

## 2017 Regular Season Bulletin 2

### Correction

In last week's Bulletin, I shared a play that involved the momentum exception, Rule 8-5-2a. My ruling was incorrect; momentum does not apply since the ball didn't become dead in the end zone. The correct result of the play is R's ball, 1/10 at the R-12 yard line.

### Helmet Coming Off

Many players whose helmets come off during a play will leave on their own for one play; others will need reminding from an official, but in either case, when a player leaves because his helmet came off, the clock must be stopped for an official's timeout and the coach informed so he can send in a substitute. A team ran a play with 10 on defense because the coaching staff did not know the helmet-less player had been sent out.

### Fighting

Rule 2-11 makes it clear that fighting is an engagement in a combative manner unrelated to football. While it is possible to have a fight while the ball is live, that is the exception. Blocking is a football act, so when players start flailing during a block, it is more likely to be a personal foul for hands to the face or unnecessary roughness than fighting. Also, the player on the bottom of the pile is entitled to protect himself so what may look like kicking or punching is probably an effort to remove an assailant from the same geographical location.

In any fight or a bench-clearing brawl, the priority is to identify the main perpetrators. If you can identify substitutes leaving their bench area and coming onto the field, that's fine, but not your main focus.

### Pop-Up Kick

Question: "The ball went high into the air, about 15-18 yards deep, but did NOT touch the ground immediately off the tee. Can this be interpreted as a pop-up kick in the spirit of the rule to protect defenseless receivers during a high, short kick?"

Answer: By rule, a pop-up kick must be driven immediately into the ground. The kick you describe is a "pooch" kick and is a legal kick. If there is a safety concern about a pooch kick that goes 15-18 yards deep and high into the air, the remedy is for the R player to signal for a fair catch.

### Time Out Signals

A time out signal should be given whenever there is doubt about the recovery of a fumble. A team direction signal can follow when officials are positive which team has the ball. If the fumbling team recovers the ball, the clock will be re-started immediately. Rule 3-4-3h allows the Referee to momentarily stop the clock so no more clock time than normal is used in making the ball ready for play for the next down. This is important near the end of either half when a team may attempt to consume time by being slow to unpile following a fumble or routine scrimmage play.

## **Lightning**

From a Game Report: “With 3:25 left in the 3rd quarter we had a flash of lightning and stopped the game per the OSAA and NFHS lightning policies. 3 minutes later we had a second lightning flash; both head coaches got together with the Referee, and agreed to stop the game and end it.”

Comment: Good job by this crew. The game was ended because of the two lightning strikes which fall under Rule 3-1-5. The score is a non-factor under these circumstances. Also, 3-1-5 does not require agreement of both coaches. The officiating crew is the sole judge of whether conditions are hazardous.

## **Training Video**

This week’s training video features two plays where runners are tackled around the neck. Are these tackles legal? Is any contact above the shoulders Unnecessary Roughness? What about tackles in the head and neck area?

I will share my opinion in next week’s Bulletin. Both plays are judgment calls and officials may agree or disagree with me or amongst yourselves. The idea is to generate discussion because some day, in some game, you may have to make the call!

Here’s the link. Remember you need to be signed in to Arbiter to view the video.

<http://osaafotball.arbitersports.com/Front/105991/Video/player/14116/17183>