

2018 Regular Season Bulletin 4

Inadvertent Whistle???:

Play: K punts from their 35. The ball hits the ground on their 40 where it rolls around untouched. No player attempts to gain possession. As the ball is about to come to rest on the R 40, K2 puts his hand on top of the ball and then trots away leaving the ball there. Immediately thereafter, R2 picks up the ball and advances. The covering official then blows the play dead. Also, time runs out during this play at the end of the 2nd quarter.

Ruling: When K2 places his hand on top of the ball, he has downed the ball. He has caused the ball to become motionless and since no player attempted to gain possession, Rule 4-2-2e2 says the ball is dead. Blow the whistle, shut the play down, R's ball, 1st and 10 at that spot.

Comment: Does it matter how long K2 had his hand on the ball? His intent was to down the ball. As a Referee, I'd ask the covering official if he really wanted to give Team R the advance. I would suggest to him the ball became dead when K2 downed it. Any action after that would then be moot. But...If the official decides not to accept any assistance, you have an IW with a player in possession of the ball. R's choices are to take the result of the play at the spot where the whistle blew or replay the down. Extend the period for an untimed down with either choice. Rule 3-3-3c.

Correction:

In last week's Bulletin, I gave an incorrect enforcement spot for a DPI penalty on the last play of regulation time. The correct enforcement should have read, "If Team A begins the overtime period on offense, the snap will be from Team B's 12 1/2-yard line, 1st and 10." The penalty is enforced half-the-distance from the 25-yard line.

Illegal Motion:

If more than one back goes in motion and there are no movements that simulate the start of play, allow the play to continue because both backs could stop, reset, and remain motionless for one second before the snap which makes the play legal. The philosophy is some acts that are initially illegal can be corrected before the snap and do not become a foul until the ball is snapped.

If both backs are still in motion or if one back stops and the other stays in motion, that's a foul at the snap for an illegal shift. Rules 7-2-6 and 7-2-7.

Radios:

Official-to-Official crew radio communications are an excellent opportunity for wing officials to communicate penalty enforcement options to the coaches on their sideline and radio the coach's choice to the Referee to expedite the enforcement process.

Mechanics:

Several comments on Mechanics from Game Reports and Observations.....

Wing officials, when a play goes out of bounds on your side of the field, turn to face out-of-bounds to view player action. Dead ball officiating is your primary responsibility. Drop your beanbag at the OB spot if you go OB to be closer to any dead ball activity. If necessary, “escort” players back onto the field. Don’t be in a hurry to get a football back onto the field.

Umpires, do not continue to watch the action in the line after a pass is thrown. You often have the best look on catches and trapped balls, particularly those in the middle of the field; you need to pivot after the ball is thrown to be able to help another official who may have to make a catch/no catch call while looking through the receiver’s back.

Wing officials, don’t mirror a signal made by another official unless you saw the same action and are positive of your call. Two wrong signals don’t equal one correct call.

With more teams using a hurry-up or no-huddle offense, if you don’t complete your counting of players before the ball is snapped, continue to officiate and when the ball is dead, quickly count the team that’s your responsibility. If your count reveals more than 11, throw your flag for illegal participation.

Training Video:

This week’s training video shows two views of a tackle involving a “belly to back” or “suplex” type move that is not a proper tackling technique. This action is also flagrant as it places the player in danger of serious injury and should result in disqualification. Rules 9-4-3g and 2-16-2c.

Unnecessary Roughness