

NHSOA Newsletter



<h1>N</h1>	<h2>Neutral Zone</h2> 
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NSAA REMINDERS

RULE REVIEW

Rule 7 Section 5 – Forward-Pass Classification

Article 2... An illegal forward pass is a foul. Illegal forward passes include:

- a. A pass after team possession has changed during the down.
- b. A pass from beyond the neutral zone.
- c. A second and subsequent forward pass(es) thrown during a down.
- d. A pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an eligible offensive receiver.
- e. A pass intentionally thrown incomplete to save loss of yardage or to conserve time.

EXCEPTION: It is legal to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving a direct hand-to-hand snap.

To legally “spike” the ball to stop the clock the QB must receive a hand-to-hand snap. It is not legal to “spike” the ball from a shotgun/pistol formation.

CASE REVIEW

7.5.1 SITUATION

7.5.2 SITUATION A, B, C, D, E, F

Rule 4 Section 2 – Dead Ball and End of the Down

Article 2 ... The ball becomes dead and the down is ended:

EXCEPTIONS:

1. The ball remains live if, at the snap, a place-kick holder with his knee(s) on the ground and with a teammate in kicking position catches or recovers the snap while his knee(s) is on the ground and places the ball for a kick, or if he rises to advance, hand, kick or pass

To legally pass, hand or toss the ball to a teammate during a fake FG or TRY the holder must lift his knee off the ground before the action takes place. The holder is permitted to catch the ball while his knee is contacting the ground and then lift the knee prior to passing, handing, tossing or running with the football.

CASE REVIEW

4.2.2 SITUATION A, B, C

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q - If a team is not ready to start the game, what is the penalty?

A – Unsportsmanlike Non-player Penalty charged to the head coach– 15 yards

Q – If a team is not on the field following the conclusion of the halftime intermission or is not ready to start the second half at the conclusion of the mandatory

Warm-up period, what is the penalty?

A – Unsportsmanlike Non-player Penalty charged to the head coach– 15 yards

Q – If the halftime clock is 00:00 and the band is still on the field, what is the penalty?

A – Delay of Game Penalty – 5 yards

Q – If a player is wearing a helmet that is a different color than the rest of his team, what is the penalty?

A – There is no penalty

TARGETING / FLAGRANT

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLhc12DYcxs>

RULE REVIEW

Rule 2 Section 17 (Free-Blocking Zone / Legal Blocking Below the Waist and Legal Block in the Back)

ART. 1 . . . The free-blocking zone is a rectangular area extending laterally 4yards either side of the spot of the snap and 3 yards behind each line of scrimmage. A player is in the free-blocking zone when any part of his body is in the zone at the snap.

ART. 2 . . . Blocking below the waist is permitted in the free-blocking zone when the following conditions are met:

- a. All players involved in the blocking are on the line of scrimmage and in the zone at the snap.
- b. The contact is in the zone.

ART. 3 . . . Blocking in the back is permitted in the free-blocking zone when the following conditions are met:

- a. By offensive linemen who are on the line of scrimmage and in the zone at the snap.
- b. Against defensive players who are in the zone at the snap.
- c. The contact is in the zone.

ART. 4 . . . The free-blocking zone disintegrates and the exception for a player to block below the waist and/or the exception for an offensive lineman to block in the back is not to continue after the ball has left the zone.

CASE REVIEWS

2.17.2 SITUATION A, B, C, D, E,
2.17.3 SITUATION A, B, C, D,

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q – If the offense is in a “shotgun” / “pistol” formation, can an offensive lineman block a defensive player below the waist (“cut”)?

A – Yes... The action must be simultaneous with the snap and the defensive player must be in the free blocking zone and on the line of scrimmage at the snap. If the offensive lineman sets, pulls or hesitates before blocking below the waist, the contact is illegal.

Q – Can a fullback lined up off the line of scrimmage at the snap block a defense player below the waist (“cut”)?

A – No. Not ever.

Q – Can a defensive lineman block an offensive lineman below the waist (“cut”)?

A – Yes... The action must take place in the free blocking zone before the ball has left the zone and both players must be on the line of scrimmage and in the free blocking zone at the snap.

Q – Can a linebacker or defensive back who is off the line of scrimmage and outside of the free blocking zone at the snap block an offensive player below the waist (“cut”)?

A – No. Not ever.

Q – Can a defensive lineman block a fullback who is off the line of scrimmage at the snap and not carrying the ball below the waist (“cut”)?

A – No. Not ever.

LEGAL JERSEYS, PANTS AND PADS

Do not relent when enforcing these rules as the season goes on. We must be consistent each and every week.

- Knee pads must be worn over the knees.
- Pants must cover the knee pads and knees.
- Shoulder pads and all hard surface attachments must be fully covered by a legal jersey.

HORSECOLLAR TACKLE (Rule 9.4.3k)

The defender must grab the back or side of the collar of the shoulder pads or jersey. Grabbing another part of the jersey such as at the shoulder, numbers, or side of the jersey and pulling the runner down is not a Horsecollar tackle. As in other safety related fouls, if the hand is in the vicinity of the collar and you cannot tell if he has the collar or not, we want to err on the side of the safety and call a foul if the immediate pulling requirement is met. Just grabbing another part of the jersey and pulling a runner immediately down is not a foul

11-Man Football

Q – Can offensive player #76 declare himself to the Referee as an eligible receiver, line up as the TE, release down field and catch a forward pass?

A – No. To be an eligible receiver the player must wear an eligible number. 1-49 or 80-99.

Q – Can offensive player #56 line up in the back field as a RB and run the football?

A – Yes.

***Note** - It is not legal for #56 to release out of the backfield or catch a forward pass because he is not wearing an eligible number.

RULE 7 – Snapping, Handing and Passing the Ball

Section 5 – Forward Pass Classification

Art. 6 ... Pass eligibility rules apply only to a legal forward pass. The following players are eligible pass receivers:

- All A players eligible by position and number include those who, at the time of the snap, are on the ends of their scrimmage line or legally behind the line (possible total of 6) **and are numbered 1-49 or 80-99.**
- All A players become eligible when B touches a legal forward pass.
- All B players are eligible.
- A player who is eligible at the start of the down remains eligible throughout the down.

8-Man Football

The following players are eligible pass receivers:

- Each A player (**regardless of jersey number**) who at the snap was on an end of the scrimmage line (total of two) and each A player who at the snap was legally behind the scrimmage line (possible total of three) is eligible.

6-Man Football

The following players are eligible pass receivers:

- All players are eligible to catch a forward pass, except that a pass is ruled incomplete when caught by the passer (7-5-4).

FOULS DURING A SCORING PLAY (NFHS OFFICIALS HANDBOOK – PAGE 79)

A foul by the opponents of the scoring team during a successful touchdown, try or field goal will be penalized in one of the following manners:

1. Accept the penalty and replay the down.
2. Accept the results of the play and have the penalty enforced from the succeeding spot.

This penalty enforcement does not apply when a safety is scored.

Unsportsmanlike and nonplayer fouls which occur during a scoring down are enforced from the succeeding spot or subsequent kickoff.

➤ REVIEW - Rule 8. Section 2 - TOUCHDOWN

Art. 1, Art. 2, Art. 3, Art. 4, Art. 5

If an opponent of the scoring team commits a foul (other than unsportsmanlike conduct or a nonplayer foul) during a down in which a touchdown is scored and there was not a change in possession during the down, "A" may accept the results of the play and choose enforcement of the penalty:

A. On the try, or

B. On the subsequent kickoff.

CASE REVIEWS (Rule 8 - TOUCHDOWN) (Page 63 – 65)

- 8.2.1 SITUATION
- 8.2.2 SITUATION A, B, C, D, E, F, G

➤ REVIEW - Rule 8. Section 3 - TRY

Art. 1, Art. 2, Art. 3, Art. 4, Art. 5, Art. 6, Art. 7, Art. 8, Art. 9

If during a successful try, a foul by B occurs, A is given the choice of:

A. Accepting the penalty and replaying the down following enforcement; or

B. Accepting the result of the play and enforcement of the penalty from the succeeding spot.

CASE REVIEWS (Rule 8 – TRY) (Page 65 – 66)

- 8.3.1 SITUATION
- 8.3.2 SITUATION A, B, C,
- 8.3.3 SITUATION A, B,
- 8.3.5 SITUATION A, B, C

➤ REVIEW - Rule 8. Section 4 – FIELD GOAL

Art. 1, Art. 2, Art. 3

If during a successful field goal, a foul by R occurs, K is given the choice of:

- A. Accepting the penalty and replaying the down following enforcement; or
- B. Accepting the result of the play and enforcement of the penalty from the succeeding spot.

CASE REVIEWS (Rule 8 – FIELD GOAL) (Page 66)

- 8.4.1 SITUATION A, B
- 8.4.3 SITUATION

HALFTIME (INTERMISSION)

Confirm the established length of half time from the host school and notify both teams prior to the start of the game.

➤ REVIEW - Rule 3. Section 6 – BALL READY FOR PLAY AND DELAY

Art. 4 – Game management is responsible for clearing the field of play and the end zones at the beginning of each half so play may begin at the scheduled time.

Penalty: Delay of Game – 5 Yards

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION – Can a player(s) wear pink towels in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month?

ANSWER – YES. The towel must be a solid color that is not ball colored(brown) or penalty flag colored (yellow).

The towel can be no less than 4 inches in width and 12 inches in length; no greater than 18 inches in width and 36 inches in length.

The towel is limited to one visible manufacturer's logo/trademark reference that does not exceed 2 ¼ square inches in any dimension.

NFHS Rule 1.5.3a.5(a)

QUESTION – Can players from the same team wear different colored towels? (Example – One player(s) wears a white towel the other player(s) wear a pink towel)

ANSWER – NO. If towels are worn by multiple players, all players must wear the same color towel.

NFHS Rule 1.5.3a.5(a)

QUESTION – In an overtime period, can the defending team intercept a pass or return a fumble for points?

ANSWER – NO. If the defensive team gains possession in an overtime period, the ball becomes dead immediately and the offensive team's series of downs is ended.

RESOLVING TIED GAMES (NFHS RULES BOOK PAGE 83-85)

QUESTION – After the first overtime period the score remains tied, do you have another coin toss?

ANSWER – NO. If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series of downs in an overtime period, then the procedure shall be repeated with other overtime periods until a game winner is determined. In this case, there shall be an intermission of two minutes. At the subsequent meeting of team captains, the loser of the overtime coin toss will be given first choice of the options. If additional overtime periods are required, then first options will be alternated with no coin toss.

RESOLVING TIED GAMES (NFHS RULES BOOK PAGE 83-85)

8-MAN AND 6-MAN RULES DIFFERENCES

Please review page 85 – 86 of the NFHS Rules Book for the rules differences as they pertain 8-man and 6-man.

REMINDER – 2016 NFHS / NSAA POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Risk Minimization

- When in Question – “Defenseless or Not = Defenseless” “Excessive/Unnecessary or Not = Excessive/Unnecessary”

2. Legal and Illegal Blocks (Rule 9.3) (Defenseless, Butt Blocking, Targeting, Blocking Below the Waist / In the Back, Chop Blocks, Clipping, etc...)

- Combination Blocks
 - Blocker 1 High and Blocker 2 Low = Chop Block
 - Blocker 1 Low and Blocker 2 Low = Legal Block
 - Blocker 1 High and Blocker 2 High = Legal Block

3. Legal Jerseys, Pants and Pads

- Do not relent when enforcing these rules as the season goes on. We must be consistent each and every week.

4. Unfair Acts

GAME EQUIPMENT

QUESTION – Can a coach request the use of a specific “kicking ball” for use on a PAT or field goal attempt?

ANSWER – NO. The PAT / field goal will be attempted using the same ball from the previous play unless the game official deem it necessary to substitute for a new ball because of wet or muddy conditions.

(NFHS Rule 1.3.2 & 1.3.3) (Case Book - 1.3.2 SITUATION A, B, C, D)

SUBSTITUTIONS

QUESTION – Can a replaced / substituted player leave the field on the opponent’s sideline?

ANSWER – NO. A replaced / substituted player is required to leave the field to the side on which his team is located and go directly to the team box. Illegal Substitution

(NFHS Rule 3.7.2) (Case Book – 3.7 COMMENT #3 and #5) (Case Book – 3.7.3 SITUATION A, B)

QUESTION – Can an offensive player, after noticing his team has only 10 players on the field, enter the field just as the ball is about to be snapped?

ANSWER – YES. The substitute player must be on the field on the offensive side of the neutral zone, inside the “tick marks” and must not violate illegal shift or motion rules. The act of coming onto the field must not deceive the defensive team.

(NFHS Rule 3.7.5 & 3.7.6) (Case Book – 3.7 COMMENT #4) (Case Book – 3.7.5 SITUATION A)

QUESTION – Can the offensive or defensive team send in a substitute player or players and wait an extended amount of time before the replaced player(s) leave the field?

ANSWER – NO. The replaced player(s) must leave the field within 3 seconds. Illegal substitution.

(NFHS Rule 3.7.1) (Case Book – 3.7 COMMENT #2) (Case Book – 3.7.1 SITUATION A, B)

Related Rule 7.2.1

After the ball is marked ready for play, each player of A who participated in the previous down and each substitute for A must have been, momentarily, between (inside) the “tick marks”, before the snap. (Penalty – Illegal Formation / Signal 19, 5 yards)

****COMMENTS REGARDING SUBSTITUTIONS**

If the covering official's count of players has determined there are more than 11 prior to the snap, a dead-ball illegal substitution penalty should be charged since a replaced player(s) did not leave within three seconds. However, if the covering official's count is not completed before the snap is imminent or if the substitution has not been monitored, it becomes illegal participation at the snap if more than 11 are in formation and participate in the play. Each team is responsible for substituting legally and for replaced players to leave within three seconds. A replaced player who attempts unsuccessfully to leave the field and who does not participate in or affect the play, constitutes illegal substitution. Participation by a replaced player or substitute is illegal participation as in NFHS Rule 9.6.

SCRIMMAGE KICK (PUNT)

QUESTION – After punt returner #1 “muffs” a punt in flight

- A. Can the returner #1 advance the ball after gaining possession?
- B. Can another member of the return team advance the ball after gaining possession?
- C. Can a member of the kicking team advance the ball after gaining possession?

VIDEO REFERENCE - <https://www.hudl.com/video/2/1203/5806247a11fa7f29a4070e8e>

ANSWER –

- A. YES
- B. YES
- C. NO – The kicking team cannot advance. They can only recover and take possession.



Helpful Pointers/Tips for Crews and Positions

For a Successful Post-Season

Each official must first take care of their business, concentrating thoroughly on their primary area(s) or basic responsibility.

The Four C's

CONCENTRATION - CONSISTENCY – COMMON SENSE – COMMUNICATION

- 1> **Concentration** – Concentrate on EVERY PLAY
Erase everything from your mind, but the task at hand
Take no mental breaks at all during the game
Know the situation, anticipate the play
- 2> **Consistency** – Be ACCURATE and Be FAIR
- 3> **Common Sense** – Rules UNDERSTANDING; NOT rules knowledge. BUT BE up to speed on the Rules Manual and do NOT confuse Sat. and Sunday with Friday Night.
- 4> **Communication** – Continually and effectively with players, coaches, and each other. Be the best team on the field TODAY. Get it right; no matter how ugly it may look. Concentrate on every play. ENJOY THE GAME—HAVE SOME FUN!



SITUATIONS

Case Book Review

7.5.1 Situation

7.5 Comment/Diagram

7.5.2 Situation A, B, C, D, E, F

4.2.2 Situation A, B, C

2.17.2 Situation A, B, C, D, E

2.17.3 Situation A, B, C, D

8.2.1 Situation

8.2.2 Situation A, B, C, D, E, F, G

8.3.1 Situation

8.3.2 Situation A, B, C

8.3.3 Situation A, B

8.3.5 Situation A, B, C

8.4.1 Situation A, B

8.4.3 Situation

7.5.1 SITUATION:

Quarterback A1 runs wide and while near the neutral zone, decides to throw a forward pass. As A1 releases the ball:

- (a) his foremost foot is touching the ground in the neutral zone, or
- (b) his foremost foot is breaking the plane of B's side of the neutral zone.

RULING: In (a), it is a legal forward pass. In (b), it is an illegal forward pass because the location of the passer's foremost foot was beyond the neutral zone. (7-5-2b)

*7.5 COMMENT:

The following chart should help game officials distinguish between the various possible fouls that can occur when an ineligible receiver touches or is touched by the ball, including accidentally striking, muffing or catching, and with basic fouls regarding ineligibility. ENZ refers to expanded neutral zone. **Answers are "Is it a foul if the act/touching occurs?"**

See Diagram BELOW

Pass Interference (7-5-7; 7-5-10)	Behind Neutral Zone	In (including ENZ)	Beyond ENZ
Accidentally striking ineligible	No	No	If contact is made against an opponent that is deemed to be pass interference, or 7-5-10b occurs, yes, 15 yards. If no interference, No
Muff by ineligible	No	No	If contact is made against an opponent that is deemed to be pass interference, or 7-5-10b occurs, yes, 15 yards. If no pass interference, no.
Catch by ineligible	No	No	If contact is made against an opponent that is deemed to be pass interference, or 7-5-10b occurs, yes, 15 yards. If no pass interference, no.
Ineligible Downfield (7-5-12)	Behind Neutral Zone	In (including ENZ)	Beyond ENZ
Accidentally striking ineligible	No	No (see ENZ note)	If not yet touched, Yes, 5 yards
Muff by ineligible	No	No (see ENZ note)	If not yet touched, Yes, 5 yards
Catch by ineligible	No	No (see ENZ note)	If not yet touched, Yes, 5 yards
Illegal Touching (7-5-13)	Behind Neutral Zone	In (including ENZ)	Beyond ENZ
Accidentally striking ineligible	No	No	No
Muff by ineligible	Yes, 5 yard, loss of down	Yes, 5 yard, loss of down	Yes, 5 yard, loss of down
Catch by ineligible	Yes, 5 yard, loss of down	Yes, 5 yard, loss of down	Yes, 5 yard, loss of down

7.5.2 SITUATION A:

Quarterback A1 drops back to pass, but is unable to find a receiver and:

- (a) throws the ball to the ground; or
- (b) throws the ball to the ground in an area occupied by only defensive players; or
- (c) deliberately throws the ball at the legs of onrushing defensive linemen.

RULING: An illegal forward pass in (a), (b) and (c). Penalize A 5 yards from where the run ended and count the down in each situation. (7-5-2b, c, d)

7.5.2 SITUATION B:

Quarterback A1 is in position for a direct hand-to-hand snap.

- (a) A1 muffs the snap, but is able to take the ball from the ground and spike it forward; or
- (b) A1 receives the snap, but his spike attempt hits snapper A2's leg and ricochets into the air. A1 catches the ball and immediately spikes it forward.

RULING: An illegal forward pass in both (a) and (b). Once the ball touches the ground, a player or a spike attempt is unsuccessful, it may not be grounded legally thereafter using this exception. In order to be a "direct snap" and therefore meet the allowance within the exception, the ball must go immediately from the snapper to the person in position to take the hand-to-hand snap without being muffed, fumbled or otherwise mishandled.

7.5.2 SITUATION C:

Quarterback A1 drops back to pass and while under a good defensive rush, he throws the ball forward:

- (a) at the feet of two onrushing defensive linemen; or
- (b) 15 yards behind A3 who has run a deep post pattern; or
- (c) 5 to 10 feet over the head of eligible A3 who lined up near a sideline.

RULING: Illegal forward pass in (a). In (b) and (c), the referee will have to judge whether the pass was intentionally thrown incomplete or whether A1 was simply unable to throw the ball close to A3.

COMMENT: Some factors to look for in making an intentional-grounding decision are absence of eligible offensive receivers in the area and the "dumping" to avoid loss of distance. The ability and skill of the passer and the pressure of the defense are also factors to consider. (7-5-2d)

7.5.2 SITUATION D:

Runner A1 advances 5 yards beyond the neutral zone to B's 3-yard line where he is tackled. As he is going down, A1 simulates a fumble by tossing the ball forward into the end zone where A2 downs it.

RULING: Illegal forward pass by A1. The penalty is 5 yards from the spot of the pass, plus loss of down. If A1 is contacted after releasing the ball, it is not roughing the passer since he lost that protection when he threw the pass from beyond the neutral zone. (9-4-4)

7.5.2 SITUATION E:

A1 throws a legal forward pass: (a) which is tipped by B1 behind the expanded neutral zone and A1 catches the pass and then throws a second pass which is completed to A8; or (b) to A5 who is behind the line of scrimmage and who then throws another forward pass to A11 who advances the ball for a first down.

RULING: Illegal forward pass in (a) and (b). (7-5-2e)

7.5.2 SITUATION F:

In the last few seconds of a half, A1 completes a pass to A2 at B's 20-yard line. The ball is properly spotted and the referee marks it ready for play and signals the clock to start. In the rush and confusion to stop the clock, A's snapper and quarterback A1 are the only A players in legal position when the ball is snapped and legally "spiked" by A1. A foul for illegal formation occurs at the snap.

RULING: The "spike" is legal. Since the spike is legal, the only applicable foul is for illegal formation. The reason for the clock stoppage was the incomplete forward pass; therefore, the clock shall start on the snap.

COMMENT: The determination by the referee as to whether or not the act was intended to illegally conserve time must be applied using Rule 3-4-6. (7-5-2 Exception)

4.2.2 SITUATION A:

K1 has one knee on the ground to hold for an apparent field-goal attempt. K2 is in position to kick. K1 catches the snap and:

- (a) places the ball which is kicked by K2; or
- (b) rises and either runs or passes; or
- (c) without rising, flips the ball to K2 who attempts to run.

RULING: Legal in (a) and (b). In (c), the ball becomes dead immediately when K1 tosses it to K2 while K1 has his knee on the ground. (4-2-2a Exception)

4.2.2 SITUATION B:

During a try K1, who is apparently a place-kick holder, receives the snap with one knee on the ground and places the ball for a kick. Just as K2 comes forward to kick the ball, K1 lifts the ball, rises and:

- (a) throws a forward pass to K3 in the end zone; or
- (b) carries the ball into the end zone; or
- (c) starts to run, fumbles and the ball is recovered by K4 who advances into the end zone; or
- (d) fumbles and it is recovered by R1; or
- (e) takes several steps and then drops to one knee to place it for a kick.

RULING: Successful try in (a), (b) and (c). The ball remains live and may be advanced since the place-kick holder had his knee in contact with the ground at the time of the snap and a teammate was in position to kick. In (d), the try ended with the recovery and R1 may not advance. In (e), the ball is dead immediately when K1's knee touches the ground after rising with the ball in his possession. (4-2-2a)

4.2.2 SITUATION C:

At the snap, K1 is in position to kick and K2 is in position to hold for a place kick with one knee on the ground. The snap is high or bounces once and it is necessary for K2 to lift his knee off the ground in order to catch or recover the ball. K2 catches the snap and:

- (a) immediately drops to one knee and places the ball for a kick; or
- (b) immediately drops to his knees and then rises and passes the ball; or
- (c) takes several steps and then drops to his knees to place the ball; or
- (d) takes several steps and fumbles the ball which is subsequently recovered and advanced by K1 or K2.

RULING: The ball remains live in (a), (b) and (d). In (c), the ball is dead when K2's knee touches the ground, because he did not go back down immediately after catching or recovering the errant snap. In (d), the advance by K1 or K2 is legal. (4-2-2a Exception)

*2.17.2 SITUATION A:

A1 is legally in motion at the snap: (a) within the free-blocking zone, or (b) outside the free-blocking zone. In (a), A1 blocks B1 below the waist within the free-blocking zone. In (b), A1 comes into the free-blocking zone and blocks B1 above the waist and in the back.

RULING: It is an illegal block in both (a) and (b). In (a), this is blocking below the waist and in (b) it is blocking in the back. The offensive blocker must be on the line of scrimmage at the snap to be able to legally block below the waist. (2-17-3, 9-3-2, 5 Penalty)

2.17.2 SITUATION B:

After the snap A1, an offensive lineman in the free-blocking zone at the snap, blocks B1 then disengages and blocks B2 below the waist before the ball has left the zone. Both B1 and B2 were in the zone and on the line of scrimmage at the snap. The contact takes place in the free-blocking zone.

RULING: It is legal for A1 to block below the waist on his second block since the ball is still in the zone. (9-3-2)

2.17.2 SITUATION C:

Back A9 is lined up behind quarterback A8 within the free-blocking zone. As A8 drops back to pass, A9 blocks B7, who was in the free-blocking zone at the snap, below the waist.

RULING: Illegal block by A9. An offensive player must be on the line of scrimmage and in the free-blocking zone at the snap in order to block a defensive player below the waist who was also on the line of scrimmage and in the free-blocking zone at the snap. (9-3-2)

2.17.2 SITUATION D:

Linebacker B7 is in the free-blocking zone, but off the line of scrimmage. B7 blocks A8 below the waist.

RULING: Illegal block. In order for a block below the waist to be legal, both the blocker and the person being blocked must be on the line of scrimmage and in the free-blocking zone.

2.17.2 SITUATION E:

A1 is in shotgun formation, lined up seven yards behind the line of scrimmage ready to receive the snap. Immediately after the snap to A1,

- (a) A2 immediately drops and blocks B1 below the waist or
- (b) A2 rises, and slightly retreats as if to go in traditional pass blocking protection, but then dives and blocks B1 below the waist.

Both A2 and B1 were in the zone and on the line of scrimmage at the snap. The contact between A2 and B1 takes place in the free-blocking zone.

RULING: It is a legal block in (a) and an illegal block below the waist in (b). It is legal for A2 to block B1 below the waist if the contact is made immediately following the snap. Any later, and the ball is considered to have left the free-blocking zone and the block is illegal.

***2.17.3 SITUATION A:**

Offensive lineman A1 is on his scrimmage line and in the free-blocking zone at the snap. Immediately after the snap he drops back one step, then moves quickly three steps to the inside and while still in the free-blocking zone, contacts B1 in the back. The ball has not left the free-blocking zone prior to A1's block. B1 was in the free-blocking zone at the snap.

RULING: Legal block by A1.

***2.17.3 SITUATION B:**

Quarterback A1 takes the snap and hands off to back A2 who takes a few steps left and then hands off to back A3 who attempts to run wide to the right. Linemen A4 and A5 pull and block opponents from behind in the back while the ball is still in the zone. The defenders and linemen were in the zone at the snap and the contact occurred in the free-blocking zone.

RULING: Legal contact.

***2.17.3 SITUATION C:**

A9 is approaching B10 in the open field and at an angle. A9 pushes B10 in the back with one hand and with the other hand on the shoulder.

RULING: This is an illegal block in the back. ([9-3-5](#))

***2.17.3 SITUATION D:**

A2 is on the line of scrimmage and in the free-blocking zone at the snap. A2 pulls down the line and contacts B7 (who was in the free-blocking zone at the snap) inside the shoulders, below the neck, above the waist and in the back while B7 and the ball are still in the free-blocking zone.

RULING: Legal.

8.2.1 SITUATION:

Runner A10 dives into the pylon at the intersection of the goal line and sidelines and the ball breaks the plane of the goal line.

RULING: Touchdown. Assuming the pylon was placed properly, the ball broke the plane of the goal line prior to the touching of the pylon.

8.2.2 SITUATION A:

During (a) A9's run for a touchdown, B2 holds A1, or (b) K1's field goal, R2 holds K1.

RULING: In (a), A will likely keep the score and may choose to enforce the penalty on the try or enforce the penalty on the subsequent kickoff. In (b), K may keep the points and have the penalty enforced from the succeeding spot, or have the penalty enforced from the previous spot and replay the down. (8-4-3)

8.2.2 SITUATION B:

On the down in which time expired for the second period, Team A:

- (a) scores a field goal or
- (b) scores a touchdown.

In both cases, the opponents of the scoring team commit a live-ball foul.

RULING: In (a), the offended team has the option to keep the score, with the penalty assessed on the second half kickoff as this is the succeeding spot. In (b), the offended team has the option to keep the score, with penalty assessment on either the try or on the second half kickoff as this would be the subsequent kickoff.

8.2.2 SITUATION C:

During the down in which time expires for the fourth period, the opponents of Team A foul on a play where Team A:

- (a) scores a touchdown that leaves Team A trailing by one point,
- (b) scores a field goal which ties the game, or
- (c) scores a touchdown that leaves team A trailing by one point and the opponents also foul on the try.

RULING: In (a), Team A has the option to keep the score, with the penalty assessed on the try. The penalty cannot be assessed on the first play of overtime as there is no subsequent kickoff. In (b), Team A has the option to keep the score, with penalty assessment on the first play of overtime as the first play of overtime is the succeeding spot. In (c), Team A may only have the penalty for the opponent foul on the scoring play enforced on the try but cannot carry over the penalty to overtime; however, the foul by the opponent during the try could be enforced on the first play of overtime at Team A's choice.

8.2.2 SITUATION D:

A1 scores a touchdown. After the score, B commits an (a) deadball, (b) unsportsmanlike or (c) nonplayer foul prior to the initial ready for play on the try.

RULING: In (a), (b) or (c), Team A may elect to enforce the foul at the succeeding spot or on the subsequent kickoff.

8.2.2 SITUATION E:

Prior to the ball being thrown during a play in which A1 catches a touchdown pass and advances for a touchdown, B1 holds A2 to prevent him from going out for a pass on the side away from the play. When given options, A elects to enforce the penalty for the defensive holding foul on the subsequent kickoff. During the successful two-point try, B1 is guilty of holding A1. Does A have the option of having the 10-yard penalty added on to the previous 10-yard penalty on the subsequent kickoff?

RULING: Yes. The fouls did not occur during the same down, so these are not multiple fouls and, therefore, they may both be enforced on the subsequent kickoff. (8-3-5b; 10-2-4)

8.2.2 SITUATION F:

During a touchdown run by A1, B1 holds. During the successful kick try, there is a foul by B2.

RULING: If A accepts the penalty for B's holding foul, A may accept the score and attempt the try from the 1½-yard line or accept the score and have the penalty enforced on the subsequent kickoff. For a foul on the try, A may accept and replay the try from the 3/4-yard line or accept the 1-point try and enforce the penalty for B's try foul on the subsequent kickoff. The captain of A may choose to have both penalties enforced on the subsequent kickoff.

8.2.2 SITUATION G:

A1 scores a touchdown. During the scoring play,

- (a) A commits an unsportsmanlike foul or
- (b) B commits an unsportsmanlike foul.

RULING: In (a) and (b), the touchdown will be scored. The offended team will have the option to enforce the penalty on the try or carry it to the subsequent kickoff.

8.3.1 SITUATION:

A has a huge lead and scores another touchdown in the third period, and the captain of A informs the referee that his team does not wish to attempt the try.

RULING: There is no choice. A shall attempt a try, or at least snap the ball.

8.3.2 SITUATION A:

Following a penalty, the try is from B's 8. A1 advances to B's 4 and fumbles. The fumble rolls into the end zone where B1 intentionally bats or kicks the ball across the end line.

RULING: The measurement for the penalty for B1's foul is from B's 4 where A1's run ended. The new try is from the 2-yard line anywhere between the hash marks. (9-7-1, 9-7-2; 10-3-2, 10-3-3; 10-4-3)

8.3.2 SITUATION B:

During a try by place-kick, the kick by K1 is blocked by R1 and recovered by K2, who advances across R's goal line.

RULING: The try is unsuccessful. The try and down ended when the attempted place kick was blocked and it was obvious the kick would not score. The covering official should sound his whistle immediately when it is apparent the kick will not score. (4-2-2i)

8.3.2 SITUATION C:

During a try, A1 completes a pass to A2 in the end zone and: (a) ineligible A3 was illegally beyond the neutral zone; or (b) A4 interfered with B1; or (c) B2 interfered with A2.

RULING: In (a), if the 5-yard penalty is accepted, the try will be repeated. In (b), if the 15-yard penalty is accepted, the try will be repeated. In (c), A undoubtedly will accept the result of the play and enforce the penalty from the succeeding spot. (7-5-10 Penalty; 7-5-12 Penalty; 8-3-5)

8.3.3 SITUATION A:

During a try, a fumble by A1 is nearly at rest on the 3-yard line when a muff by B1 is judged by the game official to be a new force causing the ball to go into B's end zone where B2 recovers and: (a) downs the ball in the end zone; or (b) advances to his 10-yard line.

RULING: The try ends and the ball becomes dead when B2 recovers. In any ordinary down, such a dead ball in the end zone would be a safety, therefore, one point is scored for A in both (a) and (b). (4-2-2i; 8-1; 8-5-2b)

8.3.3 SITUATION B:

During a non-kick try, A1 fumbles the ball, and in scrambling to recover the ball and avoid defenders, retreats into his own end zone where he is tackled in possession of the ball.

RULING: The ball is dead and no points are awarded. B cannot score on a try.

8.3.5 SITUATION A:

During a kick try:

- (a) B1 holds and the try is successful; or
- (b) A1 holds and the try is successful; or
- (c) B1 roughs the kicker/holder and the try is unsuccessful.

RULING: In (a), A may accept the score and have the penalty enforced from the succeeding spot or enforce it from the previous spot and replay the down. In (b), B undoubtedly will accept the penalty and replay. In (c), A obviously would accept the penalty and replay. (8-3-7; 10-5-2)

8.3.5 SITUATION B:

During a successful two-point try: (a) B1 roughs the passer; or (b) B2 holds tight end A8.

RULING: In both (a) and (b), A may accept the score and have the penalty assessed from the succeeding spot.

8.3.5 SITUATION C:

During a successful two-point try, B1 is flagged for pass interference against A1. After the untimed down is over, A1 taunts B1.

RULING: A may accept the score and have the penalty enforced at the succeeding spot. However, B may accept the penalty for the dead ball foul by A, and have 15 yards marked off from the spot where the ball is placed after enforcement of B's penalty. The ball would then be free-kicked from K's 40-yard line.

8.4.1 SITUATION A:

The field-goal attempt:

- (a) goes directly over an upright; or
- (b) is clearly over the crossbar between the uprights.

In (a) and (b), the ball is blown back by the wind so that it drops into B's end zone.

RULING: In (a), it is an unsuccessful attempt because the ball did not penetrate the plane of the goal between the inside of the uprights extended. It is a legal field goal in (b) and it doesn't matter if the ball comes back above or below the crossbar. (8-4-1c)

8.4.1 SITUATION B:

K has the ball on R's 40-yard line for a free kick. The ball is in this position following:

- (a) a fair catch; or
- (b) an awarded fair catch; or
- (c) a safety followed by a couple of dead-ball penalties.

In all three cases, K1 place kicks the ball between the uprights and over the crossbar.

RULING: Field goal in (a) and (b), and touchback in (c). (8-4-1, 8-4-2; 8-5-3a(1))

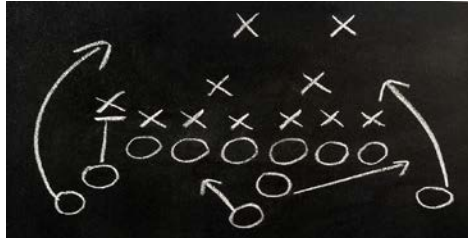
8.4.3 SITUATION:

With fourth and 5 from B's 18, K1's field-goal attempt is successful. B1 roughs the kicker/holder.

RULING: K may accept the result of the play (3 points) and have the penalty enforced from the succeeding spot, or accept the penalty. If the penalty is accepted and K retains possession, it will be first and goal from R's 9-yard line. (9-4-5; 10-5-1f)

O

Offensive Team



OBSERVERS Comments

Referee (R) = Stay with the QB "passer" until players separate. Don't be in a hurry to get your eyes downfield or watch the flight of the ball.

Umpire (U) = pre-snap alignment on scrimmage kicks, FG-Try attempts....get in the correct position. On short yardage plays squeeze in together and get a solid spot.

Linesman (L) – Line Judge (LJ)= It is OK to stay on the sideline during the play when the ball goes to the other sideline.....when play ends, squeeze in to the hash marks and help clean up the backside.

Back Judge (BJ) = Make sure not to come up to far to help with the relay, form a nice triangle. Also on short runs up the middle don't come up to far, need to keep players in front of you.

ALL officials continue to officiate after the whistle is blown!!!

Basic Fundamentals

Just like any sport, fundamentals are key to a team's success. The same is true for any officiating crew. It is important to always review the very basics to our officiating mechanics and judgment. Here are a few of them.

1. A player cannot fumble before gaining possession
2. No live ball foul causes the ball to become dead
3. Any kick that is not a scoring attempt becomes dead when it breaks the plane of R's goal line
4. Free kick lines are always 10 yards apart
5. The whistle seldom kills the ball. It is already dead by rule
6. A scrimmage kick recovered by K or R in or behind the neutral zone may be advanced by K or R
7. Forward pass interference can only occur beyond the line of scrimmage
8. Live ball fouls by team A are not combined with dead ball fouls by team A or B to make it a double or multiple foul
9. Penalty enforcement for any dead ball, non-player or unsportsmanlike foul are at the succeeding spot unless they occur during a scoring play and then they can be enforced on the try or kick off

2016 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

History of the 'zebra' Uniform

For ease of recognition, officials are traditionally clad in a black-and-white vertically striped shirt, white knickers, with a black belt, black shoes, and a peaked cap. A letter indicating the role of each official appears on the back of

the shirt at college level, while NFL officials have numbers with a small letter or letters above. Shortly after the September 11, 2001, attacks, an American flag was added to the shirts of NFL officials.

The stripes were first introduced in the 1920s, before which plain white shirts were worn. College football referee Lloyd Olds is credited with the idea after a quarterback mistakenly handed the ball to him. The officials are colloquially called "zebras" due to their black-and-white striped shirts.

During the 1940s the NFL officials wore color stripe shirts that represented their positions; black and white for referees, red and white for umpires, orange and white for head linemen and green and white for field judges. During most of the American Football League's existence (1960–1967), officials wore red-orange striped jerseys. The referees wore red hats, the others white, each with the AFL logo. This look was recreated in 2009 during AFL Legacy Weekends to mark the 50th anniversary of the AFL's founding.

The United States Football League which played from February to July allowed officials to wear black shorts. The United Football League, which launched play in October 2009, featured officials wearing solid red shirts (no stripes) with black numbers and black pants. As no teams in the league wore red or orange, there was no prospect of a clash of colors. From 2010, the UFL switched to a customized version of the traditional stripes.

Stripes on officials' shirts in high school are one inch wide and in college are two inches wide; NFL officials wear shirts with an uneven striping pattern. High school and college officials wear socks with a "Northwestern stripe" pattern, while NFL officials wear socks with two white stripes bordering one black stripe.

In 2006, the NFL completely redesigned the shirts, going to a sleeker-looking uniform which, however, no longer identified a given official's position from the front. Also new for 2006 were black pants with a white stripe down the side to be worn in cold weather. These looser-fitting pants allow for layering of warmer clothes underneath. In the 2010 season, college officials and, in many states, high school officials, were given the option of wearing the black cold-weather pants. The black pants became mandatory for college officials in 2011 and for NFL officials in 2012.

For several decades, all NFL officials wore white hats. In 1979, the referees changed to black hats with white stripes, while the other officials continued to wear white ones. Finally, in 1988, the NFL switched to the high-school and college football style: the referee wears a white hat (which now includes the NFL logo, first added for Super Bowl XXXIX), and the other officials wear black hats with white stripes. This has led to referees being referred to as "white hats".

Officials' hats are also occasionally used as additional equipment. If a player not carrying the ball steps out of bounds (a wide receiver running a deep passing route or a player running downfield on punt coverage, for example), the official will drop his hat to mark the spot of where the player went out of bounds. The hat also is often used to signal a second foul called by the official on a play (by those officials that may carry only one flag); to indicate unsportsmanlike conduct committed against the official himself (as when a player shoves an official); or when some other situation requires a physical mark and the official has already used the ordinary item on the play. Some conferences discourage the use of the hat in these situations; the bean bag will be used instead.