

2018 Regular Season Bulletin 6

Scrimmage Kick:

Play: A (soon to become K) has the ball 4th and 25 on their own 15. K1 punts and the ball crosses the LOS in the air and hits R1 in the back on K's 20-yard line. The ball then hits the ground and K2 recovers the ball on K's 20. Which team gets the ball, and what is the next down and distance?

Ruling: The threshold question in this play is "is the ball beyond the NZ when it is touched?" In this play, the answer is "YES." So, there is no longer a line-to-gain as the continuity of downs has been broken. Since Team R was the first to touch the ball, Team K may recover and retain possession but may not advance the ball. Team K's ball, 1st and 10 at the K 20-yard line. Rule 6-2-4.

Penalty Enforcement:

Question: (From a Coach) "We had a personal foul penalty on the last timed down in the first half of the game. The officials ruled that the offense could accept the penalty and apply to the kickoff for the second half."

Answer: Rule 3-3-3a tells us that a period shall be extended by an untimed down if there was a foul by either team during a down in which time expires and the penalty is accepted. It makes no difference if the foul is offensive or defensive. So...enforce the accepted penalty and extend the period for an untimed down.

Play 1: Team K punts on the last play of the 4th quarter, and K34 commits a holding foul during the kick. R12 returns the kick to K's 20 as time runs out to 0:00.

Ruling 1: Team R has option to take K's foul at the succeeding spot (K's 20.) 1st and 10 from K's 10-yard line. Extend the period for an untimed down. Rule 10-4-2 Exception.

Play 2: Team K punts from their 40-yard line, the punt is blocked behind the LOS, and R44 scoops the ball and is tackled by his facemask at the K 30-yard line. At the snap, Team K had 6 players on their line of scrimmage.

Ruling 2: There are two fouls against Team K, illegal formation and a 15-yard facemask foul. Team R may decline the 5 yard illegal formation penalty and accept the 15 yard facemask penalty which would be enforced from the succeeding spot (K's 30) resulting in R's ball, 1st and 10 from the K 15-yard line. Rule 10-4-2 Exception.

10-Second Runoff:

There is no NFHS rule that allows for a 10-second runoff of the game clock under any circumstances. Period. End of Story. Enough Said.

Blocks in the Back:

I've been asked to comment on legal and illegal blocks in the back. The following guidelines are suggested.

There are 4 requirements for a block in the back (IBB) to be legal. 1) by an offensive lineman in the FBZ at the snap; 2) the block must be in the zone; 3) the opponent must be in the FBZ at the snap; 4) the block must occur before the ball leaves the zone.

Now, to other kinds of IBB's. What is often seen is a defender spinning on a blocker who has made legal in-front contact, but now the contact shifts to the defender's back because of the spin. This is a legal block and a prime example of why officials need to see the whole contact, not just the defender falling forward. Again, continuous contact from the front to the back is legal.

A defensive player may push an opponent in the back above the waist in an attempt to get to the runner. Also, players of either team may push or pull in the back if they are trying to reach a loose ball...a fumble, a backwards pass, a kick that they are eligible to touch and a tipped forward pass. Players of either team are also allowed to push in the back if they are warding off a blocker.

Remember....if (for whatever reason) you don't see the whole block, don't throw the flag. It's a lot easier to defend a no-call than it is to defend an incorrect call.

Correction/Clarification:

In last week's Bulletin, my response to one of the most missed test questions was incorrect. The correct answer to "It is recommended that goal lines be marked in a color that contrasts with other field markings" is TRUE, based on 1-2-3g Note 2, not 1-2-3a which I referenced when I said the correct answer was false. Bottom line, 1-2-3g Note 2 logically trumps 1-2-3a. The NFHS has admitted that the note to 1-2-3g should have also been included as a note to 1-2-3a.

Blocking Below the Waist:

Question: In Oregon, what is the philosophy on a BBW out of a 2-point stance when the QB is in a shotgun formation? Is it a rule of thumb that the lineman needs to be in a three or four-point stance? Also, does the defensive player need to be heads up on the offensive lineman?

Answer: To be a LEGAL BBW with the QB in a shotgun formation, the block must be initiated immediately at the snap while the ball is passing through the free blocking zone. Stance is not a requirement and the defensive player does not need to be heads up on the offensive lineman. Look at Rules 2-17 and 9-3-2a and Case Book play 2.17.2 Sit. E.

Training Video:

This week's training video shows four BBW plays with the QB in a shotgun formation. Two views of each play; one regular speed and the other in slo-mo. Look at these plays with the above information in mind. Are these blocks immediate? Are they legal?