the referee continues to have the authority and the duty to not allow equipment that is dangerous to the player wearing the equipment or to any other player.***

The Board repealed PIM (Policy Interpretation Memorandum) 00-2 (Rev. 9/02) entitled "Players Use of Casts and Supportive Braces." The Board **did not** make any changes in the CYSA Constitutional provision, section

3:08:01, concerning orthopedic casts and splints. That section provides: “Players wearing orthopedic casts, air-splints or metal splints shall not be eligible to participate in any game.” Accordingly, CYSA’s position on player equipment is as follows:

- 1. Players may not wear orthopedic casts, air-splints or metal splints;**
- 2. Players may not wear any equipment that in the opinion of the referee is dangerous to the player wearing the equipment or any other player (note: Law 4’s prohibition against jewelry remains as it always has been);**

The following FIFA guidelines should be considered by referees in making equipment decisions:

- Look to the applicable rules of the competition authority.
- Inspect the equipment.
- Focus on the equipment itself – not how it might be improperly used, or whether it actually protects the player.
- Remember that the referee is the final word on whether equipment is dangerous.

The guidelines adopted by FIFA are discussed further in the March 7, 2003, Memorandum from Julie Ilacqua, US Soccer’s Managing Director of Federation Services, on Player Equipment. The memorandum is available on US Soccer’s website.