

2018 Regular Season Bulletin 1

Lots to talk about in this Bulletin! Questions from the first week of sub-varsity games and topics Brad has asked me to comment on and clarify.

Mouthpieces: Per Brad. Fangs, teeth and other markings on mouthpieces are **legal** unless they are considered offensive, insulting, vulgar or taunting. To disallow a mouthpiece, it needs to clearly meet the criteria for a UNS foul in the official's judgement. Rule 9-8-1a and NOTE.

Halftime Intermission: Officials are not responsible for notifying teams of the time remaining at halftime to allow for a prompt return to the field for the 3-minute warmup. Each team is responsible for monitoring the clock. 15-yard UNS foul on the Head Coach for failure to have his team on the field in a timely manner. Rule 9-8-1g3.

Sub-Varsity Rules Modifications:

Question 1: 4th quarter of a Frosh game. Team A has scored and after the try elects to put the ball in play 4th and 10 at their own 40. A62 holds B29. Penalty is enforced, and it is now A's ball 4th and 20 from their own 30. After careful consideration of the situation, Team A's head coach realizes that he has nothing in his playbook that will earn his team 20 yards. He informs the official on his sideline that he now desires to choose to punt the ball (or turn the ball over to B 35 yards downfield.) In this situation with the 4th down being replayed because of penalty enforcement, must Team A still run a non-kicking scrimmage play or do they have the choice to punt or use one of the punt options allowed under the new rule?

Answer 1: There is no rule on point to cover your play, but there is precedent for allowing a coach/team to have the same choices for a down replayed because of a foul than he/they had for the original play. Rule 4-3-7 says a team shall have the same privilege if the down is to be replayed. Rule 8-3-8 allows a team to change the spot from where a try may be attempted when the try down is replayed. So, applying those philosophies/precedence's to your play, then Team A can choose from all of the scrimmage kick options available to them; they are not locked in to running another non-kicking scrimmage play just because they chose that option to begin with.

Question 2: Same play as above. Team A's Head Coach chooses to punt the ball. Prior to the snap, he now realizes that he made a poor choice and informs the official that he wants to turn the ball over to his opponent 35 yards downfield. Can he change his choice?

Answer 2: No, once a choice is made, it's irrevocable.

Question 3: How long do coaches get to make a 4th down choice to punt or not to punt?

Answer 3: Officials will not delay the 25-second count to let a coach decide what he wants to do. He can take a team time-out if his decision-making process takes longer than 25 seconds. Otherwise, Team A will be flagged for delay-of-game.

Question 4: Team A elected to punt the ball with no rush and no return. Ball is punted and B1 muffs the catch. We placed the ball at the spot of the muff. Correct?

Answer 4: Correct, the ball is placed where it touched the ground.

Question 5: Team A elects to punt the ball with no rush and no return. Punter A1 receives the snap 12 yards back from the snapper. A1 walks up 7 yards and punts. We stopped the play and made A1 re-kick without walking up. Was this proper?

Answer 5: Good job! A1 needs to kick the ball close to where he received the snap.

Pass Interference:

Play: A receiver accidentally (meaning voluntarily) crosses the sideline (without contact) and is out of bounds when he is clearly interfered with by B96 and the pass falls to the ground. When the interference occurs, both players are out-of-bounds. LJ throws a flag for DPI.

Ruling: Incorrect call. Rule 7-5-7 says "Pass interference restrictions apply only beyond the neutral zone...." Since "beyond the neutral zone" does not exist out-of-bounds, there cannot be any fouls for pass interference. Pass interference can only occur in the field and end zones.

False Start vs. Encroachment:

If you can't decide who moved into the neutral zone first, give the benefit of the doubt to the defense. Offensive players know the snap count and are required to be motionless; defensive players do not.

Passing:

When in doubt, if a pass is forward or backward, rule it forward. When a pass is thrown, it's not always easy to draw an imaginary line from the passer to the receiver. An uncaught backward pass may be recovered and advanced by either team. Ruling it backward when it could go either way benefits the defense. Calling it an incomplete forward pass is fair to both teams; the offense can't gain yardage and the defense benefits because the offense has used up one of its downs.