

2014 Regular Season Bulletin 10

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Roughing the Punter – Correction

In last week's Bulletin, I shared a play regarding a punter who kicked a loose ball following a bad snap, then was contacted by the defense. I stated that there was a judgment possibility of a flag for roughing/running into the kicker. AFTER FURTHER REVIEW, the definition of a kicker, Rule 2-32-8, says the player could not be a kicker since he **illegally** kicked the ball and therefore cannot be roughed or run into. There could be a flag for a personal foul, which, again would offset the flag for illegally kicking the ball with the down replayed.

My apologies for any confusion....but it's nice to know officials are reading the Bulletins! ☺

Breaking the Huddle

It is not a foul for Team A to break the huddle with 12 players as long as any replaced player begins to leave the field within three seconds of the arrival of his/her substitute. A player who is being replaced is allowed three seconds to leave the offensive or defensive huddle and continue to his team area. This three second window does not apply to how long it takes the replaced player to reach his team box area. The replaced player only needs to be in his team box area before the ball is snapped.

Roughing the Passer

If a passer throws the ball at the sideline and his momentum carries him out-of-bounds where there is an obvious late hit, the flag is for roughing the passer. Although roughing the passer can only be a live-ball foul, it doesn't matter that the contact was out-of-bounds.

Disconcerting Acts

Play: Just before the ball is snapped all four defensive linemen do a coordinated belly flop on the ground which causes Team A's right guard to false start.

Ruling: Disconcerting act by the defense. Foul for unsportsmanlike conduct. Rule 9-5-1d.

Please review the following information as playoffs start this week.

Clock Management

Every official on the field is ultimately responsible for clock management, regardless of which official has primary game clock responsibility. Officials need to take a quick glance at the clock during the dead ball period after each play and be prepared to make an adjustment if the clock is incorrectly stopped or left running. This is especially important at the end of each half when the score is close. Errors of this kind can be very costly.

45-Point (Running Clock) Rule

The 45-point (running clock) rule will be in effect for 1A through 5A games for ALL rounds of the playoffs. The alternative plan will be used for ALL 6A games.

Overtime

Please review Rule Book pages 84-85 which talk about resolving tied games. In Oregon, the first two series of overtime start from the 25 yard line; the third and ensuing series begin at the 10 yard line. Halftime is a good time to review overtime rules and procedures. Remember, you only toss the coin once in overtime, and ends of the field may change with each complete overtime series.

Professionalism

During the playoffs, we will work games involving teams from outside our normal service areas. It is important to be professional in our contacts with players, coaches, AD's and school administrators. Represent your local association well!

Several associations will travel long distances to work their playoff games. Allow plenty of time for road and weather conditions. Many crews conduct their pre-game conference in the car on the road to the game site. That's fine, but allow enough time to unwind, change clothes in a relaxed manner and go over last minute details before the opening kickoff.

Uping the Ante

Playoff games are more intense as teams look to advance towards championship games. Be confident in your rules and mechanics knowledge. Review your keys for every play situation. Go over your pre-snap routine. Work to put yourself in the right position to apply the philosophies that will help you make a great call or a great no-call.

Remember, we will always be criticized more for calling something that isn't there than we will for not calling something that is. If you find that you need to throw your flag, **MAKE IT BIG!**

By this time in the season, a lot of what we do is routine. It's easy to become complacent, like giving the signal for 11 players when you really haven't counted. Stay focused, be prepared mentally and don't take anything for granted.

Be prepared for the unexpected, such as an onside kick on the opening kickoff. Concentration between downs will help you prepare for the next play. Keep calm, don't be influenced by excited coaches, players and fans. People will be looking to see how you respond under pressure. Remember, a calm official has a calming effect on those around you.

I'm not suggesting that you are not going to miss one now and then, but it should not be from lack of effort, improper rules enforcement or poor mechanics. If you prepare yourself, know the game, know how to apply the rules and philosophies, use proper positioning and mechanics and give 100% to every game, you and your crew members can feel proud of the game you have worked. Finish The Season Strong!

And Finally.....

This will be the last regular season bulletin. I want to thank everyone who has sent me plays, video clips or questions. Hopefully, my responses have been helpful, informative and useful to you and your association, and...have generated some good discussion!

I hope all of you have had a great season; best of luck in the playoffs.