

2017 Football Newsletter No. 9

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Thank You

The football season is an extremely busy time for every one of you. It takes hard work to become a good official. We appreciate your investment in time and your time spent away from family.

We would like to give you all a heartfelt thank you for the job you are doing as an official.

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=OXI54A57Kcs>

Topic Review—2017 Football Season

Blindside Block and Pop-Up Kick Video Plays

The blindside block involves contact by a blocker against an opponent who, because of physical positioning and focus on concentration, is vulnerable to injury. Unless initiated with open hands, it is a foul for excessive and unnecessary contact when the block is forceful and outside of the free-blocking zone.

A pop-up kick is a free kick in which the kicker drives the ball immediately to the ground, the ball strikes the ground once and goes into the air in the manner of a ball kicked directly off the tee. Such kicks will be penalized as a dead-ball free-kick infraction.

Free Blocking Zone

The free-blocking zone disintegrates and the exception for a player to block below the waist (offense or defense) and/or the exception for an offensive lineman to block below the waist are not to continue AFTER the ball has left the zone.

Offensive or defensive players who are NOT on the line of scrimmage and in the free blocking zone at the snap are prohibited from blocking below the waist. Position of the player at the snap determines if defensive or offensive player is on the line of scrimmage.

When Team A is in the shotgun/pistol or scrimmage kick formation, blocking below the waist is legal if the block is initiated immediately at the snap (offensive lineman can't stand-up then go back down and block below the waist) while the ball is passing through the zone. If there is any delay, it is an illegal block.

Live Ball Fouls—Dead Ball Fouls

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.

Break the 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 arrival of his substitute. A player who is being replaced is allowed three seconds to acknowledge that by starting to leave the offensive or defensive huddle and continuing to his team area.

A replaced player is one that has been notified by a substitute that he is to leave the field. The replaced player needs to continue to his team area. The three second notification does not pertain as to how long it takes the replaced player to reach his team area. The replaced player only needs to be in his team box area before the ball is snapped.

Free Kick Principles

Free Kick goes out of bounds untouched by R—penalty options

- 5 yards previous spot—rekick
- Decline foul, taking ball at inbounds spot at hash mark
- R's ball 25 yards beyond spot of kick, placed at hash mark

Unsuccessful Field Goal Kick

In NFHS, if an attempted field goal is unsuccessful, it is treated the same as a punt. If the ball breaks the plane of team R's goal line, it is immediately dead and a touchback results. If the kick goes out of bounds in the field of play or becomes dead inbounds, the ball belongs to team R where it was declared dead or went out of bound.

Post-Scrimmage Kick (PSK) Enforcement

- Post-scrimmage kick penalty enforcement is used after a foul by R when the foul occurs during a scrimmage kick play.
- The scrimmage kick crosses the expanded neutral zone; the foul by R is beyond the expanded neutral zone and before the kick ends; R must be in possession at the end of the down.
- **Rationale:** By punting the ball, Team K has indicated it has ended its series. PSK allows Team R to keep the ball after enforcement of a penalty for a foul committed under the correct circumstances

Awarded First Down

Fouls by Team B that give Team A an automatic first down are roughing the kicker or holder, roughing the passer, and roughing the snapper.

Loss of Down

Fouls by Team A that include loss of right to replay a down are illegally handing the ball forward; illegal forward pass; and illegal touching of forward pass by an ineligible.

Blocking Below The Waist--Chop Block

A chop block is a combination block by two or more teammates against an opponent other than the runner, with or without delay, where one of the blocks is at the knee or below and the other block is above the knee.

The penalty for a chop block is 15 yards and is enforced under the “all-but-one” principle.

Some key points regarding chop blocks.

- Both the offensive and defensive players can be guilty of a chop block
- Two high blocks are legal in situations where blocking is allowed
- Two low blocks are legal in situations where low blocks are legal
- High-Low or Low-High blocks are chop blocks
- When in doubt, the contact is at the knee or below

These safety-driven rules mandate consistent enforcement by officials. Properly positioned officials, watching the play from a wider perspective than simply following the football, and properly instructed players taught the right techniques by their respective coaches, will ensure that knee and other injuries are minimized, and that the balance between offense and defense is maintained.

Restricted Area

The restricted area (formerly the coaches box) has been defined where a maximum of three coaches may communicate with players and substitutes during dead ball situations. The (up to three) coach(s) must move behind the restricted area before the ball becomes live. Coaches you need to name a “get-back-coach,” so you as coaches in the restricted area have ample room to move into this area before the ball becomes live.

If a game official unintentionally contacts a coach or other nonplayer in the restricted area while the ball is live, the team is assessed a 15-yard penalty for a nonplayer, illegal personal contact foul. As a nonplayer foul, the penalty is enforced from the succeeding spot. A second such offense would result in the head coach’s disqualification. Unlike a foul for sideline interference (non-contact, Rule 9-8-1k or 9-8-3), no warning or 5-yard penalty is required in this situation.

Penalty enforcement applies to each individual team pertaining to any violation(s) enforced.

- First offense, flag, team sideline warning, no yardage penalty assessed
 - Sideline warning—don't wait until the fourth quarter—if coaches are there now, it is because you as an official have let them be there the entire game
- Second offense, a five-yard penalty for sideline interference
- Third offense, 15 yard penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct charged to the offending head coach.

Expanded Neutral Zone

On scrimmage downs, the neutral zone may be expanded following the snap to a maximum of two yards beyond the defensive line of scrimmage, in the field of play. That affects scrimmage kicks and forward passes.

On scrimmage kicks, the touching of a low kick is ignored in or behind the expanded neutral zone and Team K cannot be guilty of first touching until the ball clears the expanded neutral zone.

On forward pass plays, ineligible Team A players may continue into the expanded neutral zone if contact is made immediately on Team B linemen and sustained the block as long as the contact does not continue beyond the two-yard expanded neutral zone.

Calling Pass Interference

Don't Focus On The Ball

- A. Train yourself not to look at the ball in flight
- B. Watch downfield action of the players in the area where the action will occur
- C. By shifting your eyes from the ball to players you will be able to rule on any interference that occurs while the ball is in the air

The Basics

- A. Once the offense throws the ball, all eligible players on both teams have equal territorial rights to move toward, catch or deflect the pass.
- B. It is not interference if unavoidable contact occurs when two or more eligible's are making a simultaneous, bona fide attempt to move toward, catch or bat the pass.
- C. Physical contact may or may not be involved.
- D. Catch ability is never a factor in high school interference calls

Mechanics/Positioning

- Wing officials, be sure to use your signals when the ball is near the sideline. Is it in or is it out? Clock operators need to know. Your officiating partners need to know.
- Wings—concentrate on forward progress spots. If a player is downed in-bounds and immediately rolls out of bounds then you should have a wind
- 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.

Kick Holder Restrictions

A placekick holder, who at the snap has his knee on the ground while there is a teammate in kicking position, must rise before he may try to advance, hand the ball to

another player or pass the ball. If the holder does any of those things while his knee(s) is on the ground, the ball is immediately dead.

If the holder rises to catch or recover an errant snap, and immediately returns his knee(s) to the ground and places the ball for a kick or again rises to advance, hand, or pass, the ball remains live.

NOTE: The ball becomes dead if the place-kick holder muffs the snap or fumbles and recovers after his knees have been off the ground and he then touches the ground with other than hand or foot while in possession of the ball.

Eligibility

At the snap, eligible receivers are those in the backfield or on the end of the line with a number 1 to 49 or 80 to 99. Interior linemen (regardless of number) and ends or backs numbered 50 to 79 are ineligible at the snap. Players numbered 50 to 79 inclusive cannot report to the referee to become eligible receivers.

Eligibility rules apply *only* to legal forward passes. Eligibility does not arise in the case of an illegal forward pass..

If a pass is caught by an ineligible receiver, the ball remains live and may be advanced. However, the penalty will be accepted, and the play negated, unless a subsequent fumble gives Team B possession of the ball.

An ineligible Team A player by number or position can throw a legal forward pass. An ineligible Team A player can catch or recover a backward pass and advance.

Backfield players numbered (50-79) would be considered an ineligible receiver (because of the number they are wearing) and may not advance beyond the expanded neutral zone on a legal forward pass play before a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral is in flight.

Officials Quiz Review

Question 1: Team A scores on the last play of the (A) second period; (B) fourth period, to make the score, Team B-21 and Team A-19. During Team A's successful 2-point try, B1 commits an unsportsmanlike foul. How is the penalty enforced?

Question 2: A1's fumble is rolling beyond the line, where it is batted toward Team A's goal line by (a) A5, or (b) B8. Do you have a legal bat?

Question 3: Guard A1 and tackle A2 are the leading blockers on a sweep. They lock arms and block linebacker B3. Is this a legal block?

Question 4: Team A has ball fourth and eight. Player A24 gains six yards when he is tackled. After the whistles sounds, R73 is flagged for a late hit. How is penalty enforced?

Question 5: Time expires at the end of the second period during a scrimmage kick. After the down, K1 piles on and R1 strikes K2. When are the penalties enforced?

Question 6: Team K tries an onside kick from Team K's 40 yard line, as the ball bounces near the sideline the ball is muffed out-of-bounds by K46 at Team R's 49 yard line. What is the ruling?

Question 7: Second and 10 from Team A's 33 yard line. While right guard A68 is blocking defensive tackle B76 above the waist at A's 36 yard line, left guard A60 pulls and joins A68 in a double-team. A60 blocks B76 at the knees. Legal Block?

Question 8: A1 catches a pass and has a clear path to the end zone. At the team B five yard line and before he scores, A1 points at and taunts pursuing B2. The line judge throws his flag for taunting and reports A1's foul as (a) unsportsmanlike conduct, or (b) a personal foul. What is the ruling?

Question 9: Team A breaks their huddle and moves to the line. As the quarterback is barking signals, the referee counts 11 Team A players on the field. Suddenly, A42 enters the field and no Team A player departs. Is there a foul?

Question 10: With no-time-outs remaining and fourth down with 40 seconds to go in the third period, Team K is preparing to punt into a strong wind. With 20 seconds remaining, K1 commits a false start. When does the clock start after penalty enforcement?

Football Officials Or Coaches Concerns

- 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), the penalty is enforced from the succeeding spot on the kickoff to start the third period. In (B), the penalty for B1's foul will be administered from the succeeding spot if an overtime period is played.

Ruling 2: You will have a illegal bat in both (a) and (b). A grounded fumble cannot be batted in any direction.

Ruling 3: That is interlocked blocking. The penalty is 10 yards in NFHS. Enforce penalty from the spot of the foul.

Ruling 4: The series for Team A ended short of a first down. A new series is awarded Team B. The penalty for the late hit by R73 will be administered then the line-to-gain chains will be established. First and 10 for Team B.

Ruling 5: Both dead ball fouls after the end of the second period will be enforced on the second-half kickoff in the order of occurrence. R1 will be disqualified for fighting.

Ruling 6: Team R could have Team K rekick after a five yard penalty, or take the ball first and 10 at the inbounds spot on Team R's 49, or take the ball first and 10 at the inbounds spot at Team R's 35.

Ruling 7: Chop Block (high-low). If accepted Team A will be penalized 15 yards.

Ruling 8: In (a), that is a live-ball foul penalized as a dead-ball foul. Team A keeps the score and the penalty is enforced on the try. In (b), the personal foul is a live-ball foul during a run. The penalty is enforced from the spot of the foul (team B's five yard line). It would be Team A's ball, first and 10 from team B's 20-yard line and the score would NOT count.

Ruling 9: Team A must be given an opportunity for the replaced player to attempt to depart. Three seconds is allowed. If after that time, no Team A player attempts to depart and the ball has not been snapped, throw the flag and blow the whistle for the dead-ball foul (illegal substitution, five yards). If the snap occurs before the limit is reached, throw the flag (illegal participation, 15 yards), but allow the play to continue.

Ruling 10: Penalize Team K 5 yards and start the clock with the snap. Under normal circumstances, the clock would start with the ready-for-play signal, but this would permit the period to end and K could then punt with the wind. K will not be permitted to gain this advantage by committing a foul to consume time.