

2017 Regular Season Bulletin 6

Illegal Kick

Play: Team A's ball, 4th and 5 at the B 10-yard line. Team A sets up for a field goal attempt. The snap is muffed and rolling around in the backfield when the kicker A-12 kicks the ball at the B-12. The kicked ball goes into R's end zone and comes to rest with no player attempting to obtain possession. The Back Judge blows the ball dead.

Ruling: Team B will undoubtedly accept the penalty for A-12's illegally kicking the ball, resulting in a replay of the down, A's ball, 4th and 22 at the B 27-yard line.....since the result of the play is a touchdown for Team A. The result of the play is a touchdown since it was an illegal kick, and the ball was declared dead in the end zone with nobody attempting to possess. Only legal kicks in the end zone are touchbacks. Rules 2-24-9, 8-2-1c and 9-7-1.

Game and Ejection Reports

Brad and I, in our respective roles, have the opportunity to read numerous game and ejection reports. Please make sure these reports are professionally written as they may be forwarded to the involved schools. Avoid slang, jokes, derogatory comments, flippant remarks and opinions. The report must only recite the facts. Actual quotes should be provided; sugarcoating vulgar language diminishes the impact of what occurred. Writing a proper report is not overly complicated, just think about the message your report will send. Here are two actual examples of what is inappropriate which prompted my comments.

"This turned out to be the game from hell!" and "#42 was a pain all night so I dumped him."

Penalty Enforcement

Play: 2nd and 4 at Team B's 9-yard line. A1 throws a pass toward eligible A2, who is in the end zone. Despite interference by A2, B3 intercepts the pass and returns the ball to Team B's 3-yard line, where he fumbles. A4 recovers at Team B's 4-yard line and B5 piles on after the whistle.

Ruling: Team B gets the ball with clean hands, but then fumbles with Team A recovering. Team A's foul is during a loose ball play; the basic spot is the previous spot. If Team B accepts Team A's OPI foul, go back 15 yards from the previous spot to the B 24-yard line, making it 2nd and 19 from the B 24. The dead ball foul would then be assessed half-the-distance forward from B's 24-yard line resulting in Team A's ball, 2nd and 7 from the Team B 12-yard line.

Team B's declining Team A's OPI foul is unrealistic, but the result of the play would be Team A's ball, 1st and Goal at Team B's 4-yard line. The dead ball penalty would then be accessed making it Team A's ball, 1st and Goal from Team B's 2-yard line.

Comment: When there are multiple penalties and enforcement spots to deal with, take the time to sort things out. Go through each sequence individually, then piece the parts together to give you the final enforcement.

Training Videos

Last week's training video featured a play where the ball was run up the middle, then pitched back to a player who threw a touchdown pass. I asked you to look for possible ineligible downfield, the legality of the pass and whether or not forward progress was stopped.

I don't think there was any illegal forward pass, the ball was clearly thrown from behind the neutral zone. Only the Umpire can judge forward progress and the video doesn't give a clear picture of forward progress being stopped. Were there any ineligible downfield? Again, hard to tell, but in this play, the ball was snapped from the 3-yard line and the expanded NZ ended at the 1yd line. Remember, it's not so much where the ineligible is when the pass is thrown, it's where he has been anytime between the snap and the pass. If he advances too far downfield and returns behind the NZ before the pass is thrown, it's a foul. An ineligible may initiate contact with an opponent within the expanded NZ but he cannot continue that contact beyond the 2-yard expanded NZ. With the ball snapped from the 3, I'd give him the GL; beyond that, he's toast!

Let's talk mechanics. This is a running play until all heck breaks loose, so I think the video shows the U in a good position. The only help the U can give is an opinion on whether forward progress was stopped before the ball goes backwards. And if so, then the U needs to get on his whistle! When this play turns into a pass, the U needs to be thinking about IDP's. The HL does an EXCELLENT job of moving from the 3-yard line to the GL at the snap, then moving back when the ball goes backwards. He's following the movement of the ball which is critical. Do the wings always hold on the GL, until it's clear the play is over? No...wings have to be fluid and able to adjust to a broken play. The video doesn't show the movement of the LJ, but I hope he also moved back with the ball. When the pass was thrown into the EZ on his side, the LJ should go past the goal line, as it is no longer threatened, and be on the sideline about halfway into the EZ to have a good look at the completed catch.

Before signaling a TD, the R has to get the crew together and ask questions to get necessary information. Ask if any official had forward progress stopped. If the answer is "yes," then everything else becomes moot. If no one had progress stopped, then move on and ask about ineligible. R can throw a late flag if any official had an ineligible downfield. The R has to step up and take control, not let everybody talk at once and sort things out.

This is a PERFECT example of where a mic'ed R would have been helpful. If forward progress was ruled stopped at the 1-yard line, the R gets on his mic and announces, "The runner's forward progress was stopped at the 1-yard line. Second down." If forward progress was not stopped and there was a late flag for ineligible(s) downfield, the R announces, "There is no touchdown. Ineligible receiver downfield, number (??) on the offense, 5-yard penalty, repeat 1st down."

This week's Training Video features two chapters from the 2017 LeMonnier training tapes that discuss Blocking and Catch/No Catch. Here are the links.

<http://osafootball.arbitersports.com/front/105991/Video/player/14164/17264>

<http://osafootball.arbitersports.com/front/105991/Video/player/14165/17265>

Remember, you must be signed in to Arbiter to view these videos.