



2023 Football Memo – Week 3

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SDHSAA Resource Links: [SDHSAA Football Officials Links](#)

Updates, Progress and Learnings...

One of the beautiful aspects of our great game of football is we always have a chance to learn from one another. These learnings are from Coaches and Officials, situations handled well, and situations not handled so well. Bottom line we are in this together and for the good of our student-athletes and the game of football must always come first. We all have responsibility to maintain the integrity of our game, know, apply, and coach/play by the NFHS/SDHSAA rules correctly.

Please take these learning from the first 3 weeks of our season and apply to your game:

- Progress is being made on players being properly equipped. Stay with this POE. Thank you Coaches and Officials – note players not in compliance, do not play until properly equipped.
- There is a difference in eye black – single black mark and “face paint”. The “face paint” look will not be tolerated. Correct or do not play. It is that simple.
- Officials DO NOT turn your backs on players, piles, huddles and walk back to your position. Back pedal to your position. There are many responsibilities between plays, not a time to take off.
- I have witnessed so great preventative officiating during times when teams have been entering the field, during player introductions and leaving/crossing at halftime. Officials be aware of these situations and make your presence known to prevent and “dust-up” situations.
- Should you be using a visible play clock, make sure you meet with and instruct the play clock operator in your pregame. The play clock must be accurate (25 or 40) in all situations. Back Judges own this responsibility and continue to use your “under 10 and under 5” mechanics as some teams are not accustomed to the visible play clock.
- Game clocks – whenever possible, instruct and disable the “tenths” of a second function. The tenths of a second is NOT to be used for football timing. Officials only adjust the game clocks in whole/full second increments.
- Referee – never turn down the opportunity to use a field mic when offered. Great announcements help everyone in attendance. Practice your announcements, avoid useless words such as “on the”. Be succinct – Holding, Offense, #73, 10-yard penalty from the previous spot, Replay 3rd down.
- We have done a good job of stopping, and shutting the play down by our LOS officials when forward progress has been stopped and not allow the pile to be pushed. The offensive players have been diligent in not pushing the pile/runner – however, officials DO NOT let the defensive continue after progress has stopped. Stay after the 2023 POE of not allowing “helping the runner” situations. Coaches thank you for not coaching this tactic. It is a player safety issue.
- Officials – it is clear protocol that game balls are checked and approved as part of our pre-game responsibilities. Should teams continue to use the approved, properly inflated game balls in their pre-game warm ups that is just fine, however once approved the game balls are not to be altered and must meet specifications before being put into play. Rule 1-3-1 is crystal clear on the specifications which are required for the ball. Coaches do not alter or allow players to alter once they are approved to be game ready.



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Communicate, and Confirm

Crew Chiefs – make it a best practice to reach out to the host school and confirm your arrival time, your crew and game time. Make it a habit that by the end of day on Monday, prior to the scheduled game that you email the host school Athletic Director to confirm details of the upcoming contest. We have had several games each week that do not start at the traditional 7:00 PM. Do not assume it is a traditional 7:00 PM start. Check and confirm to avoid issues.

Free Kick Offsides Philosophy

I will continue to stress, do NOT major in the minors when it comes to calling fouls. Outside player safety and unsportsmanlike acts, we as officials must be sure of the foul, our call has an impact on the play. One area I will address for consistency is offsides on a free kick.

- Any on-side kick must be officiated; the kicking teams restraining line must be officiated as a plane. Anytime during an onside kick situation, the kicking team breaks the plane; it is a foul, and the play shall be blown dead, and a penalty assessed. It is a huge advantage for the kickers when the plane is broken. Be sure and firm in the situations.
- On a free kick where the ball is kicked deep, it is a foul when a member of the kicking team (except kicker and /or holder) has a foot down (steps across) the kicking team restraining line before the ball is kicked. Be a little tolerant if the kicking team simply breaks the plane.
- All free kick require a minimum number of players to be on each side of the kicker at the time the ball is kicked – 4 for 11-person and 3 for 9-person. This is the Referee's call, but the entire crew is responsible. DO NOT miss this situation as it is a huge advantage to “overload a side” and is also of great player safety concern.

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 kick 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).

Until the Whistle

Coaches, please teach your student athletes that the play kills itself. Players must 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



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Referee Football Quiz Questions

1. Which of the following must occur in order for post-scrimmage kick penalty enforcement to apply?
 - a. The foul must occur after the kick ends.
 - b. The ball must cross the neutral zone.
 - c. Team K must have possession of the ball when the down ends.
 - d. The play must be a punt, successful field goal or successful try.
2. Fourth and 10 from team K's 20-yard line. Snapper K1 initially moves the ball forward, then attempts to snap it. After the backward motion of the snap begins but before K1 releases the ball, noseguard R2 reaches across the neutral zone and knocks the ball out of K1's grasp. R3 recovers the loose ball.
 - a. No fouls; the ball remains live and its team R's ball.
 - b. Dead-ball foul on K1 for an illegal snap.
 - c. Dead-ball foul on R2 for encroachment.
3. R1 catches a punt beyond the neutral zone and, while advancing, gives a fair-catch signal. After that, R1 fumbles and the ball is recovered by R2, who advances for a touchdown.
 - a. No problem; touchdown for team R.
 - b. R1's signal is illegal.
 - c. R1's signal is invalid.
4. Under which of the following circumstances is a period extended?
 - a. There was a double foul.
 - b. There was an inadvertent whistle.
 - c. A touchdown is scored, and a try will be attempted.
 - d. All of the above.
 - e. None of the above.
5. Thinking his team is a player short, B12 enters the field while the ball is live, but does not in any way participate in the play.
 - a. Team B is penalized 15 yards from the previous spot.
 - b. Team B is penalized 15 yards from the succeeding spot.
 - c. Team B is penalized five yards from the previous spot.
 - d. Team B is penalized five yards from the succeeding spot.

Referee Football Quiz Answers

- 1 — NFHS – b (2-16-2h)
- 2 — NFHS – b (7-1-3)
- 3 — NFHS – b (2-9-5, 6-5-8 Pen.)
- 4 — NFHS – d (3-3-3, 3.4.2 C)
- 5 — NFHS – d (3-7-6)

- Umpires – Be Active, Get the Ball Down Consistently, Have a Consistent Pace.
- Be Precise with Penalty Administration, H walk with the U, check then place the ball RFP.
- You must see the whole play when calling an infraction, to not just see part of the play.
- Make the fouls impact the play before making putting down the flag – ask yourself does the action impact the play? Always player safety first but no cheap football fouls