

Niagara Soccer Association – April 2015

Referee Guidelines for Administering Water Breaks

Player safety is our primary concern; consider taking Water breaks in these game situations:

- It is a hot day.
- Though the game is at night, it was hot during the day.
- The day is very humid.
- One team is short of substitutes, so no rest for players.
- Request by coaches.

Procedure:

1. Before the game starts – decide you will take water breaks; equal water breaks in each half.
2. Speak with and advise both Coaches, not just the team captain.
3. Instruct Coaches:
 - a. Players do not leave the field; they take water on the side line (touch line).
 - b. Water bottles are not thrown onto the field; water is handed to the players.
4. The referee decides when to take water break.
5. Use a regular stop in play – such as when the ball has left the field for a throw-in, goal kick or kick-off. Do not use a direct free kick, indirect free kick or corner kick to take the water break.
6. Blow your whistle and announce clearly: “Water Break 2 minutes!”
7. Continue the clock; do not stop your watch.
8. Use your whistle to end the water break and call players back at 1 minute.
9. Limit the water break to 2 minutes, maximum.
10. Do not allow for time wasting and excessive coaching. Use your whistle and your voice; be firm about getting players back into the game. Set up for restart of play quickly.

Coaches can substitute players, if the stop in play would have allowed substitutions to take place. Manage the substitution procedure in the normal manner at the conclusion of the water break, but, before play is restarted. Restart the game.

Also, use the water break for you to have drink. It’s not just for the players!