

South Dakota High School Activities Association

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Teachable Moments

COACHES, each week take at least 5 minutes out of your practice to talk to your players about Good Sportsmanship and Playing Within the Rules. Remind players about being a Good Citizen. All of these things go hand-in-hand in being a well respected student athlete. The time and effort you put in building good character of young people is more likely to help them overcome difficulties in life and be responsible citizens. Make players aware of your philosophy and your expectations pertaining to how they represent your program, school and community. Hopefully the dividends will outweigh the unwanted.

OFFICIALS, you are responsible for your actions on and off the field. You are held to a higher standard. It is important that all officials enforce the rules, manage games and build relationships through consistent and appropriate behavior. Each game deserves your maximum effort. No matter what level of play you officiate, no matter what the score may be or the time remaining in the game, you must have a dedicated purpose.

Coaches and Officials are recognized for what you do,
but you are accountable for who you are.

Video Review

The SDHSAA has found that the most effective training tool for promoting consistency and improved officiating is through video review.

With the help of SDHSAA coaches and Mark Smith of Pierre, the SDHSAA is working on compiling a video review of unique plays and situations.

The SDHSAA is hoping the plays will allow discussion areas of mechanics, crew communication and rules study with football officials on high school mechanics and rules.

The plays are not meant to pick on any one official, crew or team. These plays are meant to be a learning tool to help promote what we all want to see from our officials.

Take ideas from these plays that you find helpful and apply them to your football officiating game. This week's video plays:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcJb1PooumA>

Tooth and Mouth Protector

Players are required to wear a tooth and mouth protector which is protecting all of the teeth. It is recommended that the mouth piece be properly fitted to the individual player. Tooth and mouth protectors may be any color, including white or clear.

Schools are buying mouth pieces by the bulk which means the mouth pieces are all the same size. If the mouth piece goes past all the teeth and keeps extending the players complain of discomfort, and the mouthguard is not being properly worn. The mouth pieces have marks at the end so football players can cut/trim the mouth piece to fit their teeth as each player has a different size mouth. The SDHSAA will allow mouth protectors to be altered if it does not decrease protection of all the teeth – **ALL TEETH MUST BE IN CONTACT WITH THE MOUTH PIECE!**

Prior to the start of the game, the head coach shall be responsible for verifying to the referee and another game official that all his players are legally equipped and understand how to wear/use the mandatory equipment while the ball is live. Game officials should, through normal observations, attempt to verify that each player is legally equipped.

Punts—Back Judge Mechanics

Back judges need to anticipate what can happen between the time the kick is made and the down ends. Go through a checklist to remind yourself what to look for: a fair catch signal, first touching, kick-catch interference, legal or illegal batting, when to drop a beanbag, touchback, etc. Starting position should be 10-12 wider than and 2-3 yards behind the deepest receiver. Be where you can observe action on and by the receiver. Be on the opposite side of the field as the line judge because the line judge goes downfield at the snap.

Kick Catch Interference

The kicking team is responsible to know the location of the kicked ball. If a receiver has to run around a kicking team player while moving toward the ball and attempting to catch it, it is kick catch interference even if there is no contact. The receiver has a right to an unimpeded path to the ball and unhindered opportunity to catch the kick.

It is kick catch interference if the kicking team contacts the receiver before or simultaneous with his first touching of the ball.

A kick receiver is defenseless and most vulnerable when (1) his attention is on the downward flight of the ball or (2) he has just touched the ball.

Kick catch interference can also include a kicking team member standing close to a receiver; running in front of him; waving his arms at him; yelling, shouting or screaming at him; or otherwise obstructing his path to the ball. This means you do not have to have contact to have a foul.

A receiver need not give a fair catch signal to gain this protection.

Kick catch interference is strictly a judgment call. There is no “halo” or hard and fast distance to be used as guide.

Kick-Catch Interference: Penalty

When you have fair catch interference, the receiving team has three options:

- Team R may accept the results of the play
 - An awarded fair catch after enforcement of a 15-yard penalty from the spot of the foul
 - A 15-yard penalty from the previous spot and a replay of the down
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Offensive Holding

The hold must restrict the defender's ability to participate in the play. The hold must turn the defender; take his feet; and/or change the direction of the defender's path at the point of attack.

If an offensive lineman takes out the feet of a defensive player by tackling him, pulling or taking him to the ground, then a holding penalty should be called.

If the hold is at the point of attack and significantly restricts the defender's ability to move and participate in the play, by taking his feet or turning him from his intended path to the ball, then a hold should be called. Make the hold big!

Players "dancing" with one another when no advantage has been gained are not guilty of holding. If an offensive blocker's hands are inside the frame of the defender's body, and the offensive blocker has not changed the defender or changed the direction of the defender's path of travel, then the hold should not be called even if that offensive lineman has grasped the defender's shirt.

If the offensive player's hands grasp the shirt of his opponent outside the frame of the defender's body, and the defender has not turned or spun, of his path to the ball carrier has not changed, then a hold should not be called.

Football officials must judge whether the defender was still able to get up the field to the quarterback or ball carrier, or whether the defender can still participate in the play. If so, a hold should not be called.

An umpire can make his job easier by talking early and often to the offensive and defensive players about holding. Sharing information with both lines lets the players know what to expect and what will and will not be called. In that way, much of the holding can be avoided.

The hand(s) cannot be thrust forward above the opponent's frame to contact an opponent on the neck or face area.

Hurdling

Hurdling is an attempt by a player to jump (hurdle) with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent who is contacting the ground with no part of his body except one or both feet (a player still on his feet).

This is an illegal Personal Contact Foul and carries a 15-yard penalty (2-22). Officials use personal foul signal.

No player or nonplayer shall hurdle an opponent. (9-4-3d). "On his feet" means no part of the opponent's body other than one or both feet is in contact with the ground.

To focus on the dangers associated with hurdling, it was included as a Point of Emphasis for the 2012 season. Attempting to "hurdle" a defender increases the risk of injury to both the hurdler and tackler. Coaches must teach their players of the inherent dangers associated with this illegal act, and game officials must call it when observed.

PLAY: Team K is attempting a try. Linebacker R1 runs toward the line of scrimmage and, after the ball is snapped, hurdles snapper K2 and lands on his feet. At no time does R1 make contact with any team K player. The try fails. Has R1 fouled?

RULING: Yes, R1 is guilty of hurdling. Hurdling is an attempt by a player to jump with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent who is still on his feet. That act is considered a personal foul. The 15-yard penalty is enforced from the previous spot.

Enforcement Spots

1. Live ball personal foul (foul while ball is live)—if the runner has not crossed the goal line the penalty would be enforced from the spot of the foul.
 - If an unnecessary (but legal) block against defenseless player occurs while the runner is still running in the field of play (live ball)—you would enforce the penalty from the spot of the foul—take away the touchdown.
Rationale: safety rules for contact against players who are deemed defenseless
2. Dead ball personal foul—if the runner has crossed the goal line, goes out of bounds or is down by rule before the personal foul—you have a dead ball situation so you would count the touchdown and enforce penalty on extra point try or kickoff.
3. Live ball unsportsmanlike foul—if runner has not crossed goal line and you have an unsportsmanlike penalty you would consider the unsportsmanlike foul as a dead ball foul—live ball foul penalized as a dead ball foul. Count touchdown—enforce penalty on extra point try or kickoff.
4. Dead ball unsportsmanlike foul—runner has crossed goal line, goes out of bounds or is down by rule (dead ball). Count touchdown—enforce penalty on extra point try or kickoff.

Unsportsmanlike acts are those that do not involve physical contact against an opponent. Taunting, excessive celebrating and disrespect directed at officials are examples of unsportsmanlike acts. Late hits, flagrant facemask grab, unnecessary roughness, excessive or targeting fouls are among those considered personal fouls.

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.

Weather—Second Half Choices

With the weather patterns moving across the state, which seems like each Friday, coaches can delay their choice for the second half instead of indicating choice at the end of first half. Wind direction may change during halftime.

Second half choices must be completed before the three minute warm-up period begins.

Following the mandatory three-minute warm-up period after the halftime intermission expires, both teams assume their respective free-kick formations.

The game officials are responsible for ensuring that there is a 3-minute warm-up period posted on the clock for use by the coaches immediately after the halftime intermission expires. The head coach is responsible for his team being on the field for mandatory warm-up time at the end of the scheduled halftime intermission.

Huddle

It is not a foul for Team A to break the huddle with 12 players as long as any replaced player begins to leave the field within three seconds of the arrival of his substitute (2-32-15, 3-7-1, 3.7.1A).

PLAY: Team A has 11 players in the huddle when A12 enters the game. After about two seconds have elapsed, Team A breaks the huddle with 12 players. A5 continues to his team bench area.

RULING: Legal.

Passes To Save Time/Yardage

Save Loss of Yardage

A forward pass is illegal if to save loss of yardage the pass is intentionally thrown incomplete into an area not occupied by an eligible Team A receiver. **Penalty:** five yards from the spot where the pass was released plus loss of down. **The game clock starts on the ready for play signal.**

By NFHS rules for high school football—A passer who is outside the frame of the tackle and ball lands beyond the neutral is NOT an exception to the intentionally grounded rule. This exception applies to college and NFL games but NOT high school games.

Pass: Intentionally Grounded To Save Time

It is an illegal forward pass any time a pass is intentionally thrown incomplete to conserve time. However, it is legal to intentionally throw the ball forward and directly to the ground if it thrown immediately after receiving a direct hand-to-hand snap.

“Immediately” means right after receiving the snap and includes allowing the passer to take a quick step backward before releasing the pass. The passer may not intentionally ground the ball if he muffs a hand-to-hand snap and the ball hits the ground or if the snap is not hand-to-hand (i.e., when the snap is a backward pass as in a shotgun formation). **Penalty:** five yards from the spot where the pass was released plus loss of down.

OVERTIME PROCEDURE

After the three minute intermission the visiting team will have the choice of the coin toss “heads” or “tails”. The winners of the coin toss will have three choices: Offense, Defense or choice of end of field to put ball in play. Only one end will be utilized during the two sets of downs to insure equal game condition.

If the game goes to a second overtime, the loser of the overtime coin toss will have the same choices: Offense, Defense or choice of end of field to put ball in play. They may choose to play at other end of field as you do not have to use the same end of the field for all the overtime periods.

- One time out per-overtime period
- No clock
- Series ends when Team A scores OR with Team B possession
 - If the defensive team gains possession, the ball becomes dead immediately and the offensive team’s series of downs is ended.
- Line to gain is ALWAYS THE GOALLINE
- No Chains—only the down indicator is used

Officials need to study overtime procedure as found on Page 84-85 of NFHS rule book.

Live Ball Fouls—Dead Ball Fouls

Many of the fouls an official calls in a game occur before or as a team is trying to put the ball into play. It is important to know which fouls require the official to blow his whistle and prevent the ball from becoming live and which fouls require a flag but no whistle.

Calling dead-ball fouls has the importance of shutting down the play before it gets started. When an official observes a dead-ball foul, blow your whistle to stop further action, throw your flag high into the air to get everyone’s attention and give the stop-the-clock signal whether the clock is running or not.

The most common dead-ball fouls are illegal snap, false start, encroachment, snap infraction and delay of game. The false start is the most frequent dead-ball foul and is also the most frequent foul of any type.

The most common live-ball fouls if not corrected become fouls when the ball is snapped are illegal formation, illegal shift, and illegal motion. Live-ball fouls occur simultaneous with the snap. Fouls simultaneous with the snap are simply acts that take place while the ball is dead, but which do not become a foul until the ball is snapped. The rationale is the act in question can be corrected up until the snap. These fouls are enforced from the previous spot (10-4-2a).

It can be tempting to blow your whistle when you see two offensive players in motion just prior to the snap. You have to remember that something could happen (a charged timeout, both players could get set for one second or the end of the period) that would preclude the ball from being snapped. Let the snap occur before throwing a flag for a live-ball fouls.

The clock may have started or continued to run after a dead-ball occurred. The time should be reset, especially if time is critical such as near the end of a half. That is not the case for live-ball fouls at the snap. Time run off the clock in that case will stand since there was a legal live-ball play. Do not reset the clock after a live-ball foul at the snap regardless if a foul is accepted or declined.

Another consideration for fouls that happen before the snap is the mechanics of throwing the flag. For dead or live ball fouls there is no need to throw the flag to a particular spot. Those fouls are never spot fouls. The enforcement spot is always the previous or succeeding spot. A flag needs to be thrown high into the air to indicate to all a penalty has occurred and to get everyone's attention.

Underhanded Forward Pass

It is legal to throw a forward pass underhanded. The manner in which the ball is thrown has no bearing on whether it is forward or backwards. In NFHS play, a forward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction toward the opponent's end line. A backward pass is one thrown with its initial direction parallel with or toward the runner's end line.

A forward pass thrown from beyond the neutral zone is an illegal pass. If the ball strikes the ground, the pass is incomplete, the ball is dead and the down ends. Rule 7-5-5.

Officials Quiz 2017

Question 1: K23, is running down field under a punt, has the kick strike him on his helmet: (a) R36 is in position to catch the kick if he so chooses; or (b) no Team R player is in position to be able to get to the ball and catch it. Do you have kick-catching interference?

Question 2: On a fourth down attempt, holder K22 muffs the snap. K15 kicks the loose ball between the uprights. Does the kick score?

Question 3: K55 punts and the kick goes well downfield. As R34 is about to catch the kick, K12 waves his hands near R34's face (faceguarding) but makes no contact. Do you have kick-catch interference?

Question 4: Fourth down on Team K's 40 yard line. K24 punts. Deep receiver R44, realizing the kick is shorter than expected, is running forward to try to reach the kick, but has to go around K15, who came an eyelash short of contact. Do you have kick-catch interference?

Question 5: Player A34 runs for five yards. After he is down, the umpire notices A34 is not wearing (a) knee pads, (b) thigh pads, (c) a tailbone protector. What is the ruling?

Question 6: Scrimmage kick from R's 40-yard line going in. The ball lands at R's 10-yard line and is bouncing towards R's goal line. K34 sprinting downfield, catches the ball on one of the bounces at the 3-yard line with both feet on the ground and attempts to stop but slides (with both feet on the ground and the ball in his arms) from the 3-yard line into the end zone. Does momentum apply or does R get the ball 1st and 10 on the 20 after a touchback?

Question 7: K11's punt is rolling downfield at the Team R 40-yard line when K89 scoops it up and takes a few steps with the ball. Legal advance?

Question 8: K25's untouched punt is caught by K32 downfield and there (a) are no Team R players anywhere near the spot of the catch, or (b) is a Team R player in position to catch the ball. Do you have kick catch interference?

Football Officials Or Coaches Concerns

- If you have any play situations during your games that officials statewide should know about to help them become better officials, please send plays to be included in weekly bulletins.
- If you have questions about rule interpretation, please forward your concerns to buck.timmins@k12.sd.us or call me at 605-996-1483 (home) or 605-933-1493 (cell).
- If you have any questions or comments about any information you will receive this football season--please forward your concern to me.

Quiz Answers

Ruling 1: In (a) K2 has committed kick-catching interference as R23 was in position to catch the kick. In (b) there is no foul as no Team R player was in position to be able to get to the ball and catch it.

Ruling 2: The kick does not score and it is a foul for illegally kicking the ball. The result of the play is a touchback. If the penalty is accepted, it will be enforced 15 yards from the spot of the foul, and fourth down will be replayed.

Ruling 3: If the covering official judges K12 obstructed R34, K12 is guilty of kick-catch interference.

Ruling 4: R44 has the right of way. If the covering official judges K15 obstructed R44, K15 is guilty of kick-catch interference; otherwise no foul.

Ruling 5: A 15-yard penalty is enforced from the end of A34's run; it is treated as a dead-ball foul and is charged to the head coach for purposes of his disqualification. Also, A34 must leave the game until his equipment conforms with the rules.

Ruling 6: Momentum is not a factor since a K player secured possession of the ball. Once the kick is possessed by a Team K player, the ball becomes dead. R's ball, 1st and 10 from their 3-yard line. Case Book 4.2.2 Situation F.

Ruling 7: The ball should be whistled dead when K89 gains possession. Team K cannot advance the ball. It's Team R's ball, first and 10 at the R40 yard line.

Ruling 8: No foul in (a) if no receiver is in position to catch the ball, but kick catch interference in (b) as there was a receiver in position to catch the ball.

Do Not Tolerate Taunting, Baiting And Unsportsmanlike Acts
