

South Dakota High School Activities Association

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Author: Buck Timmins

Fan Behavior

The behavior of a fan should not jeopardize the players on the field or you as an official. If a spectator begins to cross the line and becomes unruly contact the game administrator. You as an official **DO NOT** deal with the behavior of fans by issuing a sideline warning or telling the unruly spectator he/she must leave the game site. That is the job of the game administrator. If you as an official feel that a fan needs to be warned or removed from the game **talk to the game administrator**.

Trainers, cheerleaders in uniform, band members in uniform, mascots, stats people and others affiliated with the teams need to be behind the two yard restraining line. If these people are trying to “help officiate” then game management needs to deal with those people. You as an official should not deal with out of control spectators - instead contact game management.

Class AA/A Crossover Games - Mercy Rule

The mercy rule **will be in effect** for any SDHSAA football game involving a team from Class A or Class 11B, **including** those football games against Class 11AA opponents regardless of site or circumstance.

The mercy rule only takes effect in the second half. If a team is ahead by 35 points or more, the clock goes to a “running” clock, stopping only for timeouts (team or official). The game ends if one team achieves a 50 point lead or greater. Additionally, note that any period may be shortened or the game terminated early at any time, provided both coaches and the referee agree to do so (NFHS Rule 3-1-3).

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 (mechanics and rules review):

Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLkV-99jIZQ&feature=youtu.be>

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPJAOWZWpEI&feature=youtu.be>

Sideline Congestion

Officials need to enforce the sideline and coaching box rule. The rule is in place for the safety of all players, coaches and officials and to allow the officials to work the sideline.

In addition, with the new 40/25 second rule, ball boys need to have room to get the balls to officials and the line-to-gain crew needs to get set quicker.

Concern of Observers: 40-25 Second Play Clock Mechanics

1. Do referees understand the “silent wind” procedure on a first down inbounds?

The Team A (offense) runner is stopped inbounds beyond the line-to-gain (first down). The game clock is stopped for the first down and the 40-second play clock is started immediately. The referee will then restart (wind) the game clock (no whistle involved) as the football is placed on the ground and ready for play. It is not an administrative stoppage.

The application of the rule creates a “silent wind,” a time when the referee gives the start-the-clock signal following a first down but does not blow the whistle. The ready-for-play whistle/signal is not used for a 40-second play clock.

2. Do referees understand that after Administrative Stops, play resumes with the common ready-for-play signal/whistle to start the 25-second play clock?

Administrative Stops--25 second play clock (signal/whistle)

1. Following a penalty administration or of an inadvertent whistle.
2. Following a score either on try or succeeding kickoff.
3. Following a touchback.
4. Following a measurement for a possible first down.
5. Following a charged timeout by either team or a media timeout.
6. Following an official’s timeout for an injury to any player, or helmet coming off any player.
7. At the start of a period or overtime.
8. Following a change of possession.
9. Following an official’s timeout for a measurement.
10. Following an official’s timeout for any other reason.

Wearing Illegal Equipment/Adornments

The head coach shoulders the responsibility to verify that all of the team's players are legally equipped. Officials have the responsibility to prohibit the players from participating until they become legally equipped. Coaches and officials must work together to make the game as safe as possible for the athletes participating by requiring compliance with equipment rules. Officials need to cleanup illegal equipment early: don’t leave it for next week’s crew to handle.

- Play cards cannot be worn on the belt, only the wrist or arm. This is a safety issue and could result in a player’s hands or fingers being injured.
- Moisture-absorbing sweatbands, when worn on the wrist beginning at the base of the thumb and extending no more than 3 inches toward the elbow. Players Cannot Wear Sweatbands As Bicep Bands.
- If gloves are worn in the game, players can not participate with them strapped to their belt.

- Wearing a belt that is so long it hangs down like a towel or tail - it should be tucked in the pants or cut off to an appropriate length.

Wing Officials--Running Play Away

The wing official on the side opposite of where the ball is going does not have relevant point-of-attack responsibilities. But your eyes may still be drawn to the ball because you dismiss the players behind the runner as immaterial.

While the ball is live, the opposite wing must adopt a officiating mindset by scanning the players behind the point of attack for activity viewed as excessive or unnecessary.

You as the opposite wing become the most important official on the field. The referee, umpire and back judge TRUST that you will clean up the activity behind the ball. You need to come-on-to field to the numbers to observe the action behind the play. Use your voice to let the trailing players know you are watching.

Forward Progress

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 downed inbounds near a sideline the clock should not be stopped. The covering will give the dead ball signal (Signal 7) to indicate the play has ended inbounds to start the 40-second play clock. The covering official must give the wind-the-clock signal to keep the game clock running.

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.

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 receivers are making a simultaneous, bona fide attempt to move toward, catch or bat the pass.
- C. Physical contact may or may not be involved. Face guarding (waving the hands near the face of an opposing receiver) is NO longer considered an act of forward pass interference.
- D. Catchability is never a factor in high school interference calls

Crack-back Block

Crack back block is a term that is misunderstood because it is not defined in the rulebook. A crack back block is not necessarily an illegal block, but is simply a block by a player who blocks back toward the spot of the snap.

Most crack backs aimed below the opponent's waist are illegal because they occur outside the free-blocking zone. But a crack back above the waist from the front is generally always legal; the free-blocking zone is not an issue.

A wide out's position in the formation is outside the free-blocking zone, meaning he cannot legally block below the waist. When the sweep comes toward the wide out but the wide out peels back toward the original position of the snap, it should serve as a "red flag" to the covering official.

The covering officials should look for "blindside blocks" when the wide out moves back toward the snap. A blindside block is a block against an opponent other than the runner, who does not see the blocker approaching. No player shall execute a blindside block outside of the free blocking zone with forceful contact unless initiated with open hands and not viewed as excessive or unnecessary in order to be legal. Officials need to have head/eyes on a swivel to view all the action as the crew cannot have four sets of eyes on the ball carrier.

Remember that a block that starts above the waist can be completed below the opponent's waist. If a blocker's initial contact is with the opponent's body, hands or arms, at the waist or above, and in continuation the contact is below the waist, it is a legal block. The official must see the entire block in order to rule on it correctly.

On running plays, wing officials and the back judge must pay strict attention to wide outs that are in motion towards the original position of the snap or following the snap blocks towards the ball on defensive players.

Officials must stay with your keys until the threat of blocking below the waist is over on running players as the blocks must be from the front and above the waist.

You as an official need to see the beginning of the block as a doubtful block in the back where the blocked player turns his back, leaving the blocker with no other choice than blocking from behind, the contact is not a foul (unless it qualifies as unnecessary roughness or another personal foul).

Every play has a beginning and end—if you throw the flag or blow the whistle somewhere in between—you missed the play.

See The Whole Play

Points To Think About

- 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.
- 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
- Avoid "walking through" penalty signals. Come to a complete stop before signaling. Have no facial expression; slowly give the signal and point to the offending team; avoid jabbing the arm when signaling; it is a sign you are angry or feel a sense of

“gotcha” toward the offending team. Don’t walk through the end of you signal either. Come to a complete stop after signaling and hustle to your next task

- Umpires often have the best look on catches and traps, particularly those in the middle of the field—need to pivot after ball crosses head.
- Observers have noted too many officials giving signals when it is not their call. Let the calling official make the call and cover your area of work. A second signal can complicate matters.
- There is never any hurry to signal except on a kill on a first down or out of bounds. Slow whistle—slow flag—slow beanbag.
- Counting players—Officials need to count players every down, it matters
- We don’t ever want to toss a ball to a wing official to place the ball for a measurement. The ball should be run over to the wing official and he will place it at his feet for the measurement.
- It is very important that you have the correct number reported when calling a foul. Don’t stop officiating to get a number.
- You must see the whole play when calling an infraction. Make the fouls be solid before making a call

Officials Quiz 2019

Question 1: 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. Do you have a touchback?

Question 2: 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?

Question 3: Substitutes A12 and B12 properly enter the game between downs. The replaced player of Team A remains in the team huddle while the replaced Team B player leaves the field within three seconds. Is this a legal substitution?

Question 4: Backs A1 and A2 simultaneously move to new backfield positions prior to the snap. In less than one second after both are stationary: (a) A3 goes in motion and is in motion at the snap; (b) the ball is snapped. What is the ruling?

Question 5: 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. What is the ruling?

Question 6: 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. Is this a chop block?

Question 7: 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. Is this pass interference?

Question 8: During a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone, snapper A58 holds B74 behind the neutral zone. Where is the holding foul penalized?

Question 9: 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 10: 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 player B75 disqualified from the game?

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: 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 2: 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.

Ruling 3: In this situation, Team A is charged with a 5-yard penalty (dead ball) for an illegal substitution because the replaced player of Team A did not leave within three seconds as required.

Ruling 4: Illegal shift in both (a) and (b). Following a huddle or shift, all 11 (9) players of Team A must come to a complete stop and must remain stationary simultaneously for at least one second before the snap or before a player goes in motion.

Ruling 5: 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 6: Chop Block (high-low). If accepted Team A will be penalized 15 yards.

Ruling 7: There is no pass interference call on B9, however, a flag should have been dropped for the illegal block.

Ruling 8: 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.

Ruling 9: 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 10: Player 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.

Be Outstanding Protecting Players
