

# South Dakota High School Activities Association

## 2018 Football Newsletter No. 6

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### Football Mechanics Test

The 2018 Mechanic Exam is available for crews to complete. This exam must be completed and submitted online. The online Mechanics Exam due date is Tuesday, October 3, 2018 by Noon (CT). You can download and print a hard copy of the test to go over with your crew. The exam can be completed by logging into the SDHSAA website under the “Officials Zone” and then “Online Exams” just as you did with the open book rules exam. Only one member of your playoff crew needs to submit the exam online.

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### PLAY CLOCK

If there is an official’s timeout taken to send a player out of the game for one play and the 25 second play clock is interrupted, then the play clock must be re-set to 25 seconds and restarted.

Anytime the play clock is interrupted, it must always be reset to 25 seconds. You can never start the play clock with less than 25 seconds. This may be an advantage for Team A, but sending a key player off the field for a play may be more of a penalty than the 5 yards.

With this new rule, officials must stop the clock and send the player off the field if equipment is not present/being worn incorrectly. If it is judged the team is doing something illegally to gain an advantage, the referee has the option to penalize as an unsportsmanlike conduct foul.

Officials must be diligent is checking equipment; a lot of problems can be avoided if illegal/missing equipment is discovered before the player participates.

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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=5yln8qgc9gw&feature=youtu.be>

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## Goal Line Pylons

The goal line pylons placed at the intersection of the goal lines extended and the sideline, not only assist in making out of bounds calls, but also help an official in determining whether a touchback has occurred, and most importantly, whether a touchdown has been scored.

The goal line pylons sit on the sideline, and as such they are entirely out of bounds. The end zone is entirely in bounds. These pylons are out of bounds behind the goal line.

For runners who approach a goal line pylon, the goal line plane is extended out of bounds for a runner who is still touching the ground in bounds. If the ball is held outside the sideline plane and breaks the goal line plane extended, it is a touchdown.

However, if a runner dives or jumps and the ball breaks the plane of the goal line extended while he is airborne and he lands out of bounds, the runner's forward progress is marked where the ball crossed the plane of the sideline. The ball is not spotted at its position when the runner first touches out of bounds. Consequently, there is no score unless the ball was inside or over the pylon when it broke the plane of the sideline.

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## Forward Progress -- Goal Line Extension

### General Rules

- If a ball carrier advancing from the field of play has possession of a live ball when it penetrates the opponent's goal line he shall be awarded a touchdown.
- The pylon is in the end zone but is considered out of bounds when properly placed at the intersection of the sideline and the goal line extended.
- A player who touches a pylon is out of bounds.
- A ball that touches the pylon is out of bounds behind the goal line.

### Philosophy

- A runner is a player with possession of a live ball advancing towards his opponent's goal line.
- An airborne player is one who voluntarily leaves his feet and dives or lunges in an attempt to get to the opponent's goal line.
- A runner who is hit by an opponent causing him to become airborne is still considered a runner and the rules regarding a runner at the goal line will still apply.
- The goal line is the vertical plane which separates the field of play from the end zone.
- When related to a live ball in a runner's possession while the ball is over the out-of-bounds area, the goal line includes the extension beyond the goal line.

### Play Situations

- Runner crosses goal line with possession of the ball. Runner is inside the pylon and ball is outside pylon—**Score**
- If the runner is airborne when he crosses the sideline--the forward progress is where the ball crosses the sideline.
- Player dives (airborne)—crosses sideline and crosses the goal line extended with possession of the ball. Both player and ball cross outside the pylon—**NO SCORE**
- Runner gets hit near the goal line causing him to leave his feet. Runner crosses goal line extended over the pylon and ball crosses goal line extended--**Score**

**PLAY:** Runner A1 is advancing towards B's goal line and is very near the sideline. (a) A1 advances towards B's end zone while holding the ball outside the sideline plane; or (b) A1 dives toward the end zone, but is hit by B1 which causes him to land out of bounds beyond

the goal line extended. A1's last contact with the ground was short of the goal line. In both cases the ball breaks the plane of B's goal line extended.

**RULING:** In (a), it is a touchdown because A1 was touching inbounds when the ball broke the plane of the goal line extended. However, in (b) since A1 was not touching inbounds and was short of the goal line when he was hit, it is not a touchdown even though the ball did break the goal line plane extended. The ball is spotted at the inbounds spot on the yard line where the foremost point of the ball crossed the sideline plane when A1 was driven out of bounds.

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## **Forward Progress—Defenseless Player**

Defenseless players are especially vulnerable to potential injury. Game officials must diligently observe all action and watch for contact against players who are deemed defenseless. The game official must draw distinction between contact necessary to make a legal block or tackle.

A runner in an opponent's grasp and whose forward progress has been stopped cannot defend himself from an opponent taking a free shot at him. A downed runner or a runner giving himself up and sliding feet first cannot protect himself against unnecessary contact.

Classifying players as defenseless reinforces the prohibition against illegal contact and emphasizes the need to protect the most vulnerable players.

Coaches must exercise leadership in eliminating illegal contact, and game officials must act decisively to penalize illegal contact to minimize the risk of player injury.

Special attention must be given to contact against these players to determine if it is legal. Although defenseless players who are involved in the play may be contacted by an opponent, the player initiating contact must do so in a legal manner.

Forward progress should be handled by the wing official moving up and down the field with the runner, parallel to the sideline, and moving to the selected place at right angles to sidelines ("squaring off"). Not only does squaring off look sharper than arriving at a spot in an arc, it adds credibility to the call.

The progress point is the forward-most point of the ball in player possession when that player is downed by rule. Where a knee or hip touches the ground is only an indicator that stops the play. When the play ends between the hashes, the wings can give the spot from approximately midway between the hash mark and the sideline.

When the runner is airborne as he goes over the sideline, the spot is where you judge the ball crossed the sideline, not where the ball is when the runner first touches out of bounds.

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## **Clock Operator**

### **Athletic Directors and Coaches**

Athletic Directors and Coaches remind your clock operator to report to the game officials at the field at least 30 minutes before game time for the following purposes:

1. Before meeting with the timer, officials must confirm with the game manager the starting time of the game and length of halftime.
2. Determine procedure for communication with timer if the clock needs to be corrected.
3. To discuss if the game clock horn (mechanical signal) can be turned off. Preference is for the game clock horn (mechanical signal) to be turned off for the duration of the game.
4. Instruct clock operator to time intermission which will be 12, 15 or 20 minutes. The halftime intermission will start on the referee's signal when the players and game officials leave the field.

5. The mandatory three-minute warm-up period will be put on the clock after the intermission time has elapsed and shall be started immediately.
6. If the regulation game ends in a tie and overtime is played, the timer needs to put three minutes on the clock. After that, the clock is not needed for overtime.

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## Wing Officials

On a snap inside Team B's 10-yard line and 5 yard line wing officials have primary responsibility for goal line.

1. Run between the numbers – Officiate in advance of the runner to the goal line. If run ends short of the goal line, retreat and square-in to mark the spot
2. Run outside the numbers to your side zone – Use the out of bounds area as needed to officiate even with or slightly behind the runner as he nears the sideline and goal line. Do not trail so closely as to become involved in the play.
3. Pass – Assume normal pass coverage until receiver(s) in your coverage area penetrates the 5-yard line moving toward the end zone. Move directly to the goal line, remaining until it is apparent that no pass or run will make the goal line. Work back cautiously to mark the spot using the out of bounds area as needed.
4. When the goal line is your responsibility, be aware of where the pylon is, do not back pedal past the pylon and then try to make a call at the goal line. Stay at the pylon, just back out into dead ball area on the goal line if the play is coming to the corner.
5. 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.

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## Wing Officials—Dead Ball Officiating

1. 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 went out of bounds. Once those two responsibilities have been satisfied (and only then) do we worry about getting a football back onto the field
2. When players go into the bench area your primary responsibility is to go in after them and separate and walk them back to the field.

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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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## Officiating the Backward Pass

On passing plays, the Referee observes blocking by the backs as the quarterback drops back. The Referee should move to maintain the 15 - yard distance between himself and the quarterback (e.g. if the quarterback drops back seven yards, the Referee retreats

seven yards at a 45 degree angle from the quarterback maintaining spacing between himself and the quarterback).

The wider view allows the Referee to determine if the pass is forward or backward yet to continue to focus attention on the passer. The Referee will use an extended arm towards the offensive team's backfield to indicate a backward pass.

Wing officials when you read pass, do not be too quick to release downfield—be patience. Read your keys. Be prepared to determine whether a quick pass thrown toward you is forward or backward and to assist the umpire if he needs help in ruling whether or not a pass crosses the line of scrimmage. When in question, it is a forward pass. If you determine the quick pass is a backward pass you need to punch your arm toward the offensive backfield to alert the other officials the pass is backwards.

As a crew during your pre-game discussions, talk about how the crew is going to rule whether a pass is forward or backwards. Only rule an incomplete pass if the pass is thrown in your area of coverage and the ball has bounced at least two times on the field.

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## Officials Quiz 2018

**Question 1:** Receiving team fumbles on kicking team's 20 yard line. Kicking team member picks up the ball and starts running and he fumbles on his own 30. The receiving team recovers on the kicking teams 32 and is tackled there. Prior to the first fumble, but after the kick, K34 commits a five-yard facemask penalty. Would this allow the receiving team to accept the penalty and have it enforced from the kicking team's 32 yard line?

**Question 2:** A's ball for a try from the B-3 yard line. As A1 rolls out he is tackled by the facemask by B75 on the B-12 yard line. Where is the penalty enforced?

**Question 3:** 3rd and 10 from the B-45. A89 catches a pass at the B-38 and runs to the B-5 where he is downed in bounds. During A89's run, A50 blocked B10 in the back on the B30. Where is the penalty enforced?

**Question 4:** K punts from the K-40. The ball is rolling at the R-5 yard line, during the kick, K50 blocks in the back at the R-35 yard line. R10 picks up the rolling ball and advances to the K-5 yard line where he is tackled inbounds. During R10's run, R45 is called for an illegal blindside block at the R-30 yard line. Where and how are the penalties enforced?

**Question 5:** On an extra point attempt, A16 throws a pass that is intercepted by B7 in the end zone. As B7 takes two steps, he drops the ball and it is recovered in the end zone by A66. Has Team A scored an extra point?

**Question 6:** Runner A5 takes the ball and makes a nice cut, clearing nearly all the defenders at the line of scrimmage. As A5 breaks into the open field, defender B7 comes out of nowhere and tackles A5 from the side. It's a huge hit with both players first meeting shoulder-to-shoulder and it takes unsuspecting runner A5 to the ground immediately as the defender was outside of his field of vision. Is this a legal tackle?

**Question 7:** During the first half, player B75 is flagged for roughing the quarterback. With two minutes to play in the fourth quarter, B75 is flagged for a late hit. Is B75 ejected from the game?

**Question 8:** First and 10 for team A at its own three yard line. A1 is in his end zone when he muffs a backward pass from A2. A3 recovers the loose ball and is downed in the end zone. B4 is flagged for grabbing and twisting A3's facemask in the process of making the tackle. Where is the penalty enforced?

**Question 9:** Fourth and four from team K's 36 yard line. Team K is in scrimmage kick formation. K1 receives the long snap and uses an overhand motion to throw a high and deep pass downfield toward eligible K2. R3 blocks K2 while the ball is in flight. The ball hits the ground untouched at team R's 45 yard line. Is there pass interference?

**Question 10:** First and 10 for team A at team B's 12 yard line. Substitute B1 comes onto the field and replaced player B2 leaves the field via the back of the end zone. Is this legal substitution?

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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) --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:** If the foul by the kicking team was prior to the change of possession and the kicking team is not the next to put the ball in play, then the receiving team can choose to take the penalty from the succeeding spot (kicking teams 32 yard line).

**Ruling 2:** 15 yard personal foul facemask foul by B75, it will be enforced 1/2 the distance to the goal from the spot of the foul, and A will re-try from the B-6 yard line

**Ruling 3:** Illegal block in back, the 10 yard penalty will be administered from the spot of the foul making it 3rd and 5 from the B-40, clock on Ready for Play. The basic spot is not the previous spot, the foul occurred during the running play

**Ruling 4:** R has the option of keeping the ball by declining K50's block in the back foul, R did not foul prior to gaining possession (clean hands principle). Team K would then accept the illegal blindside block foul by R-45 and it will be administered 15 yards from the spot of the foul (this is now a running play). Team R will have first and ten from the R-15. If both teams accept each foul, then the fouls would offset and the down would be replayed.

**Ruling 5:** No points are scored. The try ended as soon as the ball was intercepted by Team B, creating an immediate dead ball. Nothing can happen on a try once B gains possession.

**Ruling 6:** Legal play as you cannot have illegal blindside contact against the runner.

**Ruling 7:** B75 may continue participating in the game because ejection results only after two unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, not two personal fouls if they are not flagrant.

**Ruling 8:** The penalty is enforced from team A's goal line. The result would be first-and-ten for Team A at their own 15 yard line.

**Ruling 9:** R3 is guilty of defensive pass interference. First and ten for A at B/R's 49.

**Ruling 10:** Illegal substitution, a dead-ball foul. First and five for A at B's 7.

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**Never Think You Are As Good As You Can Be  
Be A Little Better!**