



## 2021 Football Memo – Week 4

September 15, 2021

Author: Justin Ingalls

### Hit Until the Whistle

Coaches need to teach their players that the play kills itself. Players need to be taught when the “ball is dead by rule.” If players “hit until the whistle,” often they are hitting late as the whistle signifies the ball is already dead. The officials whistle only indicates that the down is over. Football players need to understand when a player is down by action or out of the play.

- Officials Can Flag Personal Fouls
- Coaches Can Stop the Personal Foul Action
- Safety of Players Is of Most Importance

### Pop-up Kicks

Rule 6-1-11 – Review as a crew. Pop up kicks are illegal – It is a dead ball foul if a free kick is immediately driven into the ground, strikes the ground once and goes into the air in the manner of the ball being kicked directly off of the tee (pop-up kick) (2-24-10, 6-1-11) If the ball is kicked directly off of the tee and into the air (not grounded) the ball remains alive and the receiving team must be given an unobstructed opportunity to catch the untouched free kick. A fair catch signal can also be used by R and the kick/ball/play is dead immediately when possessed (not simply touched).

### Free Kick Out of Bounds

When a free kick goes out of bounds untouched by Team R, it is a foul by Team K. Team R has four choices:

1. Accept a five-yard penalty from the previous spot and have Team K re-kick
2. Put the ball in play at the inbounds spot 25 yards beyond the previous spot (usually the 35-yard line)
3. Decline the penalty and put the ball in play at the inbounds spot
4. Accept a five-yard penalty from the dead-ball spot (spot where ball went out-of-bounds)

Note: If the ball is touched, not possessed by R during a free kick, the covering official shall signal the ball was touched. Simply “flick” the hands in a touching signal to indicate the touch. This is a communication tool to let everyone know you are certain the ball was touched – this action helps remove doubt.

**Play:** Team K's free kick from its 40-yard line goes out of bounds untouched at Team R's 20-yard line.

**Ruling:** If Team R chooses previous spot enforcement, Team K will re-kick from its own 35-yard line. Choosing to put the ball in play 25 yards beyond the previous spot would yield a new series for Team R at its own 35-yard line. Accepting a five-yard penalty enforced from the dead ball spot would result in a snap from Team R's 25-yard line.

### Ejection Policy – SDHSAA Handbook

**Student:** Anytime a student-athlete is ejected from a contest, they are not allowed to participate for the remainder of the contest or event they were ejected from, as well as any other/further competitions held on that same calendar day. The student is also suspended from the next scheduled, rescheduled, or contracted contest, meet or event at that level of competition, which is to include all games/meets in the interim at other levels of competition. If the ejection occurs during the last regular season contest at the sub-varsity level, the student is suspended from all competition that day plus the next regular season contest at the varsity level or the first postseason contest; whichever occurs first. NOTE: A suspended player may travel with the team, be in the locker room, sit on the sidelines, etc. but may not be in uniform during the suspension.



## 2021 Football Memo – Week 4

**Coach:** Anytime a coach is ejected from a contest, he/she shall not coach the remainder of that calendar day at any level. The coach is also suspended from the next scheduled, rescheduled, or contracted contest, meet or event at the level of competition in which the ejection occurred, as well as all contests held in the interim at any level of competition. If the ejection occurs during the last regular season contest at the sub-varsity level, the coach is suspended from all competition that day plus the next regular season contest at the varsity level or the first postseason contest; whichever occurs first. NOTE: Suspended coaches may not travel with the team or be at the venue during any contest(s) while under suspension.

New, 2019: In the sport of football only, any player ejected/disqualified for specifically violating the provisions of “Illegal Personal Contact” as outlined in NFHS Rule 9-4-3, sub-sections (a) through (i) and (k) through (o):

- (1) Shall be disqualified only for the remainder of the current game if the foul occurs in the first half of a contest, or,
- (2) Shall be disqualified from the remainder of the current game, as well as all competition through the first half of the next varsity contest, if the foul occurs in the second half of a game.

### Thoughts to Think About from Game Observations

- Wings – Don’t ever give up the goal line. If you are responsible for the goal line—hold your position. You may have to back off for safety or perspective but never give up if there is the possibility of it coming into play.
- Contacting the snapper – No defensive player shall charge directly into the snapper (scrimmage kick) until the snapper is able to protect himself. Time to look up, regain balance. This is a judgement call, use preventive officiating, talk to the players.
- Leaping / Hurdling – it is illegal to hurdle over a player that has only one or two feet contacting the ground. It is not illegal to leap or jump through a gap on the LOS. Don’t be technical – be preventative with your officiating
- Discuss as a crew forward and backward pass responsibilities. Ball thrown immediately expect wings you can determine initial direction. When wings move off LOS R you must determine the initial direction of the pass.
- When play goes out of bounds on your side of the field—turn all the way to face out of bounds area to view player action—your primary responsibility is the out of bounds spot and safety of players who have gone out of bounds. Once those two responsibilities have been satisfied (and only then) do we worry about getting a football back onto the field
- Umpires often have the best look on catches and traps, particularly those in the middle of the field—need to pivot after the ball crosses overhead.
- Too many officials give signals when it is not their call. Let the calling official make the call and cover your area of work. A second signal just complicates matters.
- There is never any hurry to signal except on a wind and kill on a first down. Slow whistle—slow flag—slow beanbag.
- Counting players—Officials need to count players every down, it matters
- We don’t ever want to toss a ball to a wing official to place the ball for a measurement. The ball should be run over to the wing official, and he will place it at his feet for the measurement.
- Review measurement mechanics as a crew – do not be surprised on how to measure at and only at a key point in the game.
- You must see the whole play when calling an infraction. Make the fouls be solid before making a call



## 2021 Football Memo – Week 4

- Tenths of a second on the game clock are not part of football timing. Discuss with the timer in your pregame conference to turn on the tenths of a second function on the game clock whenever possible. Should there be tenths displaying on the game clock and it can't be changed, play the game as normal but only reset the clock to fill (not tenths) should you have to add time back to the game clock when under a minute to play in a half.

### Call the Obvious

- Credibility begins with getting the easy call right (false starts, encroachment, etc.). Miss the obvious and you'll have a hard time selling and having credibility with the tough call.
- The best officials are those that let the game come to them.
- They see what is happening, absorb the information, take an extra second to process the information and decide the impact on the play
- The best officials know the rules but don't use them as a crutch
- Good officials communicate well with players, coaches, and other officials
- Good officials are best at "people skills"
- The best officials aren't afraid to make the game deciding call or no-call
- The best officials are lifelong learners
- Remember it's the players game, not the officials
- Being able to handle the gray areas of judgment and enforcement is critical in applying the spirit and intent, which the rule was written

### Officials Quiz

**Question 1:** As the umpire is making a casual inspection of the players before the game, he notices that several team A players have painted their faces with makeup. Is the paint legal?

**Question 2:** First and 10 from team A's 30-yard line. A1 throws a backward pass to halfback A2. The ball bounces off A2's helmet, hits the ground at team A's 32-yard line and rolls to a stop. Since the ball hit the ground beyond the line of scrimmage, is that an incomplete forward pass?

**Question 3:** Fourth and 10 on Team K's 35-yard line. R1 blocks K2's punt behind the line, and the ball rolls to team K's 30-yard line. K3 picks up the loose ball and runs for an apparent touchdown. Is K3's advance legal?

**Question 4:** First and 10 for Team A from its own 20-yard line. A1, wearing number 77, lines up in the offensive backfield. He catches a legal forward pass and advances to team A's 27-yard line, where he is downed. Team B's coach requests a timeout to ask why A1 was not penalized. Discussion reveals that the covering official saw the ineligible catch the ball but failed to react to it. Because the official agrees with the coach, can Team A still be penalized?

**Question 5:** Team A has the ball, second and five from its own 25-yard line. A1 runs to his 40-yard line, where he hands the ball forward to A2. A2 gains five yards before he is tackled. How is the play handled?

**Question 6:** Team A, which is out of timeouts and trails by five points, has second and goal from Team B's eight-yard line. The clock is running. With seven seconds left in the game, B1 is flagged for encroachment. What is the enforcement?

**Question 7:** First and 10 for Team A from its own 20-yard line. Guard A1 is flagged for blocking below the waist. A2's pass is intercepted at Team A's 35-yard line by B3, who returns it for a touchdown. Can the penalty be enforced on the try or on the succeeding kickoff?

**Question 8:** A8 jumps in the middle of the end zone, grabs a pass while in the air and, before alighting, has the ball knocked out of his hands by a defender. While in the air, the receiver has control of the ball. Is that a touchdown or an incomplete pass?



## 2021 Football Memo – Week 4

**Question 9:** Second and 10 for Team A from Team B's 16-yard line. A1's legal forward pass is incomplete. After the ball is dead, B2 is flagged for (a) taunting A1, or (b) knocking A1 to the ground. What is the enforcement?

**Question 10:** When regulation time ended, Team A had all three of its second-half timeouts remaining and used none in the first overtime. How many timeouts does Team A have at its disposal for the second overtime?

### Quiz Answers

**Ruling 1:** The markings are illegal. Face marking is restricted to eye shade that is a single solid stroke.

**Ruling 2:** That is a backward pass that turned into a muff. The ball remains live. The initial direction of A1's pass was backward; the ball retains that status until it is either caught or recovered. By definition the ball was muffed. Either Team A or Team B could recover and advance the ball.

**Ruling 3:** Yes. Team K has scored a touchdown. With the exception of a kick try, any member of the kicking team may catch or recover and advance a scrimmage kick while it is in or behind the neutral zone if the kick has not crossed the neutral zone.

**Ruling 4:** The coach followed the proper procedure. The officials' error represents a misapplication of the rule that bars ineligible players from touching a pass. The timeout should be changed to an official's timeout and Team A should be penalized for A1's foul.

**Ruling 5:** Forward handing beyond the line is a live-ball foul. The five-yard penalty includes a loss of down and is enforced from the spot of the foul. Since Team A is still beyond the line to gain after enforcement, the first down is awarded. The loss of down aspect of the penalty is not an issue. It will be Team A's ball, first and 10 from its own 35-yard line.

**Ruling 6:** Team A has the option of having the clock start on the ready after the penalty is enforced.

**Ruling 7:** The penalty will be declined. Because the foul occurred before the change of possession, Team B does not have the option of succeeding spot enforcement. Team B will attempt the try from team A's three-yard line.

**Ruling 8:** That is an incomplete pass. To complete a catch, an airborne player must first touch the ground inbounds. If control of the ball is lost prior to or simultaneous with returning to the ground, it is an incomplete pass.

**Ruling 9:** Team B is guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct in (a) and a personal foul in (b). Both are enforced half the distance from the previous spot. Neither penalty includes the award of a first down; it will be third and two for Team A from Team B's eight-yard line.

**Ruling 10:** Team A has one timeout. Unused first-half timeouts do not carry over to the second half or overtime, nor do unused second-half timeouts carry over to overtime. Timeouts do not carry over from one overtime period to the next.

### Closing Comments

- Umpires – Be Active, Get the Ball Down
- And Be Precise with Penalty Administration
- You must see the whole play when calling an infraction.
- Make the fouls be solid before making a call
- Make sure you are contacting the Athletic Director of the home team at least one week prior to the game with a list of officials that will be working.