



KYRIE, ELEISON: THE “MERCY RULE”

Mike Pasenelli
Capital Area Chapter
PIAA Football Officials
18 August 2013



OUR MISSION

- ▶ Review the “Mercy Rule” procedures and guidance from the PIAA



WHAT? 3-1-2

- ▶ By state association adoption, a point differential may be established whereby if one team has gained the established point differential, the game shall be terminated.
 - The PIAA has chosen not to adopt this.
- ▶ A state association may also establish guidelines to use a running clock when the point differential is reached
 - The PIAA has adopted a 35 point differential in the second half
 - That is our “Mercy Rule”



WHEN?

- ▶ At any level of competition
- ▶ Upon completion of the first half, when a team gains a 35 point differential over the opponent
- ▶ The clock shall be stopped only when
 - An official's time-out is taken
 - A charged time-out is granted
 - A period ends, or
 - A score occurs



WHEN?

- ▶ Once the mercy rule is in effect, it remains in effect, even if the differential is less than 35 points



PROCEDURES

- ▶ The PIAA included a list of procedures in the September 2011 Football Bulletin, which is found on our web site
 - Rules 2011
 - 2011 Bulletin 1



WE STOP THE CLOCK WHEN

- ▶ An official's time-out is taken
- ▶ A charged time-out is granted
- ▶ A period ends, or
- ▶ A score occurs



STOPPING THE CLOCK

- ▶ An official's time-out is taken: 3-5-7
 - For a measurement
 - When a 1st down is declared
 - Following a change in team possession
 - For a player in need of equipment repair
 - After a foul, to administer a penalty
 - For a TV/radio time-out
 - For the 1 minute intermission
 - Between the 3rd and 4th periods, and
 - Following a try, successful field goal or safety and prior to the succeeding free kick



STARTING THE CLOCK

PIAA 2011 BULLETIN 1

- ▶ After an official's time-out: on the ready-for-play (RFP)
- ▶ After a charged time-out: on the snap
- ▶ After the end of the 3rd period: on the snap or when a free kick is legally touched
- ▶ After a score: when the subsequent free kick is legally touched



PROCEDURES

- ▶ Incomplete pass on 1st, 2nd or 3rd down: clock continues to run
- ▶ Ball carrier goes out of bounds (OOB) on 1st, 2nd or 3rd down: clock continues to run
- ▶ A or B gets a 1st down: stop clock, set chains, start clock on RFP
- ▶ A gains a 1st down by the ball carrier going OOB: stop clock, set chains, start clock on RFP



PROCEDURES (CONT.)

- ▶ After a free kick, punt or any other change in team possession: stop clock and start on the RFP
- ▶ After a score: stop clock, remains stopped throughout the try
- ▶ Kickoff: start clock when legally touched
- ▶ Touchback after a kickoff: start on RFP



OUR MISSION

- ▶ Review the “mercy rule” procedures and guidance from the PIAA