

2011 SRI Bulletin 4

Facebook and Twitter

Officials who use Facebook and/or Twitter to comment on or vent about officiating issues often overlook the fact that postings on social networks may be viewed by people other than the intended recipients, which could cause problems. Officials should not publicly comment about a player, team, coach, school or another official. Making these comments on a social network is essentially doing the same thing.

Value your reputation, character and credibility—use good judgment and common sense if you've joined a social networking site or are considering it. Be careful about what you post.

Disconcertion

The defense is not permitted to call defensive signals that simulate the sound, cadence or otherwise interfere with Team A's snap count. If the QB changes the play with an audible, the defense is not permitted to interfere with that either. The defense may use verbal signals, but they must be different than those used by the offense. Team A gets first choice; defenses who use "Hut," "Hike," or "Go" must change signals. This dead ball foul carries a 15 yard penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct. Rule 9-5-1d.

Penalty Enforcement

Play: Team B intercepts Team A's pass. After the interception and during the return, there is a hold by the intercepting team (Team B) and a personal foul by the team who threw the ball (Team A). Officials enforced both penalties as a double foul and replayed the down.

Ruling: Incorrect enforcement. Team B gains possession of the ball with "clean hands." That means they can keep the ball by declining A's personal foul penalty subject to being penalized 10-yards for their holding penalty. Rule 10-2-2.

Ball Position

When a free kick goes out-of-bounds, the ball will be put in play at the inbounds spot and not in the center of the field. Rule 6-1-9. The only exception is if Team R chooses a spot of first touching. Rule 6-2-7.

Taking a Knee

Question: With seconds to go in the game, the QB for Team A tells the Referee that he plans to "take a knee." How should the Referee respond? How should this play be officiated?

Answer: The Referee should not announce the QB's intentions to the defense. "Taking a Knee" formations are unique and are recognized by the defense. Referees and Umpires should position themselves closer to the offensive formation and be prepared to blow the play dead **as soon as the QB starts to go down.** Wing officials should also quickly "pinch in" along the LOS. All officials should use their voices to remind the defense not to take any late or unsportsmanlike shots at the QB or other Team A players.

Under NFHS rules, the ball does not become dead if the ball carrier simulates placing his knee on the ground. Since the QB has announced his intention, he should not be allowed to fake taking a knee and complete a play. That's why the whistle needs to be blown as soon as he starts to take a knee.