

## **IBSA Blind Football Temporary Concussion Substitution Policy**

### **Introduction**

Our aim is to protect and improve the health and welfare of all who play Blind and Partially Sighted (B1 & PS) Football. From the grassroots level to the international/elite level, we are committed to promoting B1&PS Football as a healthy physical activity. A key part of this is the prevention of injuries and developing how best to manage injuries of those playing B1&PS football.

Concussion assessment and management is an area of focus for B1&PS football.

### **Substitution protocol**

If a player sustains trauma to the head and is suspected of having experienced a concussion, the team must remove the player from the match for a medical evaluation by an adequately trained medical team official.

This substitution protocol is being implemented to allow a temporary concussion substitute (TCS) to replace the injured player whilst they are being evaluated. This new rule is only applicable for suspected concussions; all other non-concussive injuries must follow the standard substitution procedure in the IBSA Laws of the game.

### **Temporary Concussion Substitute (TCS)**

Implemented wording to the 'IBSA Laws of the Game – The Players'

- In the case of a suspected concussion, an approved medical team official may make a TCS to allow for an appropriate evaluation of the injured player.
- Match officials are permitted to stop play if a player is seriously injured and ensure that the player is removed from the field of play to be assessed by a medical team official.
- IBSA Classification Rules and Regulations apply at all time in relation to VI football.
- A TCS may play for a maximum of ten (10) minutes. Following this period of time, the TCS will either:
  - Leave the field of play and be replaced by the player initially withdrawn at next the available stoppage in play as determined by the referee; or
  - Remain on the pitch as a permanent replacement; or
  - Leave the field of play and the team will play with one (1) less player.
- If team have no substitutions, they may use a TCS but they will have to leave FOP after ten (10) minutes, whether the injured player returns or not.
- Player(s) may enter or leave the FOP at the next available stoppage in play as determined by the referee.

- Any sanctions awarded to a TCS will be recorded against the player on the match record sheet and respective impact on the team.

In the case of a suspected intentional misrepresentation (IM) of concussion, this will be dealt with by the IBSA Legal and Ethics Committee in line with the TCS policy.

## SCOPE

- The Temporary Concussion Substitution (TCS) rule has been adopted by IBSA for implementation at all official, sanctioned blind football and partially sighted football competitions from 1st January 2021.
- The TCS rules refer to a number of appendices, which form an integral part of the IBSA Rules and Regulations for B1&PS Football.
- These TCS rules apply to all athletes and athlete support personnel who are registered and/or licensed with, and/or participate in any events or competitions organised, authorised, recognised or sanctioned by IBSA.
- These TCS rules must be read in conjunction with all other applicable rules of B1&PS Football, including but not limited to the sport technical rules of IBSA. In the event of any conflict between these TCS rules and any other rules, the TCS rules shall take precedence.

## TCS Period

### Reference to 'IBSA Laws of the Game – Number of players'

#### Decision-making

- It is the responsibility of the athletes, athlete support personnel and medical team official(s) to familiarise themselves with all the requirements of these rules.
- The decision to make a TCS should be made by the named and approved medical team official, having clearly seen the injury and/or asked the match officials to describe the incidents if they saw it.

#### Number of substitutions

- A team may make a TCS to allow for the medical team official to carry out a head injury evaluation, even where they have no remaining substitutes and substitution opportunities.
- In the case of no remaining substitutes or substitution opportunities, and if the player being evaluated for a head injury is not cleared to return, the TCS must leave the field of play at the end of the ten (10) minute evaluation period.

#### Classification

- 'IBSA Classification Rules'<sup>1</sup>, 'IBSA Laws of the Game'<sup>2</sup> and 'IBSA Competition Rules'<sup>3</sup> shall always apply, without exception.

### Duration of the TCS period

- In keeping with the Head Injury Assessment (HIA) Protocol offered by World Rugby<sup>4</sup>, the TCS will be allowed to play for a maximum ten (10) minutes following the substitution.
- The TCS period begins once the injured player has left the field of play, 10 minutes non stopping clock kept by the referee. The TCS is replaced once the ball is out of play as close to the 10-minute period as possible.
- The temporary substitution will not count against the team's total number of allowed substitutions or substitution moments until the HIA has been completed.
- Following this period, the TCS will either:
  - Leave the field of play and be replaced by the player initially withdrawn at the next available stoppage in play as determined by the referee; or
  - Remain on the pitch as a permanent replacement; or
  - Leave the field of play and the team will play with one (1) less player.
- If the match ends before the evaluated player is cleared to return, the TCS must be marked on the match record sheet as a standard substitute.

### TCS Disciplinary Matters

- Any sanctions awarded to the TCS while in the match as a TCS will be recorded on the match record sheet against the player.
- If a player receives a red card while in the match as a TCS, the player must leave the field of play and the team will play with one (1) less player. Following the dismissal of the TCS, if the player being evaluated for a head injury is cleared to return, the player may re-enter the match, but the team will have to utilise a substitute. The team will still play with one (1) less player.

### Player Evaluation Outcome

- If the player being evaluated for a head injury is not cleared to return, the TCS must be one of the players remaining in the match and the team will have used a substitution and substitution moment. The TCS cannot leave the pitch at this stage for another substitute

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<sup>1</sup> IBSA - Classification Rules – <https://www.ibsasport.org/classification>

<sup>2</sup> IBSA – Laws of the Game – <https://www.ibsasport.org/sports/football/rules/>

<sup>3</sup> IBSA – Competition Rules – <https://www.ibsasport.org/sports/football/rules/>

<sup>4</sup> World Rugby - Head Injury Assessment Protocol (World Rugby) - [http://playerwelfare.worldrugby.org/content/getfile.php?h=030cc0e5445023d2887628100863ace2&p=downloads/concussion/HIA\\_Protocol\\_Detailed\\_Description\\_Landscape\\_EN.pdf](http://playerwelfare.worldrugby.org/content/getfile.php?h=030cc0e5445023d2887628100863ace2&p=downloads/concussion/HIA_Protocol_Detailed_Description_Landscape_EN.pdf)

instead. If the team management decides to remove the TCS after this period, this will count as an additional substitution and an additional substitution moment.

- If the player being evaluated has received clearance to return to the match, that player may re-enter at any stoppage of play as determined by the referee and must replace the original TCS, who will remain an available substitute if all substitution have not been used.

### **Athlete's responsibilities**

- Participating in Head Injury Assessment (HIA) protocol in good faith;
- Ensuring, when appropriate, that adequate information related to health conditions is provided and/or made available to team medical personnel and IBSA medical personnel.
- Co-operating with any investigation concerning the violation of the TCS policy.

### **Athlete's support personnel responsibilities**

- Being knowledgeable of and complying with all applicable policies, rules and processes established by these TCS rules.
- Using their influence on athlete's and other staff to foster a positive and collaborative attitude and communication.

### **The Referee (powers and duties) - Reference to Law 5**

- Allows play to continue until the ball is out of play if a player is only slightly injured.
- Stops play if a player is seriously injured to ensure that the player is removed from the field of play (FOP).

### **Liabilities of match officials**

A referee or other match official is not held liable for:

- Any kind of injury suffered by a player, official or spectator.

Such decisions may include a decision:

- To stop or not to stop play to allow for an injured player to be removed from the field of play for treatment.
- To require an injured player to be removed from the FOP for treatment.

### **Intentional misrepresentation of concussion**

### **Disciplinary Offence**

- It is a disciplinary offence for an athlete to intentionally misrepresent (either by act or by omission) his or her skills and/or abilities during a Head Injury Assessment and/or at any other point after the injury. This disciplinary offence is referred to as 'Intentional Misrepresentation'.
- It is a disciplinary offence for any athlete or athlete support personnel to assist an athlete in committing Intentional Misrepresentation or to be in any other way involved in any other type of complicity involving Intentional Misrepresentation, including but not limited to covering up Intentional Misrepresentation or disrupting any part of the Head Injury Assessment process.

### **Protest relating to Intentional Misrepresentation**

- Only an official representative of an IBSA member, a head of delegation or IBSA itself may make a protest relating to Intentional Misrepresentation.
- Protests must be communicated within 1 hour after the final whistle to the IBSA Technical Delegate.

### **Provisional Suspension**

- If IBSA commences disciplinary proceedings against an athlete or athlete support personnel in respect to Intentional Misrepresentation (and/or complicity involving Intentional Misrepresentation), IBSA will impose a provisional suspension from all competitions until an investigation is conducted and resolved. In consequence:
  - An athlete or athlete support personnel who is subject to a provisional suspension may not, during the period of provisional suspension, participate in any capacity in any competition, event or other activity organised, convened, authorised or recognised by IBSA.
  - An athlete or athlete support personnel who receives notice of a provisional suspension may apply to IBSA for any provisional suspension to be lifted on the basis that facts exist that make it clearly unfair, in all of the circumstances, for a provisional suspension to be imposed. This application must be sent to the IBSA Technical Delegate.
  - If IBSA imposes a provisional suspension, it should ensure there can be an expedited hearing no later than 30 days after the date of imposition of the provisional suspension if the athlete or athlete support personnel requests such a hearing.

### **Investigation**

- In respect of any allegation relating to Intentional Misrepresentation, a hearing will be convened by IBSA to determine whether the athlete or athlete support personnel has committed Intentional Misrepresentation.
- Investigation of potential Intentional Misrepresentation can include, but is not limited to:
  - Interviews with the athletes and the athlete support personnel involved;
  - Video-analysis of records done during the Technical Assessment and/or other matches (in this or other competitions).

## Consequences

- The consequences to be applied to an athlete or athlete support personnel who is found to have been guilty of Intentional Misrepresentation and/or complicity involving Intentional Misrepresentation will be one or more of the following:
- Disqualification from all events at the competition at which the Intentional Misrepresentation occurred, and any subsequent competitions at which the Athlete competed;
- Suspension from participation in B1 and/or PS Football competitions for a specified period of time ranging from one (1) to four (4) years; and
- Publication of their names and suspension period.
- Any athlete or athlete support personnel who is found to have been guilty of Intentional Misrepresentation and/or complicity involving Intentional Misrepresentation on more than one occasion will be suspended from participation in any competition for a period of time from four (4) years to life.

Any consequences to be applied to teams, which include an athlete or athlete support personnel who is found to have been guilty of Intentional Misrepresentation and/or complicity involving Intentional Misrepresentation, will be at the discretion of IBSA.

## Discipline

**‘IBSA Competition Rules – Disciplinary Matters’ applies with the exception of Independent Medical Person(s)**

IBSA may, at its own discretion, appoint up to two (2) medical professionals to the Legal and Ethics Committee, to provide additional medical advice. These additional members shall be subject to the same conditions as with other appointed committee members to ensure impartially.

## Appeals

**‘IBSA Competition Rules – Appeals’ applies with the exception of Independent Medical Person(s)**

IBSA Football Committee

September 2020