



HEART
OF
FOOTBALL

EUROPEAN CLUB ASSOCIATION

THE MANDATORY RELEASE RULES AND FIFA'S UNILATERAL CHANGES TO THE INTERNATIONAL MATCH CALENDAR

MAIN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



I. INTRODUCTION

As ECA Members are aware, according to FIFA rules, the release of players to national teams is, as a general rule, mandatory on the dates included in the international match calendar (**IMC**). The IMC therefore plays a fundamental role in the organisation of, and articulation between national team football and club competitions.

The 2018-2024 IMC was the result of an agreement between FIFA and the main football stakeholders, ECA included.¹ The agreed IMC is composed of nine release windows with two match dates (“double headers”) with release periods of nine days per window. The COVID-19 pandemic has recently forced the stakeholders to agree to some amendments in order to adjust the IMC, such as the agreement to create triple headers for UEFA national team matches during several release windows. Even though these amendments have placed an increased burden on players and clubs, ECA, as well as other stakeholders, has always adopted a constructive attitude towards FIFA and the Confederations and accepted compromised solutions for the greater good of the game, provided that those solutions were balanced and did not unreasonably place excessive burdens on clubs and players.

This time, however, FIFA has issued a decision regarding the IMC which ECA cannot accept. In complete disregard to the clubs’ interests and the principles of the IMC, the Bureau of the FIFA Council decided on 7 August 2021 to extend, at CONMEBOL’s request, the next two international windows in September and October 2021 to have a duration of eleven days, instead of nine, during which three matches would be played.² This decision, which was taken unilaterally by FIFA and against the explicit objection of ECA and the rest of the stakeholders, means that clubs will almost definitely be prevented from fielding their released players during the weekend following the end of the September and October windows. Moreover, FIFA has compounded the adverse impact of that decision by refusing to extend for those windows the temporary exceptions regarding quarantine (i.e. no obligation to release players in case quarantine requirements apply), which appears entirely unreasonable.

On account of the above, ECA has firmly expressed its objection to FIFA’s decision and has urged FIFA to review its position. ECA will not accept that a governing body like FIFA abuses its regulatory function in order to place its commercial interests and those of its member associations above the physical wellbeing of players and legitimate sporting interests of clubs.

¹ See <https://bit.ly/2VORevK>

² See [FIFA Circular no. 1766](#) of 13 August 2021.

The above notwithstanding, at present, it appears unlikely that FIFA will accept to change its decision. In case it does not, ECA will have to consider what actions it will take in the short, medium and long term to ensure that this situation does not happen again. In the meantime, however, clubs will have to decide how to respond to the call ups from national teams for September and October 2021. We therefore considered that it would be important that all ECA member clubs have as much information as possible regarding the application of the FIFA rules and requirements on mandatory release of players, so that they are in the best possible position to take the decisions they deem in their best interests.

We have therefore prepared the Q&A below which will hopefully be informative and of use to our members. You will also find attached Annexe 1 of the Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players (**RSTP**), together with its commentary, for your ease of reference. For the sake of clarity, the Q&A below are only for informational purposes and do not constitute legal advice. However, should any club require specific legal advice, we invite you to contact the ECA Legal Department at legal@ecaeurope.com

II. QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. *Is there a general obligation for clubs to release players for both triple headers in the September and October International Windows?*

In principle, **yes** (Art. 1 Annex 1 RSTP). Even if FIFA's decision was made unilaterally and against the express will of ECA and other stakeholders, if that decision is not judicially challenged and reversed, it will stand and the IMC will be deemed modified accordingly. As the release is mandatory for all dates in the IMC and as the IMC now includes these new dates, the release is in principle mandatory (see below for further information on this).

2. *Is there an obligation for the players to comply with call-ups for both triple headers in the September and October International Windows?*

In principle, **yes** (Art. 3(1) Annex 1 RSTP). Players are generally obliged to respond affirmatively when called by their National Association (**NA**). The above notwithstanding, please note that the [Commentary to the RSTP](#) provides that:

*Once a player has been called up to play for his national team, he basically has to comply with this summons. **Should he wish not to be called up for a certain match or matches or for a certain period of time, he must inform the association of which he is a national, in writing, of his intention before being called up. Furthermore, only the player himself is entitled to renounce representing his national team. This declaration shall be submitted by the player to the association concerned in writing.***

It therefore appears that, if a player informs his NA prior to being called that he does not wish to be called-up for a particular international window or that he renounces to the national team, he may not be under an obligation to report. Clubs who are considering discussing in good faith with their players the possibility of them not attending, or only partially attending, the September and/or October windows should consider this possibility. For instance, the Player could agree with his NA that he only participates in one of the three matches, or that he returns to the club before the end date of the international window (e.g., Wednesday instead of Thursday).

However, please note that if – despite his expressed wish not to be called up – the NA still calls the player and he fails to report, the player will be ineligible to represent the club for any match occurring during the mandatory release period (for further details see question 14 below).

3. *When do the NAs have to issue the call up under the rules?*

NAs wishing to call up a player must notify the player in writing at least 15 days before the first day of the international window (Art. 3(2) of Annexe 1 RSTP). The deadlines for NAs to call up players for the relevant September and October windows are respectively 15 August and 19 September.

It is important to note that the NA of the player has to notify the call-up directly to the player and club, and cannot do so via a third party, e.g., the NA of the club. Thus, for instance, if the Mexican FA informs the Italian FA of the call-up of Hirving Lozano within the 15-day deadline, but the Italian FA only notifies the player and SSC Napoli of the call-up outside such deadline, it is our opinion that the call-up should be deemed late.

4. *What can clubs do if a call up is not timely issued/is deemed late?*

If an NA does not respect the 15-day deadline when calling-up a player, the club will not be obliged to release him. Indeed, the Commentary to the RSTP explicitly states that:

*An association calling up a player must notify the player and his club in writing at least 15 days before the day of the match. **The club for which the player is registered is not obliged to release the player if this deadline is not complied with.***

Therefore, the club simply needs to refuse the call up. It is important to note that, in such a case, the player will also not be obliged to travel with the national team. Therefore, if he does it against the club's will, it may entail a breach of contract by the player and the club may act accordingly.

5. *Sometimes NAs issue a “pre-call” and only later the definitive call-up. Is this valid? How does it work in that case?*

This must be assessed on a case-by-case basis and we invite clubs to contact the ECA administration in this circumstance. In principle, what matters for the purpose of the rules is whether or not the player and the club were timely notified (i.e. 15-day deadline) that the player was being called up to join his national team. Therefore, whether the notification is called “pre-call” or “definitive call” should not be material.

However, it may be that sometimes any such “pre-call” will raise doubts as to whether the player is definitely being called up to attend the relevant matches (e.g., the letter simply puts him on notice that he *may* be called up but is unclear as to whether he will effectively be called up). In that case, on the basis of the principles of good faith and legal certainty, it is our opinion that the club may have good grounds to argue that the release is not mandatory (assuming that the NA only finally calls up the player outside the relevant deadline), as these so-called “pre-call-ups” have no regulatory value for the purposes of the RSTP.

6. *When do players have to leave to join their national team? When do players have to start travel back?*

Normally (i.e. in the standard 9-day international windows), players must start their travel to join the national team no later than Monday morning and start their travel back to the club no later than Wednesday morning following the end of the international window (Arts. 1(4) and 1(7) Annex 1 RSTP). However, given the FIFA decision to extend by two days the September and October windows, there will probably be an amendment to the Annexe 1 RSTP which presumably will entail that players must start their travel back to the club no later than Friday morning.

Consequently, the relevant dates for the September and October windows are:

- For the September window, players must start their travel to the NA on Monday 30 August 2021 and their travel back to the club on Friday 10 September.
- For the October window, players must start their travel to the NA on Monday 4 October and their travel back to the club on Friday 15 October.

In that regard, it is also worth mentioning that players complying with a call-up to participate in the CONMEBOL qualifiers shall resume duty with their European clubs no later than 48 hours

after the end of the release period.³ As such, players must report back to their clubs no later than Saturday 11 September and Saturday 16 October.

7. *What happens if players do not return to the club on time?*

In case a player does not resume duty with his club by the 48-hour deadline, FIFA will, upon the club's request, rule that the next time the player is called up by his association the period of release will be shortened by two days.⁴ In case of a repeated offense, FIFA may even ban the association from calling up players for the subsequent date of the IMC. Clubs should not hesitate to file complaints (and inform ECA about it) against NAs in those circumstances.

8. *Are NAs obliged to provide travel details? What happens if they do not?*

Yes, clubs have the right to receive from the NA the player's outbound and return schedule ten days before the start of the release period (Art. 1(9) Annexe 1 RSTP). In addition, as mentioned above, the NA shall ensure that players are able to return to their clubs on time when making and communicating travel arrangements.⁵

The RSTP are silent as to what happens if the NA does not inform the club about the player's travel arrangements. It is our opinion that, in such a case, there *may* be grounds for a club to refuse the release of the player or for the latter to fail to report. However, if a club faces such scenario, it is advisable to directly contact the ECA administration for a more detailed assessment of the circumstances.

9. *Can clubs refuse to release a player if he is injured?*

In principle, **yes**. Article 4 of Annexe 1 RSTP provides the scenario where a player is unable to comply with a call-up in case of injury or illness. Nevertheless, the player is obliged to undergo a medical examination if the NA so wishes.

However, it appears that, in that event, the player may still be ineligible to play for the club (for more details see question 14 below). Indeed, the Commentary to the RSTP also provides that the restriction on playing

*is extended by five days if the player, **for any reason whatsoever (eg the player was injured or the club did not release him)**, did not wish to or was unable to comply with the call-up.*

³ See Article 1(8) of Annexe 1 RSTP.

⁴ See Article 1(10) of Annexe 1 RSTP.

⁵ See Article 1(9) of Annexe 1 RSTP

10. *Can Clubs refuse to release players in case players would have to self-isolate and/or there is a period of quarantine?*

FIFA refused to extend the temporary exceptions regarding the quarantine periods for the September and October windows, which allowed the clubs to refuse to release players where quarantines would apply in the place where the match would take place or at the location of his club or if other travel restrictions existed.

However, ECA's firm view is that, even if FIFA has decided not to extend the COVID temporary exceptions, it would be unreasonable for clubs to be forced to release players in circumstances where there is a mandatory period of quarantine or self-isolation of at least five 5 days. In fact, Clubs could argue that (i) their duty of care as employer would require that the club would instruct the player not to travel (particularly if this is consistent with their domestic law) and (ii) if the player is unavailable to immediately resume his activity with the club, this would effectively correspond to a *de facto* release period which is longer than that which the club must comply with.

In that case, we consider that FIFA would likely not be minded to impose any consequences on the clubs (particularly for fear of public opinion backlash) and, even if it did, the clubs would have a good case to challenge any such consequences.

11. *As ECA clubs are aware, FIFA and ECA have entered into an MoU with various rights and obligations for each party. One of the undertakings made by FIFA was not to change the concept of the IMC without ECA's consent. By deciding to extend the September and October 2021 windows by 2 days and transform double headers into triple headers without ECA's consent, FIFA may have breached the MoU. Can Clubs validly refuse to release players on the basis that FIFA is in breach of the MoU with ECA?*

In the opinion of ECA, **it is likely that clubs would still be required to release players under the FIFA rules even if FIFA's decision entails a breach of the MoU with ECA.**

The FIFA decision to extend the September and October windows will be incorporated as part of Annexe 1 of the September 2021 edition of the RSTP. With that in mind, the RSTP explicitly provides that the release rules are binding for all associations and clubs (Art. 1(4) RSTP). As such, the mandatory nature of the release rules provided in Annexe 1 does not depend on FIFA's compliance with the MoU, or indeed its validity. It is rather based on all clubs' obligation to comply with the provisions of the RSTP by virtue of being part of the football "pyramid", the failure of which may lead FIFA to impose sanctions on clubs.

The above notwithstanding, if clubs are minded not to release their players (or at least not to release them for all 3 matches in each window), the breach of the FIFA-ECA MoU should be used by the clubs as part of their line of defence against any potential sanctions being imposed upon them. Please reach out to the ECA Administration in case you require further detail in this regard.

12. *In case the NA has complied with all requirements to call up the player and none of the possibilities to reject the call addressed above applies, what would you recommend as a practical step for the club to be able to keep the player (or at least have him return before the end of the window)?*

Agreement with the players to request not being called-up

In our view, one practical alternative which could be considered is for the club to try to agree with its called-up players that they request to their NA not to call them (or to drop them from the call-up in case it has already been issued) for certain match(es) (e.g., the third match in the September and October windows). When approaching their players, clubs could seek to base their request with reference to what has been agreed by all stakeholders in terms of IMC (i.e. 9-day release periods, not 11-day release periods) and the fact that, should they stay the entire release period, this will mean that they will be unavailable for club duty, which is manifestly unfair (particularly considering that, as players are aware, it is the club who pays for salaries and all other benefits). We would expect NAs to be more open to consider requests that come from the players themselves.

Having said this, we are fully aware that this type of discussion and arrangements between clubs and their players is not an easy one.

Seek to engage in a discussion/negotiation with the NA

Given the abusive/unilateral manner in which FIFA has accepted CONMEBOL's request to extend the window to 11 days (which, according to our current analysis, entails a breach of the FIFA-ECA MoU), the fact that NAs are aware that players will miss club matches and the on-going COVID restrictions, we believe that clubs would be justified in responding to any call up for that extended release window by questioning the NA about the enforceability of any mandatory release beyond the agreed 9-day release windows and see if this can trigger a negotiation with the NA about some flexibility with regards to certain players.

We would suggest that you would get in touch with the ECA Administration to discuss what the specific content of such a letter should be.

13. *If all rules/requirements are complied with by NAs to call up the players, what can be the consequences for clubs, if any, in case they refuse to release players?*

In spite clubs not being direct members of FIFA, the FIFA Statutes and regulations provide that FIFA may impose sanctions on clubs which act in breach of Annexe 1 RSTP (Art. 6 Annexe 1 RSTP). In theory, all sanctions set out in Art. 6 FIFA Disciplinary Code could be imposed. However, considering the public positioning that FIFA has been adopting in relation to COVID-19 (health & safety first), it would be surprising (although it cannot be excluded) if FIFA would impose any significant sanctions on clubs/players, in particular in case legitimate arguments are presented as to why a player/club rejected to comply with a call-up/release. As such, it is expected that any sanction would range between a warning, a reprimand and/or a modest fine.

In addition, please kindly note that some NAs may also provide for their own set of sanctions in the national regulations in case a club refuses to release a player during a mandatory release period. As such, clubs should also be wary of the national regulatory framework in that regard. Indeed, it may be that, in some cases, both FIFA and the NA will have competence to sanction a club for a breach of their respective release rules. For instance, in case a Portuguese club refuses to release a Portuguese player, besides FIFA, the Portuguese FA may also issue sanctions against such Portuguese club.

14. *Are there any other consequences besides sanctions if clubs refuse to release players?*

Article 5 of Annexe 1 RSTP provides that:

*A player who has been called up by his association for one of its representative teams is, unless otherwise agreed by the relevant association, **not entitled to play for the club with which he is registered during the period for which he has been released or should have been released pursuant to the provisions of this annexe, plus an additional period of five days.***

As such, the most important consequence of not releasing a player for a mandatory release period is not so much the sanctions to be potentially imposed by FIFA (which as mentioned we would expect to be very mild, if any), but the fact that the relevant player will become ineligible to participate for the club. That is to say, if a club fields a player who should have been released in any match occurring during the release period or the additional 5-day period, then there is a risk that the club could be declared to have forfeited the match (see Art. 22 FIFA Disciplinary Code).

15. *In case a club were to field a player during the release period or the additional 5-day period, what would the process of declaring a player ineligible likely be at domestic level?*

It is important to note that the forfeiture declaration will not be made directly by FIFA but rather by the NA/league. We would expect that the following process would be followed:

- A club fields a non-released player in a match occurring during the release period or the additional 5-day period.
- Even if FIFA could pursue *ex officio* such an event (see Article 22(4) Disciplinary Code), it is unlikely that FIFA will exercise such power and any investigation usually starts when FIFA becomes aware of a player's potential ineligibility following a complaint lodged by a third party, usually the opposing club or another club in the same league.
- Once FIFA receives the complaint, it will request information from the NA, the player and the club involved in the non-release. In particular, it will make sure that:
 - the member association called up the player on time (ie within the 15-day deadline)⁶; and
 - the player participated in a match when he was ineligible (ie any match occurring during the release period or the additional 5-day period).

In case FIFA confirms the above points, it will instruct the relevant NA to declare the match forfeited by the club which fielded the ineligible player, which the NA should in principle comply with. However, in certain countries, the league and not the NA is in charge of organising the national championship, which may include retaining disciplinary competence over the competition. Therefore, the league would be the actual body which would have to execute FIFA's order to declare the match forfeited. However, the leagues are, strictly speaking, outside the jurisdiction of the FIFA Disciplinary Code.⁷

Consequently, in principle only in cases where the league is under the jurisdiction of the NA could FIFA force the league, via the NA, to declare the match forfeited. In case the league is not a member of the NA or under its jurisdiction, it is unclear which the consequences will be in case the league refuses to comply with the order for the match to be forfeited.

⁶ See Article 3(2) of Annexe 1 RSTP

⁷ See Article 3 of the Code.

16. *In case a club were to field a player during the release period or the additional 5-day period, what would the process of declaring a player ineligible likely be at European Competition level?*

Whether a player who is not release by his club is eligible or not to participate in European club competitions during a mandatory release period or the additional 5-day period is a matter of debate. In particular, because Article 44 of the UEFA Club Competitions Regulations, which provides for the eligibility of players to participate, only states that:

*Each player must be duly **registered with their national association as playing for the club concerned** in accordance with the association's own rules and those of FIFA, notably the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players*

In other words, such article speaks of the RSTP in the context of the registration of a player with the club only, and it does not mention anything about the eligibility of players which have not complied with a call-up.

Consequently, it is our opinion that it will be UEFA who will have to interpret its regulations and come to a conclusion as to whether or not a player who has been called up is ineligible to play in the UEFA Club Competitions (UCCs) during the release period and/or the additional 5-day period and whether fielding the player should lead the match being forfeited under the applicable UEFA rules. In that regard, please note that, because of the FIFA decision, the release period of the September and October 2021 international windows will end on Thursday only. Therefore, because of the additional 5-day period, in case a club refuses to release a player, the ineligibility period would extend until the Tuesday of the following week and thus, it may affect UCC matches.

17. *In case the club decides not to release the player regardless of whatever consequences may apply, how should it go about it in communicating its decision and defending its position?*

As mentioned in our response to Question n. 12 (second part), we believe that the manner in which FIFA took its decision to extend the release windows to 11 days for CONMEBOL, the consequences that will arise to clubs in connection thereto (chiefly losing players for important matches) and the current COVID-related restrictions, provide useful grounds to mount what could be perceived as a legitimate position which could hopefully be treated more leniently.

We would again recommend that you would reach out to the ECA Administration to discuss this in more detail.

18. Are clubs entitled to any type of compensation for releasing players?

In principle, **no**. Article 2(1) of Annexe 1 RSTP explicitly states that clubs are not entitled to financial compensation. The above notwithstanding, a direct result of the MoU, two programmes were introduced: the Club Benefits Programme (CBP) and the Club Protection Programme (CPP).

The CBP essentially provides for a limited financial compensation on the basis of a pre-determined formula to the clubs that release players to final tournaments. You can access the rules of the FIFA programme [here](#) and an ECA summary [here](#).

For its part, the CPP provides for a compensation mechanism in case of an injury sustained by a player whilst with his national team which makes him unavailable for club service for a certain period of time. You can access important information on the CPP [here](#) and an ECA summary [here](#).

Finally, it is also important to note that clubs are responsible for insuring release players against illness and accident during the entire period of his release. This cover must also extend to any injuries sustained by the player during the international match(es) for which he was released.

1 Principles for men's football

1.

Clubs are obliged to release their registered players to the representative teams of the country for which the player is eligible to play on the basis of his nationality if they are called up by the association concerned. Any agreement between a player and a club to the contrary is prohibited.

2.

The release of players under the terms of paragraph 1 of this article is mandatory for all international windows listed in the international match calendar (cf. paragraphs 3 and 4 below) as well as for the final competitions of the FIFA World Cup™, the FIFA Confederations Cup and the championships for "A" representative teams of the confederations, subject to the relevant association being a member of the organising confederation.

3.

After consultation with the relevant stakeholders, FIFA publishes the international match calendar for the period of four or eight years. It will include all international windows for the relevant period (cf. paragraph 4 below). Following the publication of the international match calendar only the final competitions of the FIFA World Cup™, the FIFA Confederations Cup and the championships for "A" representative teams of the confederations will be added.

4.

An international window is defined as a period of nine days starting on a Monday morning and ending on Tuesday night the following week (subject to the temporary exceptions below), which is reserved for representative teams' activities. During any international window a maximum of two matches may be played by each representative team (subject to the temporary exceptions below), irrespective of whether these matches are qualifying matches for an international tournament or friendlies. The pertinent matches can be scheduled any day as from Wednesday during the international window, provided that a minimum of two full calendar days are left between two matches (e.g. Thursday/Sunday or Saturday/Tuesday).

- i. During the international windows scheduled for March 2021 and September 2021, for associations affiliated to UEFA:

- a) the international windows are extended by one day; and
 - b) a maximum of three matches may be played by each representative team.
- ii. During the international window scheduled for June 2021, for associations affiliated to the AFC, CAF, Concacaf and the OFC:
- a) the international window is extended by seven days; and
 - b) a maximum of four matches may be played by each representative team.

5.

Representative teams shall play the two matches (subject to the temporary exceptions set out in paragraph 4 of this article) within an international window on the territory of the same confederation, with the only exception of intercontinental play-off matches. If at least one of the two matches is a friendly, they can be played in two different confederations only if the distance between the venues does not exceed a total of five flight hours, according to the official schedule of the airline, and two time-zones.

6.

It is not compulsory to release players outside an international window or outside the final competitions (as per paragraph 2 above) included in the international match calendar. It is not compulsory to release the same player for more than one "A" representative team final competition per year. Exceptions to this rule can be established by the FIFA Council for the FIFA Confederations Cup only.

7.

For international windows, players must be released and start the travel to join their representative team no later than Monday morning and must start the travel back to their club no later than the next Wednesday morning following the end of the international window, subject to the temporary exception below. For a final competition in the sense of paragraphs 2 and 3 above, players must be released and start the travel to their representative team no later than Monday morning the week preceding the week when the relevant final competition starts and must be released by the association in the morning of the day after the last match of their team in the tournament.

- i. During the international windows that have been extended in accordance with paragraph 4 (i), players must start the travel back to their club no later than the morning following the end of the international window.

8.

The clubs and associations concerned may agree a longer period of release or different arrangements with regard to paragraph 7 above.

9.

Players complying with a call-up from their association under the terms of this article shall resume duty with their clubs no later than 24 hours after the end of the period for which they had to be released. This period shall be extended to 48 hours if the representative teams' activities concerned took place in a different confederation to the one in which the player's club is registered. Clubs shall be informed in writing of a player's outbound and return schedule ten days before the start of the release period. Associations shall ensure that players are able to return to their clubs on time after the match.

10.

If a player does not resume duty with his club by the deadline stipulated in this article, at explicit request, the FIFA Players' Status Committee shall decide that the next time the player is called up by his association the period of release shall be shortened as follows:

- a) international window: by two days
- b) final competition of an international tournament: by five days

11.

Should an association repeatedly breach these provisions, the FIFA Players' Status Committee may decide:

- a) to further reduce the period of release;
- b) to ban the association from calling up a player(s) for subsequent representative teams' activities.

1bis**Principles for women's football****1.**

Clubs are obliged to release their registered players to the representative teams of their country for which the player is eligible to play on the basis of her nationality if they are called up by the association concerned. Any agreement between the player and a club to the contrary is prohibited.

2.

The release of players under the terms of paragraph 1 of this article is mandatory for all international windows listed in the women's international match calendar (cf. paragraphs 3 and 4 below) as well as for the final competitions of the FIFA Women's World Cup™, the Women's Olympic Football Tournament, the championships for women's "A" representative teams of the confederations, subject to the relevant association being a member of the organising confederation, and the confederations' final-round qualification tournaments for the Women's Olympic Football Tournament.

3.

After consultation with the relevant stakeholders, FIFA publishes the women's international match calendar for a period of four years. It will include all international windows for the relevant period (cf. paragraph 4 below), as well as the final competitions of the FIFA Women's World Cup™, the Women's Olympic Football Tournament and blocked periods for the championships for women's "A" representative teams of the confederations as well as for the confederations' final-round qualification tournaments for the Women's Olympic Football Tournament. Following the publication of the women's international match calendar, only the specific dates for the championships for women's "A" representative teams of the confederations and the confederations' final-round qualification tournaments for the Women's Olympic Football Tournament will be added within the respective blocked periods. The championships for the women's "A" representative teams of the confederations and the final-round qualification tournaments for the Women's Olympic Football Tournament must be played within the respective stipulated blocked periods and confederations are required to notify FIFA of the dates, in writing, at the latest two years in advance of the respective championships for women's "A" representative teams or final-round tournament.

4.

There are three types of international windows:

- a) Type I is defined as a period of nine days starting on a Monday morning and ending on a Tuesday night the following week, which is reserved for representative teams' activities. During the type I international window, a maximum of two matches may be played by each representative team, irrespective of whether these matches are qualifying matches for an international tournament or friendlies. The pertinent matches can be scheduled on any day as from Wednesday during the international window, provided that a minimum of two full calendar days are left between two matches (e.g. Thursday/Sunday or Saturday/Tuesday).

- b) Type II is defined as a period of ten days starting on a Monday morning and ending on Wednesday night the following week, which is reserved for friendly tournaments of the representative teams and qualifying matches. During the type II international window, a maximum of three matches may be played by each representative team. The pertinent matches can be scheduled on any day as from Thursday during the international window, provided that a minimum of two full calendar days are left between two matches (e.g. Thursday/Sunday/Wednesday).
- c) Type III is defined as a period of 13 days starting on Monday morning and ending on Saturday night the following week, which is reserved exclusively for qualifying matches for the championships of the women's "A" representative teams of the confederations. During the type III international window, a maximum of four matches may be played by each representative team. The pertinent matches can be scheduled on any day as from Thursday during the international window, provided that a minimum of two full calendar days are left between matches (e.g. Thursday/Sunday/Wednesday/Saturday).

5.

It is not compulsory to release players outside an international window or outside the competitions listed in paragraph 2 above that are included in the women's international match calendar.

6.

For all three types of international windows, players must be released and start the travel to join their representative team no later than Monday morning and must start the travel back to their club no later than the next Wednesday morning (type I), the next Thursday morning (type II) or the next Sunday morning (type III) following the end of the international window. For the confederations' final-round qualification tournaments for the Women's Olympic Football Tournament, players must be released and start the travel to join their representative team no later than Monday morning before the opening match of the qualification tournament and must be released by the association on the morning of the day after the last match of their team in the tournament. For the latter qualification tournaments, the maximum total period of release (between leaving Monday morning and the day of release back to the club by the association) is 16 days. For the other final competitions in the sense of paragraphs 2 and 3 above, players must be released and start the travel to their representative team no later than the Monday morning of

the week preceding the week when the relevant final competition starts, and must be released by the association on the morning of the day after the last match of their team in the tournament.

7.

The clubs and associations concerned may agree a longer period of release or different arrangements with regard to paragraph 6 above.

8.

Players complying with a call-up from their association under the terms of this article shall resume duty with their clubs no later than 24 hours after the end of the period for which they had to be released. This period shall be extended to 48 hours if the representative teams' activities concerned took place in a different confederation to the one in which the player's club is registered. Clubs shall be informed in writing of a player's outbound and return schedule ten days before the start of the release period. Associations shall ensure that players are able to return to their clubs on time after the match.

9.

If a player does not resume duty with her club by the deadline stipulated in this article, at explicit request, the FIFA Players' Status Committee shall decide that the next time the player is called up by her association, the period of release shall be shortened as follows:

- a) international window: by two days
- b) final competition of an international tournament: by five days

10.

Should an association repeatedly breach these provisions, the FIFA Players' Status Committee may impose appropriate sanctions, including but not limited to:

- a) fines;
- b) a reduction of the period of release;
- c) a ban on calling up a player(s) for subsequent representative teams' activities.

1ter

Principles for futsal

1.

Clubs are obliged to release their registered players to the representative teams of the country for which the player is eligible to play on the basis of his nationality if they are called up by the association concerned. Any agreement between a player and a club to the contrary is prohibited.

2.

The release of players under the terms of paragraph 1 of this article is mandatory for all international windows listed in the futsal international match calendar (cf. paragraphs 3 and 4 below) as well as for the final competitions of the FIFA Futsal World Cup and of the championships for “A” representative teams of the confederations, subject to the relevant association being a member of the organising confederation.

3.

After consultation with the relevant stakeholders, FIFA publishes the futsal international match calendar for the period of five years. It will include all international windows for the relevant period (cf. paragraph 4 below). Following the publication of the futsal international match calendar, only the final competitions of the FIFA Futsal World Cup and of the championships for “A” representative teams of the confederations will be added.

4.

There are two types of international windows:

- a) Type I is defined as a period of ten days starting on a Monday morning and ending on Wednesday night the following week, which is reserved for representative teams’ activities. During a Type I international window, a maximum of four matches may be played by each representative team, irrespective of whether these matches are qualifying matches for an international tournament or friendlies. Representative teams can play the maximum of four matches within an international window of Type I in no more than two confederations.
- b) Type II is defined as a period of four days starting on a Sunday morning and ending on Wednesday night the following week, which is reserved for representative teams’ activities. During a Type II international window, a maximum of two matches may be played by each representative team,

irrespective of whether these matches are qualifying matches for an international tournament or friendlies. Representative teams shall play the maximum of two matches within an international window of Type II on the territory of the same confederation.

5.

It is not compulsory to release players outside an international window or outside the final competitions as per paragraph 2 above included in the futsal international match calendar.

6.

For both types of international windows, players must be released and start the travel to join their representative team no later than the first morning of the window (i.e. Sunday or Monday, respectively), and must start the travel back to their club no later than the Thursday morning following the end of the international window. For a final competition of the championships for "A" representative teams of the confederations, players must be released and start the travel to their representative team in the morning 12 days before the relevant final competition starts and must be released by the association in the morning of the day after the last match of their team in the tournament. For the FIFA Futsal World Cup, players must be released and start the travel to their representative team in the morning 14 days before the World Cup starts and must be released by the association in the morning of the day after the last match of their team in the tournament.

7.

The clubs and associations concerned may agree a longer period of release or different arrangements with regard to paragraph 6 above.

8.

Players complying with a call-up from their association under the terms of this article shall resume duty with their clubs no later than 24 hours after the end of the period for which they had to be released. This period shall be extended to 48 hours if the representative teams' activities concerned took place in a different confederation to the one in which the player's club is registered. Clubs shall be informed in writing of a player's outbound and return schedule ten days before the start of the release period. Associations shall ensure that players are able to return to their clubs on time after the match.

9.

If a player does not resume duty with his club by the deadline stipulated in this article, at explicit request, the FIFA Players' Status Committee shall decide that the next time the player is called up by his association the period of release shall be shortened as follows:

- a) international windows: by two days
- b) final competition of an international tournament: by five days

10.

Should an association repeatedly breach these provisions, the FIFA Players' Status Committee may impose appropriate sanctions, including but not limited to:

- a) fines;
- b) a reduction of the period of release;
- c) a ban on calling up a player(s) for subsequent representative teams' activities.

2

Financial provisions and insurance

1.

Clubs releasing a player in accordance with the provisions of this annexe are not entitled to financial compensation.

2.

The association calling up a player shall bear the costs of travel incurred by the player as a result of the call-up.

3.

The club with which the player concerned is registered shall be responsible for his insurance cover against illness and accident during the entire period of his release. This cover must also extend to any injuries sustained by the player during the international match(es) for which he was released.

4.

If a professional player participating in eleven-a-side football suffers during the period of his release for an international "A" match a bodily injury caused by an accident and is, as a consequence of such an injury, temporary totally disabled, the club with which the player concerned is registered will be indemnified by FIFA. The terms and conditions of the indemnification, including the loss-handling procedures, are set forth in the Technical Bulletin – Club Protection Programme.

3 Calling up players

1.

As a general rule, every player registered with a club is obliged to respond affirmatively when called up by the association he is eligible to represent on the basis of his nationality to play for one of its representative teams.

2.

Associations wishing to call up a player must notify the player in writing at least 15 days before the first day of the international window (cf. Annexe 1, article 1 paragraph 4) in which the representative teams' activities for which he is required will take place. Associations wishing to call up a player for the final competition of an international tournament must notify the player in writing at least 15 days before the beginning of the relevant release period. The player's club shall also be informed in writing at the same time. Equally, associations are advised to copy the association of the clubs concerned into the summons. The club must confirm the release of the player within the following six days.

3.

Associations that request FIFA's help to obtain the release of a player playing abroad may only do so under the following two conditions:

- a) The association at which the player is registered has been asked to intervene without success.
- b) The case is submitted to FIFA at least five days before the day of the match for which the player is needed.

4 Injured players

A player who due to injury or illness is unable to comply with a call-up from the association that he is eligible to represent on the basis of his nationality shall, if the association so requires, agree to undergo a medical examination by a doctor of that association's choice. If the player so wishes, such medical examination shall take place on the territory of the association at which he is registered.

5 Restrictions on playing

A player who has been called up by his association for one of its representative teams is, unless otherwise agreed by the relevant association, not entitled to play for the club with which he is registered during the period for which he has been released or should have been released pursuant to the provisions of this annexe, plus an additional period of five days.

6 Disciplinary measures

Violations of any of the provisions set forth in this annexe shall result in the imposition of disciplinary measures to be decided by the FIFA Disciplinary Committee based on the FIFA Disciplinary Code.

Article 29 Annulment, Enforcement

1. These Regulations shall replace the special regulations governing players' eligibility to play for Association teams dated 4 December 2003 and the Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players of 5 July 2001 as well as all subsequent amendments, including all relevant circular letters issued before the date of entry into force of these regulations.
2. These Regulations were adopted by the FIFA Executive Committee on 18 December 2004 and come into force on 1 July 2005.

Table of contents

Annulment, enforcement

- 1 The special regulations governing players' eligibility for Association teams is included as annex 2 of these Regulations.
- 2 The Regulations came into force more than six months after they were adopted in order to allow the associations to amend their national regulations, particularly in view of the provisions that are also compulsory at national level provided for in art. 1 par. 3a).

RELEASE OF PLAYERS FOR ASSOCIATION TEAMS

Article 1 Principles

1. Clubs are obliged to release their registered players for representative teams of the country for which the player is eligible to play on the basis of his nationality, if he is called up by the Association concerned. Any divergent agreement between a player and a club is prohibited.
2. The release of players under the terms of par. 1 of this article is mandatory for matches on dates listed in the Coordinated International Match Calendar and for all matches for which a duty to release players exists on the basis of a special decision of the FIFA Executive Committee.
3. It is not compulsory to release players for matches scheduled on dates not listed in the Coordinated International Match Calendar.
4. Players must also be released for the period of preparation before the match, which is laid down as follows:
 - a) for friendly matches: 48 hours
 - b) for qualifying matches for an international tournament: four days (including the day of the match). The release period shall be extended to five days if the match concerned is held in a different confederation to the one in which the player's club is registered.
 - c) for qualifying matches for an international tournament that are staged on a date earmarked for friendly matches: 48 hours
 - d) for the final competition of an international tournament: 14 days before the first match in the competition.

Players shall join the Association team no later than 48 hours before kick-off.

5. The players of Associations that have automatically qualified for the final competition of the FIFA World Cup™ or for continental championships for 'A' national teams shall be released for friendly matches on dates earmarked for official qualifying matches in accordance with the directives that would apply for Official Matches staged on these dates.
6. The clubs and Associations concerned may agree a longer period of release.
7. Players complying with a call-up from their Association under the terms of this article shall resume duty with their clubs no later than 24 hours after the end of the match for which they were called up. This period shall be extended to 48 hours if the match concerned took place in a different confederation to the one in which the player's club is registered. Clubs shall be informed in writing of a player's outward and return schedule ten days before the match. Associations shall ensure that players are able to return to their clubs on time after the match.
8. If a player does not resume duty with his club by the deadline stipulated in this article, the next time the player is called up by his Association, the period of release shall be shortened as follows:
- a) for a friendly match: to 24 hours
 - b) for a qualifying match: to three days
 - c) for the final competition of an international tournament: to ten days.
9. Should an Association repeatedly breach these provisions, the FIFA Players' Status Committee may impose appropriate sanctions, which may include but not be limited to:
- fines
 - reduction of the period of release
 - ban on calling up a player(s) for the subsequent match(es)

Table of contents

1. Representative teams
 2. Coordinated international match calendar
 3. Preparation period
 4. Automatically qualified associations
 5. Return to club
-

1. Representative teams

- 1 The nationality of a player establishes for which country he is eligible to play in representative teams in the event that this player is called up by the association of this country.
 - 2 The representative team, better known as the national team, is a grouping of the best players with the same nationality who represent the country concerned in an international match¹¹⁷.
 - 3 Clubs are obliged to release the players registered with them if these players are called up by the association of the country of which they are nationals in order to play for its national team. The player can be called up for a representative team with an age limit¹¹⁸ or for the national "A" team. A player and a club may not divert from this obligation in an agreement.
-

2. Coordinated international match calendar

- 1 The release of players is only compulsory on the dates listed in the coordinated international match calendar (hereinafter "the calendar"). The calendar was first approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting in June 2000 and by the FIFA Congress in August 2000, before coming into force on 1 January 2002¹¹⁹.

¹¹⁷ cf. art. 3 par. 1 of the Regulations Governing the Application of the FIFA Statutes

¹¹⁸ e.g. U-17, U-21, etc.

¹¹⁹ cf. art. 75 of the FIFA Statutes.

- 2 The calendar has introduced fixed dates on which international friendly and competitive matches are to be staged. It ensures that associations are able to select any eligible players to play in their national team in matches arranged on one of the set dates. On the other hand, clubs are not obliged to release their players on dates not provided for in the calendar.
- 3 The enforcement of the calendar has helped to improve organised football at international level. In fact, over the period of validity of the calendar¹²⁰, all participants have access to the dates on which international matches¹²¹ can be staged. "International matches" mean, in particular, friendly matches, qualification matches for an international tournament and the final stage of international tournaments. Furthermore, on the dates reserved in the calendar for international matches, no national and/or international club competitions may be staged.
- 4 The calendar, which is constantly updated, can be found on the FIFA website (www.FIFA.com).
- 5 The Executive Committee may declare an obligation to release players for particular matches. The Executive Committee has, however, made limited use of this authorisation and it has only applied it when it has had to reschedule a preliminary round match due to force majeure or for matches played for humanitarian purposes. Furthermore, on a yearly basis, the Executive Committee is called upon to decide on additional dates for official matches to be included in the calendar at the request of the confederations (cf. FIFA circular letter no. 999 dated 7 October 2005). Equally, the Executive Committee decides on the incorporation in the calendar of the confederations' championships, the dates of which need to be communicated to FIFA two years in advance (cf. FIFA circular letter no. 1028 dated 31 March 2006). The calendar is amended immediately whenever the Executive Committee approves additional dates to be included in the aforescribed sense.

¹²⁰ Usually five years.

¹²¹ With regard to the definition of "international match", reference is made to art. 3 par. 1 of the Regulations Governing the Application of the FIFA Statutes.

3. Preparation period

- 1 The period of release also covers the preparation period, i.e. the timeframe before the match for which the players are at the disposal of the association concerned. This period is laid down as follows:
 - a) for friendly matches: 48 hours
 - b) for qualification matches for an international tournament¹²² of a confederation or FIFA: four days. This period is extended to five days if the international match is played in a different confederation than the one in which the club of the player who has been called up is registered. In both cases, the day of the match is included in the period of release.
 - c) for qualification matches for an international tournament of a confederation or of FIFA staged on a date earmarked for a friendly match: 48 hours.
 - d) for the final competition of an international tournament: 14 days before the first match of the competition. This guarantees that the national team has sufficient time to practice together before the start of a confederation, FIFA or Olympic football tournament.
- 2 In any event, the players must join the national team at least 48 hours before kick-off. This provision is meant to safeguard the physical condition and wellbeing of the players and avoid the players arriving at the venue of the national team game at the very last moment without having trained with the national squad before the game.
- 3 The clubs and associations concerned are free to agree on a longer period of release. For particular matches (e.g. a decisive match or play-off games), associations regularly ask for an extended period of release in order to have more days to prepare.

¹²² So-called preliminary round.

4. Automatically qualified associations

- 1 The players of an association that has automatically qualified for the final competition of the FIFA World Cup™ or for continental championships for 'A' national teams only play friendly matches. In order to guarantee their competitiveness, the players must be released for friendly matches on dates in the calendar that are reserved for official qualifying matches in accordance with the directives that would apply for official matches staged on these dates, i.e. the period of release shall be four or five days, as the case may be (cf. point 3.1b above). Satisfactory preparation for the final stage of a tournament is the reason why associations that have qualified ex officio have the opportunity to have their players at their disposal for a longer period for friendly matches played on dates earmarked in the calendar for qualification matches. Obviously, this rule only applies to associations that have automatically qualified and not to their opponents in these matches¹²³.
- 2 At FIFA level, the only association that automatically qualifies for the final stage of the FIFA World Cup™ is the host country¹²⁴. In fact, the titleholder no longer automatically qualifies and therefore also has to participate in the preliminary round staged within its confederation. The fact that the titleholder has to participate in the preliminary round in order to be able to defend its title is to be welcomed from a sporting point of view, as it ensures that the champion has adequate competitive preparation for the final stage of a tournament, which would otherwise be missing if the national team had only played friendly games over the previous years.

5. Return to club

- 1 The provisions give more responsibility to associations that call up a player for national duty by ensuring that the player respects the timeframes set out in the Regulations. In particular, associations must ensure that players return to their clubs on time after the match.
- 2 Players complying with a call-up from their association must return to their clubs no later than 24 hours after the end of the match. If the match concerned took place in a different confederation to the one in which the player's club is registered, this period is extended to 48 hours.
- 3 In order for the club to be aware of the exact period of time that the player will be absent for the national team fixture, associations that call up a player must inform the club in writing of the player's travel schedule ten days before the match in question. This, as well as other obligations that are the responsibility of the association concerned, forges reciprocal respect and cooperation between the association that is calling up and the club that is releasing the player. The association shall do its utmost to ensure that the player resumes duty with his club once the national team fixture has been completed in order to duly consider the relationship between the player and the club.
- 4 If a player does not return to his club on time, this may have consequences for the next time he is called up by his association. The club for which the player is registered may lodge a claim before the Players' Status Committee to ask for the period of release to be shortened. If the player repeatedly fails to resume duty with his club on time, the Players' Status Committee is entitled to decide on stronger sanctions, which can also lead to a ban on calling up a player for a certain match or matches¹²⁵.

¹²³ For the opponent, the period of release is 48 hours as it counts as a normal friendly match.
¹²⁴ cf. art. 8 par. 2 of the Regulations for the 2006 FIFA World Cup Germany™.

¹²⁵ These sanctions are not automatic but need to be imposed by the Players' Status Committee after having considered all details of the case at hand.

Article 2 Financial Provisions and Insurance

1. **Clubs releasing a player in accordance with the provisions of this annex are not entitled to financial compensation.**
2. **The Association calling up a player shall bear the costs of travel actually incurred by the player as a result of the call-up.**
3. **The club for which the player concerned is registered shall be responsible for his insurance cover against illness and accident during the entire period of his release. This cover must also extend to any injuries sustained by the player during the international match(es) for which he was released.**

Table of contents

Financial provisions and insurance

- 1 A club that releases a player for the national team does not receive compensation for the period that the player is not at the club's disposal. The club does, however, also benefit from the player's appearances for the national team as the player has the opportunity to promote and show himself on an international stage. This exposure will increase the player's value and may also have a direct financial impact when the player transfers to a new club, both for the player himself as well as for his current club, provided that the player transfers during the validity of the employment contract.
- 2 An association that calls up a player is responsible for the travel expenses of the player concerned from the club to the location of the national team match and back.
- 3 A player is basically already insured with the club for which he is registered against illness and accident¹²⁶. Whenever this player is called up to play in the national team, his club is responsible for extending the player's insurance cover during the period of his release. The cover includes international matches as well.

¹²⁶ In most countries, social insurance is compulsory.

Article 3 Calling up Players

1. **As a general rule, every player registered for a club is obliged to respond affirmatively when called up by the Association he is eligible to represent on the basis of his nationality to play for one of its representative teams.**
2. **Associations wishing to call up a player who is playing abroad must notify the player in writing at least 15 days before the day of the match for which he is required. The player's club shall also be informed in writing at the same time. The club must confirm the release of the player within the following six days.**
3. **Associations that request FIFA's help to obtain the release of a player playing abroad may only do so under the following two conditions:**
 - a) **The Association with which the player is registered must have been asked to intervene without success.**
 - b) **The case is submitted to FIFA at least five days before the day of the match for which the player is needed.**

Table of contents

Calling up players

- 1 Once a player has been called up to play for his national team, he basically has to comply with this summons. Should he wish not to be called up for a certain match or matches or for a certain period of time, he must inform the association of which he is a national, in writing, of his intention before being called up. Furthermore, only the player himself is entitled to renounce representing his national team. This declaration shall be submitted by the player to the association concerned in writing.
- 2 An association calling up a player must notify the player and his club in writing at least 15 days before the day of the match. The club for which the player is registered is not obliged to release the player if this deadline is not complied with. The club must confirm the release of the player to the association within the following six days.

- 3 An association that has correctly called up a player can request FIFA's assistance to obtain the release of this player if the club for which the player is registered refuses to release him. In order for the FIFA administration to be able to intervene, the association calling up the player needs (1) to ask the association where the club is affiliated for assistance (although ultimately in vain), and (2) to contact the FIFA administration at least five days before the match.
- 4 Irrespective of compliance with the aforementioned five-day deadline, the association calling up the player is entitled to lodge a formal complaint regarding the club's refusal to release the player. The consequences are described in art. 6 below.

Article 4 Injured Players

A player who is unable to comply with a call-up from the Association that he is eligible to represent on the basis of his nationality owing to injury or illness shall, if the Association so requires, agree to undergo a medical examination by a doctor of that Association's choice. If the player so wishes, such medical examination shall take place on the territory of the Association where he is registered.

Table of contents

Injured players

- 1 An association that has called up a player who is unable to comply with the call-up due to injury or illness can request that the player be examined by a doctor chosen by this association in order to establish the effective health conditions of the player.
- 2 The player is entitled to ask that these medical examinations take place on the territory of the association where his club is registered. This prerogative is particularly practical whenever the association calling up the player is in another confederation to the one where the player is registered. In this way, for instance, the player can avoid a long intercontinental flight to a different time zone and can instead focus on his rehabilitation without interruption.

Article 5 Restrictions on Playing

A player who has been called up by his Association for one of its representative teams is, unless otherwise agreed by the relevant Association, not entitled to play for the club with which he is registered during the period for which he has been released or should have been released pursuant to the provisions of this annex. This restriction on playing for the club shall, moreover, be prolonged by five days in the event that the player, for whatsoever reason, did not wish to or was unable to comply with the call-up.

Table of contents

Restrictions on playing

- 1 During the period of release, the player shall be at the disposal of his national team and he is therefore not entitled to play for the club with which he is registered. This restriction applies as well if the club does not release the player¹²⁷.
- 2 This restriction is extended by five days if the player, for any reason whatsoever¹²⁸, did not wish to or was unable to comply with the call-up. In other words, the period of time for which the player will not be at the disposal of the club will be the following:
 - (a) the period of preparation (art. 1 par. 4),
 - (b) the day of the game of the national team,
 - (c) five additional days.
- 3 The association and the club, as noted previously, may agree on a longer period of release. On the other hand, the association can allow the player to participate in a particular match for his club during the period of release.

¹²⁷ The club is, however, entitled not to release the player and to make use of his services if the player was not called up at least 15 days before the game.
¹²⁸ e.g. the player was injured or the club did not release him.

Article 6 Disciplinary Measures

1. **Violations of any of the provisions set forth in this annex shall result in the imposition of disciplinary measures.**
2. **If a club refuses to release a player or neglects to do so despite the provisions of this annex, the FIFA Players' Status Committee shall furthermore request the Association to which the club belongs to declare any match(es) in which the player took part to have been lost by the club concerned. Any points thus gained by the club in question shall be forfeited. Any match contested according to the cup system shall be regarded as having been won by the opposing team, irrespective of the score.**
3. **If a player reports late for duty with his club more than once after being called up by an Association, the FIFA Players' Status Committee may, at the request of the player's club, impose additional sanctions on the player and/or his Association.**

Table of contents

Disciplinary measures

- 1 The Players' Status Committee is the competent body to supervise the fulfilment of the provisions on the release of players and to decide on infringements and their consequences. Where required and appropriate, it can submit the case to the Disciplinary Committee¹²⁹ for further action.
- 2 Furthermore, if a player who has been correctly called up but not released by his club plays for the latter during the period he should have been released¹³⁰, the Players' Status Committee can ask the association where this club is affiliated to declare any match or matches in which the player participated as having been lost by the club concerned.

¹²⁹ cf. art. 55 of the FIFA Statutes
¹³⁰ cf. explanation of art. 5 no. 2 of annex 1.