

Comments on the 2011 Football Rule Changes

ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES OF GAME OFFICIALS CLARIFIED (1-1-8): The committee clarified that administrative duties for game officials may need to continue after the game to document actions which occur during the game. This revision illustrates the difference between the game officials' jurisdiction during the game and other administrative responsibilities such as submitting specific reports after the game. In addition, the committee clarified that State Associations may continue to develop and implement policies that allow for review of unusual incidents that occur while the game officials have jurisdiction or after the game.

THIGH GUARD STANDARD REVISED (1-5-1c(4)): The committee determined that the thigh guard specifications regarding composition, compression resistance and required thickness of the outside and inside surfaces were not necessarily applicable to newer technologies being used in current production. The requirements for wearing thigh guards and that the guards be unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production remain part of the rule.

EYE SHADE RESTRICTIONS ADOPTED (1-5-3c(3) NEW): The committee adopted new restrictions in response to increasing use of "face painting" and the placement of words and other symbols within eye shade (grease or no-glare strips or stickers). In recent years, players were applying materials in situations where it was not necessary for game conditions. In other cases, it appeared that some use of eye shade and other face paint was intended to draw attention to the individual player. Under the revision, if a player uses eye shade, it must be applied using a single solid stroke under each eye. The committee's intent was that eye shade be located below and within the width of the eye socket and not extend below the cheek bone. No words, numbers, logos, or other symbols of any type may be included within the eye shade.

CHOP BLOCK REDEFINED (2-3-8): The definition of a chop block was modified by the committee. The revised language specifies that any combination block where one block is high (above the knee) and one block is low (at or below the knees) constitutes a chop block, with or without a delay between the blocks. The rule change also stipulates that a low-low combination block is no longer a chop block.

INJURY TIMEOUT CONFERENCES RESTRICTED TO OUTSIDE NINE-YARD MARKS (2-6-1, 2; 3-5-8): With two changes, the committee labeled the two types of authorized team conferences ("Outside Nine Yard Mark Conference" and "Between Nine Yard Mark Conference"). In addition, the committee specified that when an injury occurs and the referee grants an authorized conference, it must be an "Outside Nine Yard Mark Conference". This will give medical personnel time and space to address the injured player.

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PROVISIONS FOR REMOVAL OF INJURED PLAYERS STANDARDIZED (3-5-10a-c): The committee standardized the rules regarding the replacement of apparently injured players (3-5-10a), players who exhibit concussion signs and symptoms (3-5-10b) and players who are bleeding or have blood on himself or the uniform (3-5-10c). Players removed in any of these situations must leave the game for at least one down (unless halftime or the overtime intermission occurs) and comply with the remainder of the applicable rule. The rule also stipulates that the time-out taken in such circumstances constitutes an officials' time-out.

HORSE COLLAR PENALTY ENFORCEMENT CLARIFIED (9-4-3k): The committee stipulated that all horse collar fouls are to be treated as live ball fouls.

ENFORCEMENT SPOT FOR ROUGHING THE PASSER REVISED (9-4 PENALTY): Penalties for roughing the passer are now enforced from the dead ball spot when there is no change of team possession and the dead-ball spot is beyond the line of scrimmage provided A maintains possession.

ILLEGAL PARTICIPATION REVISED (9-6-2): With this change, the rule regarding illegal participation now has been extended to apply to a player who intentionally goes out of bounds and, while out of bounds, affects the play, touches the ball or otherwise participates. Action of this type would now constitute illegal participation and be penalized 15 yards from the basic spot.

PENALTY ADDED FOR VIOLATIONS OF RULE 3-2-2 (9-8-1g(3) NEW): This change stipulates that an unsportsmanlike penalty will be assessed to the head coach for violation of the restrictions contained in Rule 3-2-2.

REMOVAL OF POINT DIFFERENTIAL NOTE (NINE-, EIGHT- AND SIX-PLAYER RULES DIFFERENCES): This change removes the provision in the Nine-, Eight- and Six-player rules differences regarding point differential as state association running clock/mercy rules would apply per Rule 3-1-2.

2011 Editorial Changes

1-1-8, 9; 1-2-1 NOTE; 1-2-3b NOTE 2; 1-4-1; 1-5-1b(6)e and NOTE; 1-5-1b(7)e and NOTE; 1-5-1c(3, 5); 1-5-1e; 1-5-2a-c; 1-5-3a-c; 1-6-1, NOTE; 1-6-2 NOTE; 1-7 NOTE (NEW); Table 1-7; 2-16-2f; 2-20-1a-b; 2-26-4; 2-32-5a; 2-33-2; 2-41-9a; 3-1-5; 3-2-2; 3-3-6; 3-5-2c; 3-5-4; 3-5-7; 3-5-10a-c; 3-7-1; 5-1-3f; 6-1-4; 7-5-2ce; 7-5 PENALTY; Table 8-1; 8-2-2, 3; Table 9-3-6; 9-4-2; 9-4-8; 9-4 PENALTY; 9-5-1; 9-5-1f-g; 9-8-1; 9-8-1b-d; 9-8-1g(2); 9-8-1l; 9-8-1 PENALTY; 10-1-2; 10-5-5; FOOTBALL PENALTY ENFORCEMENT; FUNDAMENTALS – III-1, IX-1, X-3; RESOLVING TIED GAMES – 5-3-1; NINE-, EIGHT- AND SIX-PLAYER RULES DIFFERENCES – Rule 2, Rule 7 (Six-Player); Penalty Summary.