

BOARDING

Indoor Soccer
(Revised) August 24/06

Introduction:

- Over the years, there has been controversy surrounding the application and interpretation of the Boarding Rule in indoor soccer.
- It continues to be a high profile aspect of the Indoor game.
- Of all the fouls that may occur in the indoor game, boarding has the potential to be the most severe.
- Of all the fouls that may occur in the indoor game, boarding has the potential to lead to the most serious injuries.
- In order to address this potential for problem correctly, the referee must have
 1. Technical knowledge of the Rule.
 2. Knowledge of the practical interpretation of the Rule.
 3. A firm and decisive application of the Rule.

Knowledge of the Rule:

Definition:

“Any penal offence or action, which propels an opponent forcefully into the perimeter wall in a manner which endangers the safety of that opponent.”

Breakdown:

1. “Any penal offence or action, which propels an opponent”:

- The initial action, which causes the “propelling”, must be a penal offence according to Rule 12 of the **Rules of Indoor Arena Soccer**.
- This action becomes an offence if it is done in a manner, which is either careless, reckless or uses excessive force. It has nothing to do with intent.

2. “Forcefully into the perimeter wall.”

- The result of the initial action causes the opponent to temporarily lose balance or lose control of their movements.
- The momentum of the opponent causes impact into the perimeter wall in an uncontrolled fashion.
- The proximity of the perimeter wall does not allow the opponent the time or space to recover from the initial action.

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3. *“In a manner which endangers the safety of an opponent”.*

- All players are aware that the perimeter walls (boards) are present, when playing.
- There is a reasonable awareness that the boards, as a result of their sturdy construction, can present a significant potential for minor, serious and life threatening injuries.
- The challenging player does not respect the safety of their opponent.

Interpretation of the Rule:

Understanding the concept from a practical perspective:

1. Create a general mental picture of a “classic” boarding incident:

- A player challenges for the ball in a tackle against an opponent who is dribbling the ball alongside the perimeter wall. The challenging player misses the ball and his body carries through into the opponent. The resulting impact of the secondary action sends the opponent “crashing” into the perimeter wall.

2. Now let’s have a look at some less obvious examples.

- A challenging player goes for the ball in a tackle, however, mis-times the tackle and trips the opponent. The opponent loses balance and crashes into the perimeter wall. **(Careless)**.
- A challenging player is following an opponent who is chasing a loose ball towards the perimeter wall. As both players approach the vicinity of the perimeter wall, the challenging player gives a small push or slight nudge to the opponent who is not anticipating this contact. This action causes the opponent to crash into the perimeter wall. **(Reckless)**.
- A player “body checks” an opponent whom is positioned adjacent to or near the perimeter wall. The opponent, whom is between the player and the perimeter wall, is then forcefully propelled into it. **(Excessive Force)**

Determining if a game situation constitutes “BOARDING”:

- As the referee, ask yourself 3 questions:
 1. Was the initial action, which propelled the opponent into the perimeter wall, a penal offence according to rule 12?
 2. Was the opponent propelled forcefully into the perimeter wall?
 3. Was the safety of the opponent endangered?
- If we have answered yes to all 3 of these questions, then the attacking player must be shown the Red Card and dismissed for Boarding.

Considerations:

Be aware of reacting too harshly to an opponent having contact with the boards.

CONSIDERATION # 1:

A number of penal fouls may result in an opponent having contact with the perimeter wall. The result of the initial action, may not, however, be considered Boarding.

- An example: A player trips an opponent while genuinely attempting to play the ball. The result of the trip sends the opponent towards the perimeter wall, where they make contact. The opponent when making contact with the boards is not, however, dangerously out of control with their body, movements or control. Clearly the safety of the opponent was not in question. Although the resulting penal offence resulted in board contact by the opponent, **DO NOT CALL BOARDING**.

CONSIDERATION # 2:

There are still some forms of permissible contact (i.e. shoulder to shoulder contact while challenging for the ball whilst it is in playing distance). This is charging. There could still be legal contact (charging) that forces an opponent to mildly contact the perimeter wall.

- An example: A player while challenging for the ball, contacts the opponent shoulder to shoulder. This action, which is neither careless, reckless or uses excessive force, may still cause the opponent to contact the perimeter wall without jeopardizing the player's safety. As a result there would be no endangerment to the opponent.
DO NOT CALL BOARDING.

CONSIDERATION # 3:

There are situations where the challenging player will cleanly win the ball from an opponent and there is no contact, however, the opponent's own momentum still carries them into the perimeter wall. As the initial action was not a penal offence, this would not be considered Boarding.

- An example: A player makes a strong, yet clean tackle on an opponent who is dribbling quickly near the proximity of the perimeter wall. The challenging player cleanly gets the ball and makes no contact with the opponent. The strong challenge by the attacking player causes the ball to immediately stop or move to the side and results in the opponent's own momentum propelling him into the perimeter wall.
DO NOT CALL BOARDING.

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CONSIDERATION # 4:

There will be examples of opponents whom are “legally contacted” or are on the receiving end of a “simple foul” that when the contact takes place will embellish the incident to make it appear much worse than it actually was. This is referred to as “**Simulating Action**” and is designed to trick the Referee into giving the attacking player a much harsher sanction.

- An example: The opponent wilfully exaggerates the severity of the contact and throws himself or herself into the perimeter wall or wilfully slaps their hands or slams their arms into the perimeter wall.
DO NOT CALL BOARDING.

Application of the Rule:

When to apply the Rule:

- Must be applied consistently and universally, regardless of age or level of game.

What is the correct application of this Rule?

- If ball is still in play, blow the whistle and stop the play.
- Show the Red Card.
- Dismiss the offending player.

How to apply the Rule (Referee Mechanics):

- Strong Whistle (loud and long).
- Immediately sprint to the incident.
- Use strong body language.
- Remain alert for any retaliation.

Conclusion:

- Often these incidents are preventable. Setting your level of acceptance early and strong man-management skills could be an ounce of prevention. Generally, players do not just “board” opponents “out of the blue”.
- Maintain a very low tolerance for any infraction, however minor, when play is in close proximity to the perimeter wall.