

2015 Regular Season Bulletin 4

Equipment

Question: What's the difference between Rules 9.8.1h and 9.9?

Answer: The rules differentiate between wearing illegal equipment or missing required equipment (Rule 9-8-1h) and failing to properly wear mandatory equipment (Rule 1-5-6.)

Missing equipment means the item is not with the player on the field, i.e. a player not wearing a tailbone pad.

Not properly wearing required equipment means the item is with the player, but he's not using it, i.e. an unfastened chin strap or a dangling mouthpiece.

Note that Rule 1-5 has no penalty section after several articles. Rule 9-9 was editorially created in 2015 to provide a penalty for Rule 1-5 violations. Rule 9-9 was the old 9-8-1m.

Penalty Enforcement

Play: Third and 10 on Team A's 30 yard line. A67 holds at the 25-yard line as A12's pass is intercepted by B23 and returned for a touchdown. How will the holding penalty be enforced?

Ruling: The penalty for the hold will be declined and Team B will score a touchdown. The holding penalty cannot be enforced on either the try or on the subsequent kickoff as it occurred before the change of possession. Rule 8-2-3 does not apply.

Legal Formation

Play: A37 is lined up as a slot in the gap between the right tackle and A89, the widest man on the line of scrimmage. While in a three-point stance, A37 notices he is in "no-man's-land," neither on the line nor in the backfield. He moves back to get into the backfield and re-sets. Is this legal?

Ruling: The shifting of A37 is a legal play. A37 is not an interior lineman and is thus not restricted. A37 must remain stationary for one second before the snap. Rules 2-32-3, 2-39 and 7-2-6.

Second Scrimmage Kick:

Question: K35's punt is blocked behind the line of scrimmage. K35 recovers the loose ball and punts the ball a second time.

Answer: Legal play. K may advance (run, pass or kick) any kick recovered in or behind the neutral zone. The second punt is legal as there was no change of team possession. Rules 5-1-3f, 6-2-1, 6-2-3, 6-4 Table, and 7-5-1. Case Book play 5.1.3 Situation C.

Legal Helmet Contact

A runner can legally stiff-arm an opponent who is trying to tackle him by initiating contact with a defensive player's helmet. However, the runner is not allowed to deliver a blow to the helmet or grab any part of the helmet. Rule 9-2-1 exempts the runner from a variety of acts.

Illegal Snap

Play: Team A runs a play where the center snaps the ball but rather than a quick snap to the quarterback, he move the ball between his legs and holds it there for the running back who is in motion to come by and take the ball from his hand. The R and U, in my opinion, correctly called this an illegal snap. The coach stated they had been running that play without problem so far this year.

Ruling: Illegal snap. Rule 2-40-2 says the ball must immediately leave the hand of the snapper in a quick and continuous motion.

Blowing the Whistle

I am hearing about whistles not being blown when the ball becomes dead, especially in sub- varsity games. Players and coaches expect to hear a whistle on every play. Sometimes there is a fine line between taking the risk of an inadvertent whistle by blowing a "quick" whistle when you think all action has ended or taking the risk of extracurricular activity by blowing a "slow" whistle or not blowing the whistle at all.

That said, officials must be alert to the status of the ball before blowing the whistle. Make sure you see the player on the ground with the ball in possession before blowing the whistle. Remember, the whistle never kills the play; the whistle only confirms something has happened to cause the ball to become dead. Never assume the runner is down. Only the covering official should blow the whistle. No "mirroring" of whistles!

Training Video

This week's training video features 8 plays that deal with free kick and scrimmage kick mechanics as well as plays that ask questions for officials and associations to discuss.

Here's the link. Remember that you must be signed in to Arbiter to view the video.

<http://osaafotball.arbitersports.com/front/105991/Video/player/3429/5937>