

2014 Regular Season Bulletin 3

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Extending a Period:

Play: As A15 is running inbounds, time expires for the first quarter. The defender grabs A15 by the back of the collar, but does not pull him down backwards until after A15 has stepped out of bounds. Is there an untimed down?

Ruling: A horse collar tackle that begins while the ball is live but consummated after the ball becomes dead is enforced as a live-ball foul. Rule 9-4-3k. As such, the period is extended for an untimed down as the foul occurred during the down. Rule 3-3-3.

Inadvertent Whistle-Giving/Getting Help:

Play: Quick swing pass to the HL side of the field that was ruled by the HL as forward and incomplete. The HL blew his whistle and the ball rolled out-of-bounds about 7 yards behind the LOS. The defense's sideline was screaming that the pass was backwards and the LJ who was on that team's sideline came in to talk to the R and HL to tell them he was 100% sure the pass was backwards. The crew got together and ultimately stayed with the incomplete pass. However, there was much debate and disagreement that we should have ruled an inadvertent whistle and replayed the down.

My strong opinion is that we should stay with an incomplete pass as it was the HL's call and by replaying the down we hurt the defense even more than just staying with incomplete.

Comment: When the LJ came in and offered information to the R and HL, the call still belonged to the HL; he "owns" the call. If the HL decides that the LJ's information is strong/convincing enough to warrant changing the call, then the HL makes the decision to "give up" the call to the LJ. If not, then the HL "keeps" the call and lives with the results, right or wrong.

You say the LJ was "100%" sure of what he saw. If he comes in, he better be 156% sure that the pass was backwards. Where was the LJ? Still on the LOS; had he drifted downfield, OR did he have the foresight to take a step or two back into the offensive backfield to get a good look at the trajectory of the pass? Where he was goes a long way in evaluating the credibility of the information he's offering. The HL, or even the R needs to ask....part of the information gathering/decision making process.

I understand what you're saying about hurting the defense, but the bottom line goal is to "get it right," and if that means changing a call, then that's what has to happen.

Mirroring Signals:

I often see officials mirror another official's signal, usually on an incomplete pass or a TD. If you weren't the covering official or did not have the same call, don't mirror. If your partner is wrong and you mirror that signal, you have now bought into the mistake. Not only is your partner wrong but now you are too! The only signal that should be mirrored is the "time out" signal to help the game clock operator know when to stop the clock.

Multiple Fouls:

Play: A's ball, 1st and 10 at the B-46. A9 is under center ready to receive the snap. A29 goes in motion but is moving toward the line of scrimmage at the snap. A9 throws a legal forward pass to A88 at the B-1. B24 makes early contact with A88 and intercepts the pass. B24's momentum carries him into the end zone and was tackled in the end zone. After the play is dead, B42 is standing over A88 taunting him.

Ruling: The illegal motion and defensive pass interference fouls combine as a double foul which will offset, allowing A to keep the ball and replay the down. The Unsportsmanlike Conduct foul on B42 after the play was dead will be enforced separately from the previous spot. A's ball, 1st and 10 at the B-31. Rules 7-2-7, 7-5-10, 10-2-1, 10-2-5 and 10-2-6.

Disconcerting Acts:

Play: B's defensive linemen are in two point stances. Prior to the snap they stutter-step in front of the Team A linemen. They back off and then quickly approach Team A linemen again and again. Team B players are silent, however our crew felt this constituted unsportsmanlike conduct by Team B because it was a disconcerting act intended to cause Team A linemen either to false start or encroach. We did not feel Team B players were trying to time a blitz.

Ruling: If your crew felt Team B's movement(s) constituted movement intended to interfere with Team A's signals or movements, then you have a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty against Team B.....Rule 9-5-1d. This foul is enforced as a dead ball foul.

Defensive players are not permitted to deliberately feint a charge to provoke Team A linemen into moving. Team B players are prohibited from making non-football movements in an obvious attempt to draw an offensive player into committing a foul for a false start or encroachment.

Unfair Act:

Play: PAT from the 3-yard line. Team A lines up in a swinging gate formation. A12 hollers, "shift" and players begin to relocate. After the players have stopped in a "semi-swinging gate," A12 starts walking towards the sideline hollering, "what are you guys doing?????" The ball is then snapped directly to A32 who is promptly shellacked by a host of B players at the B5.

Ruling: This is a foul for unsportsmanlike conduct. The unfair act provision of Rule 9-9-1 should be used to call a dead-ball foul prior to the snap. 15-yard penalty with the ball snapped from the B 18-yard line for the try. The UNS penalty gets assigned to A12 who did the hollering.

Training Video:

This week's training video features two more chapters from the LeMonnier series that show plays involving the Passing and Kicking Game.