

## **2016 Pre-Season Bulletin 3**

### **How Do You Define “Flagrant?”**

Several officials have asked me, “how do you define “flagrant” as the term applies to the possible disqualification of a player who has committed a hard, violent contact foul. Let’s start with the Rule Book definition....

**2-16-2c** Flagrant - a foul so severe or extreme that it places an opponent in danger of serious injury....

Webster helps us a bit more and defines flagrant as “...glaringly bad...outrageous...”

For 2016, the NCAA football rules allow Instant Replay officials to create a targeting foul from the replay booth if not called by the on-field officials. They use the terms “egregious” and “shockingly bad” as guidelines in making this determination.

So, now we have “severe,” “extreme,” “glaringly bad,” “outrageous,” “egregious,” and “shockingly bad.” But....does this really help?

In 1964, Justice Potter Stewart tried to explain "hard-core" pornography, or what is obscene, by saying, "...I know it when I see it ..." I believe officials face the same irony and difficulty in trying to define what is flagrant.

I would suggest two other guidelines. Intent and the severity of the contact, in that order.

When judging intent, remember it’s OK to take the player out of the play, but not out of the game.

To help judge how severe the contact is ask yourself, “does the contact go beyond what’s necessary to make a legal tackle or a legal block.”

The following are also “red flag” indicators of possible flagrant acts:

- Launch—a player leaving his feet to attack an opponent by an upward and forward thrust of the body to make contact in the head or neck area
- A crouch followed by an upward and forward thrust to attack with contact at the head or neck area—even though one or both feet are still on the ground
- Leading with helmet, forearm, fist, hand or elbow to attack with contact at the head or neck area
- Lowering the head before attacking by initiating contact with the crown of the helmet

Defenseless players, and you know who those are, are especially vulnerable to injury and thus to flagrant contact.

I’m not sure I’ve answered the question, but hopefully I’ve given you some “food for thought” to use when judging whether or not a contact foul is flagrant. Trust me, “you’ll know it when you see it.”

## **Clock Management-End of Period**

Near the end of any period, but especially near the end of either half, the time remaining on the game clock becomes very significant. Officials must be diligent to ensure that neither team receives an unfair timing advantage or disadvantage.

Some guidelines.....

- For field goals, do not stop play to let a wing official or the Umpire get in position. That means the Back Judge may have to rule on a field goal alone if one of the wings or the Umpire is surprised and not able to get in position in time.
- If the ball is snapped with two seconds or less remaining in a period regardless of whether or not the clock is running at the time of the snap, there is not enough time for a subsequent play.
- If there are more than two seconds remaining when the ball is snapped, there may be time for a subsequent play depending on how long that play takes.
- If the game clock is stopped and will start on the Referee's ready-for-play signal, there must be a full second remaining on the game clock for there to be a legal snap.
- If the game clock is stopped and will start on the Referee's ready-for-play signal, and there is less than a full second remaining on the game clock, there is not enough time for another play. Team A should be allowed to snap the ball and then be told that time expired before the snap.
- If the game clock is stopped and will start on the snap, there is enough time for another play if there is any time remaining on the game clock.

## **Clock Management-Out of Bounds**

Play: 4th and 9 at K's 20-yard line. K1 punts the ball and it travels 30 yards and rolls out-of-bounds untouched. Running into the kicker is called and the five-yard penalty is accepted making it 4th and 4 at K's 25-yard line.

Ruling: While the clock would seemingly start on the ready because neither team was awarded a new series of downs after a legal kick, the clock starts on the snap because the ball went out-of-bounds. Rule 3-4-3a.

## **Illegal Participation-Illegal Substitution**

Play: The 11th player for Team B enters on Team A's side of the line **after** the snap and makes the tackle.

Ruling: Illegal participation. 15-yard penalty from the basic spot. The spot of the foul is where he began to participate. Rule 9-6-4a. It doesn't matter if he is the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> player.

Comment: If he enters on A's side **before** the snap, it does matter if he was the 11th or 12th player. If he was the 11<sup>th</sup> player and doesn't participate, it is illegal substitution, Rule 3-7-5. If he was the 12<sup>th</sup> player, it doesn't matter if he participates or not, illegal participation. None of these examples are unfair acts.