



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

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Subject: **Player-Coaches**

Date: November 11, 2008

Nothing in the Laws of the Game prevents a player from coaching or a coach from playing. Indeed, this combination of roles is not uncommon in teams below the national professional competitive level (both in this country and elsewhere) and particularly in senior amateur play. For purposes of these guidelines, the term “coach” will include any team official (coach, assistant coach or trainer, for example). The term “player” includes being a substitute or substituted player.

The most important requirement for this arrangement is that all members of the officiating team must be aware of it. Merely mentioning it to the referee is not sufficient. As a player, the name of the player-coach must be shown on the team roster in the section used to list players. As a coach, the name of the player-coach must also be shown on the team roster in the section used to list team officials. If the roster has no separate section for team officials, the name of the player-coach must include a separate written designation as “coach” (or “assistant coach” or “trainer”) next to the player’s name. Players not clearly designated as a team official may not act at any time as a team official.

The following guidelines apply to the referee’s authority as regards a designated player-coach:

- When off the field and intending to act as a team official, a player-coach must change out of or wear something which covers the team jersey. Continuing to wear and have visible other parts of the player uniform (e.g., socks, cleated shoes, shorts) is permissible. A player-coach may not act as a team official while visibly wearing a team jersey.

