



2018 Football Newsletter

N

Neutral Zone



NSAA REMINDERS

Here are some of the highlights from our weekly NSAA reminders:

2018 Points of Emphasis

- Proper Wearing and Use of Required Equipment
 - (Rule Change 1.5.4 – An improperly equipped player shall be replaced for one down)
 - Knees, back pads and shoulder pads must be covered
 - Midribs must be completely covered by the jersey
 - Jerseys and undergarments that extend below the waist must be tucked in
- Blindside Blocks and Defenseless Player
- Application of Personal Fouls and Unsportsmanlike Conduct
- Time Management
 - Maintain a fair and consistent balance between offense and defense
 - 12-15 seconds is the maximum amount of time that should elapse between the end of the previous play and the Ready-for-Play signal (long plays downfield, out of bounds plays, change of possession, substitutions)
 - 8-10 seconds is the expected amount of time between regular scrimmage plays.
 - All officials must hustle to proper positions.
 - Efficiency is essential to prevent delay.
 - Establish and maintain the same tempo throughout the game.
- Sideline Management & Professional Communication
 - NO player, nonplayer or coach shall be in the restricted area when the ball is live

Free Blocking Zone Defined

11-man Football – 4 yards laterally on either side of the spot of the snap & 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage

8-man & 6-man Football - 3 yards laterally on either side of the spot of the snap & 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage

Blocking(contact) below the waist is permitted in the free blocking zone when:

1. All players involved in the blocking are on the LOS and in the zone at the snap
2. The contact is in the zone.

*** This applies equally to offensive and defensive players.

*** If the offense is in a “shotgun” formation:

- The initial action of the block below the waist must happen immediately and simultaneously with the snap.

Touching by Kicker/Receiver

If K touches a free kick(kickoff) in flight, it is kick-catching interference. If K touches a grounded kick in the neutral zone, it is called “first touching” and R may take the ball at that spot. If R touches the ball in the neutral zone, K may then recover.

Questions:

1 – Can a substitute player come onto the field and then leave the field during the same dead ball interval?

Answer: NO (3-7-3)

2 – Can the offense break the huddle with 12 players

Answer: YES. Provided any replaced player begins to leave the field within three seconds of the arrival of his substitute. (2-32-12, 3-7-1)

Rule 3-7 SUBSTITUTIONS

Art. 1 ... Between downs any number of eligible substitutes may replace players. Upon meeting the criteria of 2-32-12, replaced players shall begin to leave the field within three seconds.

Art. 2 ... A player, replaced player or a substitute is required to leave the field as the side of which his team box is located and go directly to his team box.

Art. 3 ... During the same dead-ball interval, no substitute shall become a player and then withdraw and no player shall withdraw and re-enter as a substitute unless a penalty is accepted, a dead-ball foul occurs, there is a charged time out or the period ends.

Art. 4 ... During a down a replaced player or substitute who attempts unsuccessfully to leave the field and who does not participate in or affect the play, constitutes an illegal substitution.

NOTE: Participation by a replaced player or substitute is illegal participation as in 9-6.

Art. 5 ... An entering substitute shall be on his team’s side of the neutral zone when the ball is snapped or free kicked.

Art. 6 ... During a down, a replaced player or substitute who enters the field, but does not participate, constitutes illegal substitution.

PENALTY: Articles 1, 2, 3 - Illegal Substitution (Signal 7 & 22) – 5 yards, dead-ball foul
 Articles 4, 5 - Illegal Substitution (Signal 22) – 5 yards, live ball foul
 Article 6 - Illegal Substitution (Signal 22) – 5 yards, nonplayer foul

RULE REVIEW – 10.1 PROCEDURE AFTER A FOUL

Art. 3 ... When a live-ball foul by one team is followed by a dead-ball foul by the opponent, the penalties are administered separately and in the order of occurrence.

Art. 4 ... When the same team commits a live-ball foul followed by one or more dead-ball fouls, all fouls may be penalized.

Art. 5 ... Enforcement of a penalty cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line. If the prescribed penalty is greater than this, the ball is placed halfway from the sport of the enforcement to the goal line.

Art. 6 ... The following fouls by A include loss of the right to replay a down:

- a. Illegally handing the ball forward
- b. Illegal forward pass
- c. Illegal touching of a forward pass by an ineligible
- d. Intentional Grounding

Art. 7 ... The following fouls by B give A an automatic first down:

- a. Roughing the kicker or holder
- b. Roughing the passer
- c. Roughing the snapper

QUESTION

Where is the ball spotted following penalty acceptance when it is snapped from the right hash mark and the run ends in the left-side zone and the foul is:

- a- Illegal motion by A1
- b- Holding by A1 in the middle of the field behind the end of the run
- c- Grasping the face mask/helmet opening by B1 in making the tackle

Answers:

- a- Spotted on the right hash mark
- b- Spotted in the middle of the field since the enforcement spot was the spot of the foul
- c- Spotted on the left hash mark

INADVERTENT WHISTLE*NFHS Rule 4.2.3**

*****THE FIRST RULE OF AN INADVERTENT WHISTLE IS: DON'T HAVE AN INADVERTENT WHISTLE!**

Replay the down if inadvertent whistle occurs:

- While snap is in flight
- While legal forward pass is in flight
- During legal kick (free or scrimmage)

The team last in possession may choose to replay the down or put ball in play at the spot where possession was lost if inadvertent whistle occurs while ball is loose following:

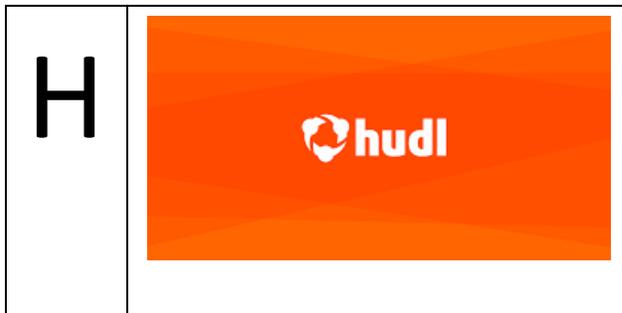
- A fumble
- An illegal kick
- A backward pass
- An illegal forward pass

The team last in possession may choose to replay the down or accept the play at the spot if inadvertent whistle occurs while ball is in player possession.

If a foul occurs before the inadvertent whistle and the penalty is accepted, the inadvertent whistle is ignored.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

“When an official is “too big” to study the rule book, he has out-grown his ability to improve”



HUDL: Another tool in the box...but don't leave it there!

The rules book, case book, official's manual, NFHS Pre-Season Guide, Hudl. These are just some of the great tools that we have as officials to improve our craft...when they are used. It took me several years of officiating before I realized how important it is to get into the rules book on a regular basis. Over time, I realized the same thing about the case book and official's manual. They each bring a unique perspective to my view of the game, officiating philosophies, mechanics, and understanding of the rules.

It didn't take me nearly as long to adopt Hudl as a valuable tool to improve mechanics, rules application, judgement, positioning, etc for both myself and my crew. At the college level, a crew will often find someone to record the entire game without any breaks in the film to observe their mechanics and penalty enforcements as a crew. While we don't have that luxury most of the time on a Friday night high school matchup, there are a lot of great ways to use Hudl to improve each week.

I reached out to several officials from around the state to get their best tips for using Hudl effectively. Many of the responses had the same themes. Here are the top 5:

1. JUST USE IT!

Like any tool, Hudl is useless if you never pull it out of the toolbox. Each official who is a member of the NHSOA has access to the NHSOA Hudl account to view games that are posted. If you don't know how to access your account, reach out to your NHSOA district representative. There is a specific process that has to happen after games are played for that game to be posted to the NHSOA Hudl account. All of the time and effort put into Hudl by the NHSOA staff (thank you, **Scott Johnson!**) shows just HOW important this tool is to us as officials. So get on there and start watching some film!

2. REVIEW UNUSUAL PLAYS OR CONTROVERSIAL PENALTIES

If you don't use Hudl for anything else, be sure to use it for this! Look at the play several times to learn what you or your crew did right and what you could have improved upon. Be sure to observe positioning, keys, mechanics, signals, action away from the ball, etc to take in the entire play. Be open to the possibility that you might have blown a call or been in a bad position. It happens to all of us.

3. SCOUT TEAMS FOR YOUR UPCOMING GAMES

Focus on formations, especially on special teams. Find out what kind of an offense you will see from both teams. Check if your quarterbacks are right-handed and kickers are right-footed. How do the sidelines look? Do the linemen have a tendency to cut block? You can find out a lot about a team by watching 10 minutes of film. That little bit of time on Hudl could pay big dividends by putting you in a better position during that upcoming game.

4. REVIEW EVERY PLAY OF THE GAME

Some people do this for every game. Others pick out a few games each year to look at in-depth. This is a great way to evaluate crew mechanics and positioning during different plays. It also allows you to see things that you missed during the game on what seemed like a routine play. Referee and Umpire, do you stay with your line and QB during a pass? Wings, how accurate are your spots? Back Judge, are you in a good position to see the whole play during a punt? These are just a few things to watch for as you go through an entire game. Finding those little things on film that need attention, and addressing them, is what sets crews apart.

5. OBSERVE ANOTHER CREW

Select a crew that you know has been solid year after year and watch one of their games. Focus on the positioning and movement of the crew. This can be a great way to adopt a new mechanic to make your crew more efficient. You may also pick up on something that you thought your crew was doing correctly, but you really were not! Remember, you are not observing a different crew to criticize them, but to learn from them.

I will be the first to admit, I don't watch enough game film each week. My time on Hudl has increased each year, but we all get busy with life, and extra things (like Hudl) tend to take a back seat. We don't all need to become Hudl gurus, but it should be a goal to increase film review over time. This is true for both individuals and crews. If we want to improve the product we put on the field each week, we have to utilize all the tools at our disposal. I would put HUDL right at the top of that list!

-Chad Gillespie, District 4 NHSOA Representative, Kearney



SITUATIONS

The following are links to specific situations from an excellent training site called "Get It Right". Click on each individual Rule of the Week to watch a short YouTube video on discussing that topic.

GET IT RIGHT

"TRAIN TODAY FOR A BETTER GAME TOMORROW"

"Keep it Safe, Keep it Fair, Know the Rules, Get It Right"

Rule of the Week

[Holding or Not](#)

[Foul by K Exception](#)

[Airborne Interception Forward Progress](#)

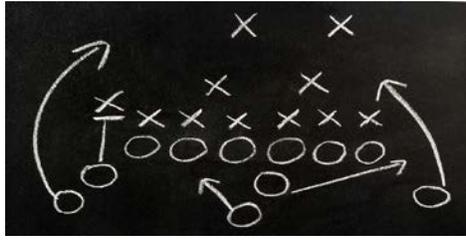
[Clipping 2018](#)

[Airborne Receiver 2018](#)

[Holder Muffs Snap](#)

O

Offensive Team



OBSERVERS Comments

Crews need to be on the field a minimum of 30 minutes before KO, I would suggest 35-40...this allows the crew to handle pre-game duties in a timely, efficient, businesslike manner and not be rushed. Meet with Coaches when arriving

on field (home team 1st) Get the toss done before the 20 minute mark. While in pre-game positions you can move around and monitor teams. Contact home team AD and indicate you would like the Chain Gang on the field at least 15 minute before KO.

If teams are on the field for the anthem...crew members need to leave their pre-game positions.....GET OUT OF THE TEAM BOX AND OUT OF THE WAY. R & LJ slide down and stand together....U-L-BJ slide down and stand together.

R make sure yardage is marked off and ball spotted before giving final signal to press box...also give down and distance both verbally and with proper hand signal.

U positioning on scrimmage kicks (10 YARDS DEEP ON LJ SIDE) and mechanics (step up to the LOS. protect snapper, use your voice)

Wing Officials start OOB 2 yards...after RFP step up to sideline...move parallel to the sideline...after play is blown dead come in off the sideline and help officiate (where ball is located will determine how far)

Wing Officials on short yardage plays.....come in HARD and mark spot of forward progress

L keep the chains back from the sideline

BJ Work hard to help with relay.....form a nice V for relay, you do not have to come up even with the dead ball spot.

BJ never get outside the hash marks while the ball is live...do not chase the play...on scrimmage plays you want 1 viewpoint: COMING TOWARDS YOU.

All officials continue to officiate after the flag is thrown and whistle is blown.....be great dead ball officials.

All officials stay in the rules books and manual. Officiating is about angles and seeing the entire play.

Mechanics and positioning are extremely important!!!

2018 EVALUATION FORM

At the bottom of your NSAA Login Page you will find the heading "Observations". Upon opening that tab you will see the link "View Observations from Previous Years". Please take the time to review your previous observations and make the necessary corrections as you move forward. The observation form is very specific and the feedback that the observers provide is important as you continue to improve as officials. If you do not have an observation on file please study the blank observation form that is available on your login page. I also included the link below.

Football Officials: [Preview the Football Crew Evaluation Form](#) (Observers will use this form to evaluate the work of your crew.)



Announcements

In this section we just want to get out some additional announcements made by the NSAA. These include links to "Understanding the All but One Principle" and "Penalty Enforcement Options During and After Scoring Plays".

[Understanding the All but One Principle](#)

[Penalty Enforcement Options During and After Scoring Plays](#)

Crew Communication Devices: [Crew Communication Devices - Guidelines and Requirements](#)

With the progression of technology, communication devices worn by football officials to assist with immediate communication between crew members has become an attraction and gaining popularity. Although many understand that these devices can certainly benefit the communication between members of a football crew, there are still concerns that there are officials who are not prepared to deal with the use of such communication devices.

The use of communication devices has been approved for use by "VARSITY" football crews only. The wireless crew communication devices are not permitted for use by officials who are officiating lower level games.

Restricted contests include: JV, Reserve, Sophomore, Freshmen, 8th and 7th grade.

Please review the attached document thoroughly before using the communicating devices.

