



FOOTBALL BULLETIN I

SEPTEMBER 2011



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RULES, REVISIONS, AND INTERPRETATIONS

*PIAA Statewide Rules
Interpreter: Buss Carr*



PIAA 35-POINT MERCY RULE

Rule 3-1-2: Running clock: Upon completion of the first half of an interscholastic football game at any level of competition or anytime during the second half when a team gains a 35-point differential over its 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. Once implemented, the mercy rule remains in effect, even if the differential becomes less than 35 points.

Examples:

1. Incomplete pass – clock continues to run.
2. Ball carrier goes out of bounds – clock continues to run.
3. First down – stop clock, set chains, start clock on ready-for-play.
4. Ball carrier makes first down then goes out of bounds – stop clock, set chains, start clock on ready-for-play.
5. After a free kick, a punt or any other change of possession – stop clock and start on ready-for-play.
6. After a score – stop clock, remains stopped during the try.
7. Kickoff – start clock when legally touched. If result is a touchback, start clock on ready-for-play.

Note: Nos. 1 and 2 above are the primary situations where the clock continues to run.

When does the clock restart? Generally, whenever it would if any of the stoppages occurred during regular game play.

1. After an official's time-out – on the ready-for-play.
2. After a charged time-out – on the snap.
3. After the end of the third period – on the snap to start the fourth period or when a free kick is legally touched.
4. After a score – when the subsequent free kick is legally touched.

Player with Cast or Splint—Correction

1.5.3 SITUATION C: Prior to the game, the coach of B requests the umpire to examine a cast/splint on the forearm of one of his players. The protective item has "hard" material, but is padded with at least ½-inch thick, closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding. The coach: (a) provides; or (b) does not provide to the umpire prior to the start of the game, a written authorization from a licensed medical physician directing the use of the cast/splint as necessary to protect an injury.

RULING: In (a) and (b), the cast/splint may be worn during the game. Written authorization is no longer required but the umpire must ensure the cast/splint is properly padded. (1-5-3b(1)). *This was incorrect in 2011 Preseason Bulletin and has been corrected. Please make note of this.*

2011 NFHS Football Rules Interpretations

SITUATION 1 (6.1.6): With 4th and 5 from K's 30-yard line, K9 punts the ball downfield where it is grounded and touched by K88 (first touching) at R's 30. The ball continues rolling and is picked up by R35 at R's 25-yard line. R 35 is subsequently hit and fumbles at R's 28. The loose ball is recovered by K88 on the ground at R's 26. During the kick, R55 is flagged for holding.

RULING: If K accepts R's foul for holding, then it is enforced from the previous spot with a re-kick since post-scrimmage kick cannot apply as K is next to put the ball in play as a result of the play. If K accepts the foul, the awarded spot for illegal touching is not applied. If K declines R's foul, R will take the ball at the spot of first touching. (2-12-1, 2; 2-16-2h)

SITUATION 2 (9.4.8): A1 is illegally in motion at the snap. The play goes to the sideline where one of B's coaches makes unintentional contact with a game official (9-4-8).

RULING: Both fouls will be penalized, first the live-ball foul for A's illegal motion, then the 15 yards for unintentional contact in the restricted area. The 9-4-8 foul is a non-player foul and is therefore penalized as a dead-ball foul, even though the contact occurred during a live ball. (2-16-2f; 10-4-5c)

SITUATION 3 (9.6.2): K1 free-kicks the ball toward the sideline. R1 runs to a sideline and intentionally steps out of bounds. While R1 is still out of bounds, he intentionally touches the ball as it nears the sideline. The ball is declared dead by the covering official.

RULING: Illegal participation by R1. This is not a kick out of bounds as the ball was touched by an R player and the ball became dead when it was touched. (4-3-1; 6-1-8)

2011 NFHS Football Rules Book Clarifications

(Underlining shows additions; ~~strikethrough~~ shows deletions.):

Page 64, RULE 8-2-2: .(other than unsportsmanlike conduct on or a non-player foul)...;

Page 64, RULE 8-2-3: ...(other than unsportsmanlike conduct on or a non-player foul)...

2011 NFHS Football Rules PowerPoint Clarification

(Underlining shows additions; ~~strikethrough~~ shows deletions.):

Slide #44 under 2011 Football Rules Reminders. Need to make a change in the text on the slide below the pictures: If a player, coach or non-player is in the restricted zone while the ball is live but does not contact a game official, a warning is issued for the first offense. The second instance results in a five-yard penalty and the third offense results in a 15-yard penalty and disqualification of the head coach.