

FOOTBALL BULLETIN I

Rules, Revisions and Interpretations

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The situations below are items of concern that have been requested or discussed for clarification. We are sharing these topics with all of you to review with your officials to assist with consistent enforcement in these rules. Thank you in advance for your efforts. They are appreciated.

Rule 1-6-1 Coaches Field Equipment

Communication devices, other than audio recorder, Local Area Network (LAN) phones and/or headsets, including but not limited to cellular phones, still photograph(s), film, analog or digital video(s) and or Internet depictions, shall not be used for coaching purpose during the game or between periods.

Situation: Team A sets up scaffolding in one of the end zones to video tape the game. Between exchanges of possession and between periods; coaches use their cellular phones to exchange information with the sideline coaching staff.

Ruling: Unsportsmanlike conduct; 15 yards; using illegal communication equipment.

Comment: Some preventive officiating techniques during pre-game field inspection may assist in these type of situations. The officiating crew should communicate with those schools who are setting up like this to remind them of their responsibilities and what may constitute illegal communication.

Rule 3-1-1; Tie-Breaking Procedures

Situation: During the last timed down of the fourth period, A1 advances for a touchdown making the score B-22 and A-20. On the try, A2 passes complete to A3 in the end zone. Following the try, B1 commits an unsportsmanlike foul.

Ruling: The penalty for the foul by B1 after the successful try will be administered from the succeeding spot to begin overtime play.

Comment: In this situation the referee should explain to the captains at the time of the coin toss the fact the penalty will be administered on the first series of downs in the overtime. The place in which the ball will be put in play for each team could have an effect on the choice made by the winner of the toss.

Rule 3-7-1 Substitutions

Situation: Team A substitutes 2 players; A1 and A2, and they enter the huddle, the play is called and Team A breaks huddle with thirteen players. Two players; A 4 and A5 go directly to sideline.

Ruling: In the judgment of the Referee, if the substitution process was not directly consummated; players moving directly on and off the field; a foul for illegal substitution shall be enforced. Dead ball foul; 5 yards.

Comment: The spirit and intent of adding a time frame (3 seconds) to the substitution rule was to quantify the term **immediate** in the rules language . This change was not designed to give the offense a timing element to deceive or create an advantage on the defense with their substitutions. If this is observed, the Referee is to enforce the substitution rule with a foul for illegal substitution.

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Substitutions; Rule 3-7-1 Casebook Situation B.

Situation: A number of team substitutes enter the field between downs. The officials do not recognize that one player does not leave the huddle within three seconds. When the ball is snapped: a) B12 is attempting to get off the field, or (b) A 12 is in the formation as an extra lineman.

Ruling: In (a) it is an illegal substitution foul and in (b) it is illegal participation.

Comment: In a related situation, if the covering official's count of players has determined there are more than 11 players prior to the snap, a dead ball illegal substitution foul should be charged since a player did not leave within three seconds. However, if the official's count is not completed before the snap is imminent, or if the substitution has not been monitored, it becomes illegal participation at the snap if more than 11 players are in the formation. Each team is responsible for substituting legally and for replaced players to leave within three seconds as required.

Rule 9-4-3 k; Horse collar tackle

Situation: A has possession, fourth and eight from B's 40 yard line. A1 advances seven yards where B1 grabs him by the inside back collar of the jersey and commits an illegal horse collar foul. The jersey/collar is grabbed one yard inbounds and B1 pulls A1 down; (a) inbounds or (b) just out of bounds.

Ruling: In both (a) and (b), the penalty for illegal horse-collar is penalized from the end of the run and A is awarded a new series.

Comment: Even though the tackle in (b) ends up out of bounds, the NFHS Football Rules Committee's intention for 2010 was clearly to be able to enforce the foul whether or not the ball became dead between the grabbing the inside back collar of the jersey and the bringing of the player to the ground.

Rule 9-4-8; Illegal personal contact

Situation: In the first quarter, the assistant coach for Team A accidentally collides with the line judge while the line judge is covering a play. Team A's coach is penalized 15 yards. In the second quarter, the back judge is covering a play near the side line and observes an assistant in the restricted area during a play.

Ruling: As written, this is a first warning for Team A for violation of the restricted area and is not penalized in terms of yards. The occurrences of the new illegal personal contact foul and the restricted area violation are not combined for penalty enforcement purposes.

Rule 9-6-4 Illegal Participation Casebook Situation A

Situation: Several A substitutes enter the field between downs and go to the teams huddle, but one replaced player does not leave within three seconds and is not detected. However, when they break from the huddle the replaced player runs toward the sideline and leaves before the ball is snapped.

Ruling: An illegal participation foul if the official judges that A was using a replaced player or substitute in a substitution or pretended substitution to deceive the opponents. If not, it is illegal substitution.

Comment: It is becoming prevalent to see more than 11 players/replaced players in the huddle or defensive formations between downs. The replaced player is to leave the field within three seconds and in such a manner that it does not confuse or deceive the opponents.