

# 2018 Football

## Newsletter No. 4

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### 2018 Football Region Meetings

Region meeting requirement must be completed by September 30. Each football official must attend a region football officials meeting to be eligible to officiate football play-off games.

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### Line-To-Gain Equipment

Ensure that the line-to-gain equipment is marked at halfway point with tape. If line-to-gain equipment is NOT marked halfway with tape—you as the linesman need to take care of this before the game starts with the help of the host school athletic director or home team coaching staff.

If the host school is not favorable in marking chains--report this situation to the SDHSAA and a member of the SDHSAA staff will talk to the athletic director at the school about the importance of this mark.

This mark can help on penalties measured from the previous spot or spot fouls to determine if first down after enforcement.

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### Video Review

The SDHSAA is excited to bring a new opportunity to help progress football officiating in our state. 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=zz4Dz4jzo5w&feature=youtu.be>

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## Rugby Style Kick/Quick-Kick Punt

A kicker is any player who legally punts, drop kicks or place kicks. A player becomes a kicker when his knee, lower leg or foot makes contact with the ball. He is still considered to be the kicker until he has had reasonable opportunity to regain his balance.

Team K does not have to be in scrimmage kick formation to kick the ball.

Player A2 gets off a quick kick. Is A2 entitled to the same protection as a conventional punter? Any player of Team A may legally kick the ball and is eligible for protection assuming it is reasonably certain a kick will be made (NFHS 9-4-5). A quick kick/rugby style kick are examples in which there is not reasonable certainty a kick will be made. As a result, Team B is given more latitude than during conventional punting situations (NFHS 9.4.5a).

When the punter runs out in a rugby style kick or a quick-kick the defense must be given an opportunity to tackle the runner.

If contact is slight and partially caused by the unexpected or unnecessary movement of the kicker, it is not a foul. Officials must consider avoidability when ruling whether contact is incidental. Contact may not be avoidable when it is not reasonably certain a kick will be made.

In NFHS, if blocking the defender into the kicker or holder is the sole reason for the contact, there is no foul.

Roughing the kicker includes any act that endangers the safety of the kicker or holder. The penalty for roughing is 15 yards from the previous spot and an automatic first down. Running into the kicker or holder is a foul that occurs when the kicker is displaced from his kicking position but is not roughed. The penalty is five yards from the previous spot with the down repeated.

The punter in a rugby style kick play or quick-kick punt play NEVER forfeits his protection from personal fouls.

**Case Book 9.4.5 SITUATION B:** K in scrimmage kick formation, muffs the snap, but quickly recovers and begins to run. However K1 changes his mind and: (a) punts on the run; or (b) abruptly stops and punts. R1 is unable to stop his charge and forcibly contacts K1. R1 did not touch the kick.

**RULING:** No foul in either (a) or (b) because it was not reasonably certain K1 was going to punt the ball.

**COMMENT:** It is always roughing the kicker if the contact could have been avoided regardless of whether or not it was apparent a kick would be made. Only unavoidable contact is ignored if it is not reasonable certain a kick will be made. The primary criteria is whether or not the contact is unavoidable.

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## Enforcement--Review

### Fouls During A Loose-Ball Play

If a foul occurs during a loose ball play, the basic spot is the previous spot unless post-scrimmage kick enforcement applies. When the foul is by the *team in possession* and occurs behind the basic spot, the penalty is enforced from the *spot of the foul*.

**PLAY 1:** During a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone, snapper A58 holds B74 behind the neutral zone.

**RULING 1:** Penalize Team A 10 yards from the spot of the foul. The basic spot is the previous spot because it is a loose ball play. The foul is behind the previous spot so the holding penalty has spot foul enforcement.

## Fouls During A Running Play

If a foul occurs during a running play, the basic spot is the spot where the run ended, unless it is a foul by the offense (team in possession) behind the end of the run. In that case, enforce the penalty from the spot of the foul. If the runner does not lose possession, the ball becomes dead when the run ends.

**PLAY 2:** First and 10 on Team A's 46 yard line. A1 is sacked on his 35 yard line. During the down, A2 clipped at his (a) 47 yard line, (b) 41 yard line, or (c) 33 yard line. In each case, the penalty is accepted.

**RULING 2:** The basic spot is where the run ended, Team A's 35 yard line. In (a) and (b), the penalties are enforced from the 35 yard line (end of run) back to Team A's 20 yard line. In (c), it is a spot foul moving the ball back to Team A's 18 yard line as the foul is behind the end of the run.

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## Fouls Before or After Change of Possession

When both teams foul during a change of possession down and the team in final possession gets the ball free of a foul (with "clean hands"), they have the opportunity to retain possession. The fact that their opponent's foul occurred after the change of possession has no bearing on the enforcement. However, when Team B, the "clean hands" team, retains possession by declining the opponent's foul, the penalty for Team B's foul shall be enforced.

**RATIONALE:** The "clean hands" rule prevents an inequity that once appeared in the rules. If A2 were illegally in motion and B1 intercepted a pass, a foul by B2 during the runback would have constituted a double foul and caused the down to be replayed. The current rule allows team B the option of accepting the penalty for the foul by A2 or declining it and retaining the ball. If the penalty for A's foul were declined in order to keep the ball, the penalty for the foul by B2 would then be administered. The rule separates the two fouls and removes them from the double foul category. A foul by the team after it has gained possession is penalized.

**PLAY 2:** During a legal forward pass which crosses the neutral zone, A1 is illegally in motion at the snap. B1 intercepts and during his return, B2 clips A2.

**RULING 2:** The illegal motion by A1 and the clipping by B2 are both live-ball fouls, but because the foul by B2 followed a change of team possession, they do not automatically constitute a double foul. If the captain of B declines the penalty for the illegal motion by A1, B will retain possession, but the penalty for clipping by B2 must be enforced. If B accepts the penalty for the illegal motion by A1, it is a double foul and the down will be replayed

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## Motion

**Double wing formation:** If both backs go in motion at the same time and have not made any movement that simulates the beginning of a play the play would continue because both backs could stop --reset--and remain motionless for one second before the snap which makes the play legal.

If both backs are still in motion or if one back stops and the other stays in motion you would have a illegal shift foul at the snap which is a live ball foul that carries a five-yard penalty from the previous spot. The defensive team could accept the five yard penalty from the previous spot and replay the down or decline the penalty and take the result of the play.

The philosophy is some acts can be corrected before the snap and are not a foul until the ball is snapped.

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## Advancing A Blocked Scrimmage Kick

If a team tries a field goal or scrimmage kick on first, second, or third down and the kicked is blocked--if the recovery is by the kicking team in or behind the neutral zone, Team K may recover and the down counts. The series for K does not end because the kick was blocked.

Team R may also recover kick behind or beyond the line of scrimmage and advance the blocked kick.

That is why it is important for the linesman to stay on the line of scrimmage until the ball crosses the neutral zone. All officials must be alert for a blocked kick and for recovery and advance of blocked kicks.

**Situation A:** With fourth and 10 on B's 25-yard line, K1's field goal attempt is blocked by R2 and recovered on B's 28-yard line by R5 who advanced for a touchdown.

**Ruling:** Legal Play. Touchdown for Team R. Team R may advance a blocked kick behind or beyond the line of scrimmage.

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## 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 an ineligible player is downfield then an illegal pass is thrown, there is only one foul—for the pass, and not a second foul for the ineligible receiver being downfield.

During a down in which a legal forward pass crosses the neutral zone, interior offensive linemen and other ineligible Team A players are not allowed to advance downfield before the pass is thrown.

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.

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## Ineligible Receivers

There is no foul for ineligible receivers downfield if the pass does not cross the neutral zone. Thus on a typical screen pass completed behind the line of scrimmage, it is perfectly legal for ineligible receivers to go downfield anytime after the snap. Such receivers may also legally block downfield as long as the screen pass is completed behind the line of scrimmage.

If the pass is deflected by a Team B player in or behind the neutral zone and it goes beyond the zone, there is also no foul. This exception protects the offense from an act they could not anticipate.

**PLAY:** A11 runs straight up the field and after the ball has left the passer's hand (a) B9 illegally blocks A11 and throws him off his pattern. The pass is completed to A10 who was clearly on the opposite side of the field.

**RULING:** There is no pass interference call on B9, however, a flag should have been dropped for the illegal block.

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### 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.

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### Officials Quiz 2018

**Question 1:** The game clock is stopped because A44 is bleeding. Team A then requests a charged timeout during which A44 receives medical treatment, his bleeding stops and the wound is covered. Does A44 need to be replaced?

**Question 2:** Fourth and nine from team R's 38 yard line. Punter K1 tries for a "coffin-corner" kick. With no team R player in position to make a play, K7 catches K1's punt at team R's three yard line. K7's momentum carries him into team R's end zone. Is that a touchback, or does the momentum exception apply?

**Question 3:** After the ball is declared ready for play, backs A25 and A34 simultaneously go in motion and stop. Before one second elapses, back A46 goes in motion parallel to his end line. The ball is snapped while A46 continues in motion. What is the ruling?

**Question 4:** Before the snap and with the game clock running, B79 jumps into the neutral zone and gets back without making contact. His action causes lineman A65 (lined up directly across from B79) to lift his hand from the ground, and he falls forward into the neutral zone without making contact. Do you have a false start on A65? When does the clock start?

**Question 5:** Time expires for the second period as A11 runs the ball beyond the line to gain and A11 then throws a forward pass to A9 who scores a touchdown. Do you count the touchdown?

**Question 6:** Team A is in shotgun formation. At the snap, left tackle A77 sets up to pass block, taking two steps back to block the edge rush end, B50. As B50 tries to rush outside of the blocker, A 77 drops and blocks B50 just below the knees, taking both players to the ground. What is the ruling?

**Question 7:** K1's free kick or scrimmage kick is muffed at team R's 10 yard line by kick receiver R1 and football rolls into the R's end zone.

**Question 8:** A1 is headed for the end zone to score a would be touchdown (a) on the five yard line (b) has broken the plane of the goal line with the ball; when teammate A2 throws a legal block on an opponent completely out-of-the-play at the 50 yard line.

**Question 9:** On third and 20 from Team A's own 35-yard line, A12 throws a forward pass to A88. Prior to the catch, B24 is detected holding. A88 advances to Team B's 45 yard line following the catch. Where is the penalty enforced?

**Question 10:** K1 punts the ball and R2 must race up to try and field the punt as the kick is shorter than expected. As R2 runs forward to try and reach the kick, he must go around K3 who comes within a yard of R2 but does not contact R2. How does the back judge handle this play?

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## 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](mailto: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.

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## Quiz Answers

**Ruling 1:** A44 must be replaced for at least one down. He cannot re-enter even though his team used a timeout.

**Ruling 2:** The ball is dead when a team K player catches a scrimmage kick. The momentum exception does not apply. It exists to prevent team R from inadvertently scoring a safety for team K and only applies when a team R player possesses the ball inside his five yard line. Since no member of team R was in position to make a catch, there is no foul for kick-catching interference. The ball belongs to team R, first and 10 at its three yard line.

**Ruling 3:** Illegal shift. The one second requirement has not been satisfied.

**Ruling 4:** This is a dead-ball encroachment foul against the defense. The foul was the only reason for stopping the clock, so it will start on the ready-for-play signal. The offended team has option to start the clock on snap for an accepted penalty inside the last two minutes of either half.

**Ruling 5:** Team B will likely accept the penalty, which will negate the touchdown. The period will not be extended as A's foul contained a loss-of-down provisions.

**Ruling 6:** Foul for illegal block below the waist. While the contact took place with the zone, the ball had long left the zone (shotgun snap).

**Ruling 7:** The force of kick is what put the ball into the end zone. The ball becomes dead immediately when it broke the plane of R's goal line and results in a touchback

**Ruling 8:** : Personal foul, 15 yard penalty from the spot of the foul on Team A player in situation (a); in situation (b), count the score and the defensive team has their choice of penalizing Team A on the PAT or succeeding kick-off (exception, if this occurred on the last play of the game, penalty can only be enforced on the PAT).

**Ruling 9:** B24's foul occurred during a loose-ball play and if the penalty is accepted it will be enforced from the previous spot. Team A obviously will decline the penalty since it has gained 10 yards more and has a first down. The holding penalty cannot be added to the end of the run because the foul was committed during the loose-ball play.

**Ruling 10:** R2 has the right of way. If the back judge rules that K3 obstructed R2, it is a foul for kick catch interference. If the back judge rules K3 did not obstruct R2's path to the

ball, no foul. It is the judgment of the official whether or not K3 affected the play by altering R2's wanted path to the ball.

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## Mechanics/Positioning Related Items To Review

- Counts—be sure to count number of players on offense and defense every play, especially if a team is huddled after a timeout and they come directly to the line of scrimmage.
- Umpires must turn and help on catch/no catch in the middle of the field on pass plays
- Wing officials square off your spots down the sideline, do not come in at an angle for spots
- Covering down field official do not have a quick whistle on punt plays, make sure the ball is caught before sounding the whistle on fair catch plays
- Umpires—Previous Spot: Be mindful of where the ball is snapped from after returning it for the next play. Be aware of previous location.
- Back Judge--after handing ball to kicker and moving to sideline—step back to 35 yard line to make sure all players are in front of 35 yard line then move to 40 yard line to watch for possible encroachment fouls.
- 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.
- Umpires, step up to the line of scrimmage on a pass under control and help rule if the quarterback was beyond or behind the line of scrimmage.
- Wings—concentrate on forward progress spots and sideline clock signals. If a player is downed in-bounds and immediately rolls out of bounds then you should have a wind
- Wings when spotting out of bounds play, turn and face the players out of bounds. Do not let players behind you without eyes on them
- All officials must have clock awareness
- Be aware of the down and distance on every play, you do not want to miss a down or give an extra down
- Linesman and Line Judge must determine if a quick pass to the sideline is forward or backward. Officials should “punch-back” a backward pass.
- Clock stoppages—officials need to stop the clock on obvious first downs and when fouls are called and the play becomes dead. Mirroring signals on clock stoppages is acceptable.
- Referee—have great penalty administration signals and great ready for play tempo/mechanics.
- Umpire—control the middle, get the ball on a line and be precise on penalty yardage.
- Back Judge--If one player is lined up more than 5 yards behind the restraining line, he/she is the only player who may kick the football. If any other player kicks the ball, it is a dead ball foul for encroachment. THIS IS YOUR Call.

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## What Makes Excellent Officiating?

Accuracy and Mechanics

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