



To: State Referee Administrators
State Youth Referee Administrators
State Directors of Referee Instruction
State Directors of Referee Assessment
National Referee Instructors and National Referee Instructor Trainers

From: Alfred Kleinaitis
Manager of Referee Development and Education

Re: Shinguards

Date: March 20, 2001

Law 4 requires all players to wear shinguards which

- are covered entirely by the stockings,
- are made of a suitable material, and
- provide a reasonable degree of protection.

These rather simple and direct statements seldom need further interpretation. Being "covered entirely by the stockings" means that the shinguards must be worn under the socks. Having the shinguards worn on top of the socks, even if the tops are rolled down over the shinguards, does not meet this requirement.

The "suitable material" is not specified but is presumed to be material which performs the cushioning and impact spreading function of shinguards.

A "reasonable degree of protection" means that the material is suitable for the purpose and that the size of the shinguard is appropriate for the age and size of the player.

Additionally, of course, as an article of player equipment, the shinguards must meet the general requirement of Law 4 that they not be dangerous to the wearer or to any other player.

In most cases, these requirements are adequately met by commercially manufactured shinguards and referees rarely need to perform any closer inspection. In any event, determining the legality of any article of player equipment under Law 4 is solely within the referee's judgment in accordance with these guidelines.