



2018
CHAMPIONS INDOOR
FOOTBALL
RULEBOOK

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New rules or adaptations for 2018
New rules for 2017
2016 new rules
 2015 new rules

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**ARTICLE
1
CONDUCT OF THE GAME**

1.1 The Field

A. Regulation Field

- 1) The field shall be 50 yards long by 28 yards wide. (See Operations Manual)
- 2) The end zones shall be a minimum of 8 yards in depth and may be rounded due to hockey board configurations.
- 3) The area bounded by walls shall be called the field-of-play.
- 4) The wall eight yards behind each goal line and parallel to it shall be named the end wall.
The end wall may be curved due to the nature of the facility.
- 5) The sidewalls extended from goal line to end walls shall be named the sidewalls of-goal.
- 6) The area bounded by the goal line, the end wall and the sidewalls of-goal shall be named the goal area.
- 7) The bounds shall be defined as the walls, sidewalls of goal and end walls.
- 8) The field-of-play shall be marked every 5 yards with lines extending from wall to wall and parallel to the goal lines.
- 9) Line Markings
 - a. Hash marks are 12 inches in length and begin 5 feet from the center of the field.
 - b. If hash marks are not in the appropriate location, they are upright to upright.**
The hash marks are placed on both sides of the field every five yards perpendicular to the yard line.
 - c. The dashers marking the sides of the field shall be named sidelines.
- 10) Goal posts shall be placed and centered on each end line. Goal posts are to be 10 feet high to the crossbar and 10-feet wide. The uprights shall be an additional 20 feet high from the crossbar. The diameter of each post shall be not less than 3 inches or greater than 4 inches. A wishbone type or single shaft goal post assembly may be used provided that it complies with the above standards.

B. Team Box

The Team boxes may be on the same or opposite sides of the field.

C. Fields Less Than Regulation Size

If the regulation length or width of a field is not available because of a wall, seating or any other object, the field shall be marked as closely as possible to regulation, subject to the approval of the league.

D. The Ball

The Home Team will supply enough game balls, approved by the league to complete the game. A minimum of 20 approved balls shall be used in a game and changed at the discretion of the referee. The balls shall be kept clean and in playable condition. Game balls will be red, white and blue. Any other color used must be CIF approved.

1.2 Length of game

- A. Four quarters to be 15 minutes in length
- B. Halftime shall be 20 minutes in length
- C. Team time-outs shall be 30 seconds in length unless it becomes a media time out.
- D. **The 60-second warning shall be 2 minutes in length.**
- E. Media time-outs shall be 2 minutes in length
- F. Time between the 1st/2nd quarters and 3rd/4th quarters shall be no longer than 2 minutes

New mechanic – to speed up the game, after a try or FG, the BJ will time one minute. After the one minute, the BJ and R will get on their whistles alerting the “T-shirt tossers” off the field and get the teams ready to kick.

1.3 Uniforms

- A. All players shall be numbered 00 through 99.
- B. No two players of the same team may participate on the same down with identical numbers.
- C. Numbers may not be changed during the game to deceive the opponents, and all number changes shall be reported to the referee.
- D. Players of opposing teams shall wear jerseys of contrasting colors, and all players on a team shall wear jerseys of the same color and design. Jerseys shall cover all pads worn under the jersey. The jersey must be full length and tucked into the pants or reach the belt line when a player assumes a normal standing position. Any altered jerseys shall be prohibited and players wearing altered jerseys shall not be allowed to participate until it is restored to its original condition, in compliance with this rule.
- E. Players may have his surname or for players with the same surname, each such player’s first initial must appear before the surname on the back of the game jersey.
- F. All players of a team shall wear pants of the same color and design.
- G. All players, including kickers, must wear visible socks or leg coverings that are of the same color, design and length. Any taping or spats over the shoes and/or ankles shall be the same color for all members of the same team.
- H. All players, other than a kicker lined up to attempt a free kick or a scrimmage kick, must wear shoes suitable for football or turf activities. No slippers, boots or other shoes not designed for football or turf activities may be worn in a game.
- I. If worn, gloves or hand pads may be gray in color, or may be the appropriate colors of the team’s jersey.
- J. All players shall wear the following mandatory equipment:

- 1) Pants that cover the knees. No knee pads may be worn over the outside of the pants
- 2) Helmets and facemasks, commercially manufactured for professional, college or high school football. All players of a team shall wear helmets of the same color and design.
- 3) Shoulder pads
- 4) **A player does not have to leave the game for one play if his helmet comes off.**

K. Illegal equipment

- 1) Any equipment which in the judgment of the umpire would be dangerous to other players
- 2) Hard, abrasive or unyielding substances worn on the hand, wrist, forearm or elbow, unless covered with adequate foam padding as approved by the umpire
- 3) Any metal or other hard substance, which may be dangerous to the player or his opponent
- 4) Adhesive material, paint, grease or any other slippery substance applied to a player's body or clothing that may affect the ball or an opponent
- 5) Jerseys which are taped or tied in any manner
- 6) Any visible bandana worn under a helmet
- 7) Streamers or extra-long belts. Any player may wear a towel that is white, black or a similar color to the uniform and no larger than 4" by 12"
- 8) Any adornment to the uniform, which serves no football purpose, but only serves to highlight the individual's appearance

L. The umpire is the sole judge of legal and illegal equipment, and may rule on such without appeal.

Officials will tell the head coach of any illegal equipment issues prior to the game. If illegal equipment is noticed during the game, the player will be removed from the game until the issue is resolved.

1.4 Possession

- A. Possession means having the ball firmly in hand or hands, arm or arms, leg or legs or controlled under the body.
- B. When players of opposite teams have possession of the ball, it shall belong to the player who first gained possession and who has not lost possession.
- C. If players of both teams legally gain possession of the ball simultaneously it shall belong to the team which last previously had possession, if on a scrimmage play, or to the receiving team, if on a kick play.
- D. A ball not in possession of a player is still in play. A ball shall be considered to have been fumbled if the player last in possession has lost control of it.

- E. If any turnover occurs inside the five yard line the ball will be moved to the 5-yard line

1.5 Dead Ball

- A. The ball is dead:

- 1) Whenever a field official blows his whistle;
- 2) When an official has signaled a score;
- 3) When the ball goes out-of-bounds;
- 4) When a forward pass is declared incomplete;
- 5) When a kicked ball strikes the opponent's goal post assembly in flight without continuing through it;
- 6) When the ball carrier is held so that his forward progress has been halted;
- 7) When the ball carrier behind the line of scrimmage is firmly in the grasp and control of a tackler to the extent that he cannot throw the ball;
- 8) When a ball carrier is tackled and driven back towards his own goal line the official must assume that he was attempting to advance the ball and that only the actual contact with an opponent prevented such advance. Therefore, the most forward point of advance shall be considered the point where the ball became dead;
- 9) When the ball carrier is contacted by an opponent and loses his balance so that a portion of his body, other than his hands or feet touch the ground, the ball shall be dead at the point where it was held when he so touched the ground;
- 10) When the quarterback, in possession of the ball, intentionally kneels on the ground or simulates placing a knee of the ground;
- 11) When the quarterback, in possession of the ball dives in a feet first sliding motion the ball shall be declared dead at the point it was held when another part of the quarterback's body, other than his hands or feet, touched the ground;
- 12) When a player, having possession of the ball in his own goal area, intentionally kneels on the ground;
- 13) When a ball carrier, in the judgment of the official, is not attempting to advance the ball the official shall immediately declare the ball dead;
- 14) When a player in possession of the ball is down and makes no attempt to regain his feet, particularly if the player is vulnerable to a hit by a defensive player
- 15) When the ball carrier's helmet comes completely off
- 16) **When under the 60-second warning of the 2nd half a team is ahead by LESS than 25 points does not advance the ball for positive yardage.**
Exception - If a team is ahead by 25 points or more, they may down the ball OR be tackled without gaining positive yardage and the clock will continue to run.

1.6 Teams

For reference hereinafter the team which puts the ball in play shall be identified as the Offense (Team A) and the other team shall be named Defense (Team B). The game is played by two teams of eight men.

1.7 Team Captains

- A. At all times each team must have on the field a player designated as captain, and so identified to the Referee. The captain shall be the sole communicator between his team and the officials (through the Referee) and he may appeal to the Referee only on questions of interpretation and application of rules. Such consultations should be held apart from other players on the field. The captain may request the Referee to call in the yardsticks to determine whether a first down has been made, or how much distance is required. If, in the judgment of the Referee, the position of the ball is within one yard of the first down marker he shall signal time out and call for the measurement, otherwise he shall refuse the request and order play to continue. The Referee's decision cannot be disputed. A captain is entitled to an explanation of any decision but no prolonged argument is to be allowed. When the yardsticks are called from the sidelines to determine whether a first down has been gained the on-field captain for each team shall be the only players permitted in the vicinity of the measurement. In case of a foul the captain of the non-offending team shall be given the choice of the penalty or the option provided.

1.8 Starting and Timing

A. Start of Game

- 1) The game shall start promptly according to the published start time.
- 2) If a team is late appearing on the field at the start of the first or third periods the team shall be penalized for delay of game.

Penalty: Delay of game, 5 yards – first scrimmage play
- 3) At the start of the game the captains of both teams shall meet the referee at center field.

The Referee or a dignitary shall toss a coin with the visiting team captain making the call. The captain of the team winning the coin toss has the following choices:
 - a. Kicking off or receiving the kickoff, or
 - b. Which end of the field to defend, or
 - c. Defer choice to second half.
- 4) The captain of the other team shall have first choice at the start of the second half.

Timing Devices – 40-25 second play clock

40-Second Clock.

1. When an official signals that the ball is dead, the play clock shall begin a 40-second count.
2. If the 40-second clock does not start or the count is interrupted for reasons beyond the control of the officials or the play-clock operator (e.g., clock malfunction), the referee shall stop the game clock and signal (both palms open in an over-the-head pumping motion) that the play clock should be reset at 40 seconds and started immediately.
3. In the event that the 40-second clock is running and the ball is not ready to be snapped after 20 seconds into the count, the referee shall declare a timeout and signal that the play clock be set at 25 seconds. When play is to be resumed, the referee will give the ready-for-play signal [S1] and the play clock shall begin the 25-second count. The game clock will start on the snap unless it had been running

when the referee declared a timeout; in that case, it will start on the referee's signal (Rule 3-3-2-f). (A R 3-2-4-I and II)

25-Second Clock. If the officials signal the game clock to be stopped for any of the following reasons, the referee shall signal (one open palm in an over-the-head pumping motion) that the clock should be set at 25 seconds:

1. Penalty administration.

2. Charged team timeout.

3. Media timeout.

4. Injury timeout for a player of the offensive team only. The play clock is set to 40 seconds for an injury to a player of the defensive team.

5. Measurement.

6. Team B is awarded a first down.

7. After a kick down.

8. Score.

9. Start of each period.

10. Start of a team's possession series in an extra period.

11. Instant replay review.

12. Other administrative stoppage.

13. An offensive team player's helmet comes completely off during the down. The play clock is set to 40 seconds if the helmet comes completely off a player of the defensive team. (Exception: If there is an option for a 10-second subtraction in either half the play clock is set at 25 seconds for any player.)

When play is to be resumed, the referee will give the ready-for-play signal [S1] and the play clock will begin the 25-second count.

d. Device Malfunction. If a visual 40/25-second timing device becomes inoperative, both coaches shall be notified by the referee immediately and both clocks shall be turned off.

B. Playing and Rest Periods

- 1) The length of a game shall be 60 minutes of actual playing time, divided into four periods of 15 minutes each. The scoreboard clock shall be the official time for the game, and shall be operated by the timekeeper under the direction and control of the Referee.
- 2) Goals shall be changed at the end of the first and third periods. At the start of the second and fourth periods the ball shall be relocated at a spot corresponding exactly, in relation to goal line and side walls, to its location at the end of the previous period. Possession of the ball, the number of down, and the distance to be gained shall remain unchanged.
- 3) The kickoff to start the second half shall take place exactly twenty minutes after the conclusion of the first half and a team shall be subject to penalty if the players are not lined upon the field ready to start the second half (1.8-A-2).

C. Clock Stoppage

- 1) Time shall start when the ball is free kicked and shall continue until an official signals to the Timekeeper that time shall stop for any of the following reasons:
 - a. After a score
 - b. For the application of penalties
 - c. **For an injured player (Anytime under the 60-second warning, if an injury to a player is the only reason the clock stops, a 10 second runoff of the clock will occur. A team may take a time out to avoid the ten second runoff. If a 10 second runoff occurs, the clock will start on the referees whistle.**
 - d. When time expires at the end of a period (If a touchdown is scored on the last play of a period the period shall be extended to include the point after touchdown attempt)
 - e. On incomplete passes after the 60-second warning in either half
 - f. When a player or on field coach requests a team time out
 - g. First down measurement
 - h. On first downs after the 60-second warning to allow the chains to reset
 - i. When the ball is declared dead and Team B is in legal possession
 - j. When a ball carrier or a loose ball goes out of bounds after the 60 second warning in either half.
 - k. When the referee deems it necessary to suspend play for any other reason
 - l. **When under the 60-second warning of the 2nd half the team ahead by less than 25 points does not advance the ball for positive yardage.**
AR – Time is under the 60-second warning in the 2nd half and team A, who is AHEAD by less than 25 points is tackled for a loss on the play. Ruling: The clock shall be stopped and will next start on the snap.
AR – Time is under the 60-second warning in the 2nd half and team A, who is AHEAD by less than 25 points is tackled after gaining 3 inches on the play. Ruling: The clock will continue to run.
AR – Time is under the 60-second warning in the 2nd half and team A, who is AHEAD by 25 points or more downs the ball or is tackled and does not gain positive yardage. Ruling: The clock will continue to run.
AR – Time is under the 60-second warning in the 2nd half and team A, who is BEHIND, is tackled for a loss on the play. Ruling: The clock will continue to run.
AR - Time is under the 60-second warning in the 2nd half, the score is TIED and team A is tackled for a loss on the play. Ruling: The clock will continue to run.
- 2) 10-Second Subtraction from Game Clock
 - a. With the game clock running and less than 60-seconds remaining in either half, if a player of either team commits a foul that causes the clock to stop, the officials may subtract 10 seconds from the game clock at the option of the offended team. The fouls that fall in this category include but are not limited to:
 1. Any foul that prevents the snap (e.g., false start, encroachment, defensive encroachment by contact in the neutral zone, etc.);
 2. Intentional grounding to stop the clock;
 3. Incomplete illegal forward pass;
 4. Backward pass thrown out of bounds to stop the clock;
 5. Any other foul committed with the intent of stopping the clock.The offended team may accept the yardage penalty and decline the 10-second subtraction. If the yardage penalty is declined the 10-second subtraction is declined by rule.
6. Injury to a player which is the only reason the clock stops.

- b. The 10-second rule does not apply if the game clock is not running when the foul occurs or if the foul does not cause the game clock to stop (e.g., illegal formation).
 - c. After the penalty is administered, if there is a 10-second subtraction, the game clock starts on the referee's signal. If there is no 10-second subtraction, the game clock starts on the snap.
 - d. If the fouling team has a timeout remaining they **MAY** avoid the 10-second subtraction by using a timeout. In this case the game clock starts on the snap after the timeout.
- 3) A period shall be extended for an untimed down if one or more of the following occurs during a down in which time expires:
- a. A penalty is accepted for a live-ball foul(s), unless the statement of the penalty includes loss of down.
 - b. There are offsetting fouls.
 - c. If an official sounds his whistle inadvertently, or otherwise incorrectly signals the play dead.

D. Running Clock

- 1) After the clock is stopped for any reason, time shall start again on the signal of the Referee, when the ball is kicked on a free kick, or when the ball is snapped.
- Exception – on a free kick under the 60 second warning, the clock starts when the ball is legally touched in the field of play, or when it crosses the goal line after being touched legally by Team B in its end zone.**
- Clarification – If under the 60 second warning, team R possesses a kick with a knee or body part on the ground in order to conserve time at the end of the half or game, no time would come off the clock.**
- Clarification – If under the 60 second warning, team R would possess the ball and then immediately take a knee or immediately go to the ground on their own, one second and only one second will be taken off the clock.**

2) Unless under 60 seconds of either half, the clock will start on the ready for play after any change of possession, including after a kick off.

- 3) After a stopped clock for any of the following reasons, the clock will start on the snap of the ball:
- a. After a delay of game foul with less than 60 seconds remaining in either half .
 - b. Following a team time-out **at any point in the game.**
 - c. Following a play during which possession changed in the last 60 seconds in either half.
 - d. Following an incomplete legal forward pass in the last 60 seconds in either half.
 - e. If the ball is declared dead out of bounds in the last 60 seconds in either half.

4) After the 60 second warning of either half, it is normal college football timing rules.

E. Team Time-out

- 1) During each half a team shall be permitted to call three time-outs, subject to the following:
- a. The time-out may be requested by any player or coach on the field and may be directed to any official on the field.
 - b. **The time-out shall be 30 seconds in length if it is not a media time out.**

c. The game time will resume on the snap.

F. Media Time-Out

- 1) During each quarter, two media time outs may be utilized for an on-field promotion, contest or performance, and for radio and television advertisements.
- 2) Media time outs will be taken near the nine and four-minute mark in the first and third quarters and near the nine and 60-second mark of the 2nd and 4th quarters. All media time outs will be taken at a change of possession or following a score, and are at the discretion of the referee.
- 3) A media time out will be administered like a team time out. One coach may enter the field to consult with his team, or the team may assemble in front of the team bench and consult with more than one coach.
- 4) A media time out shall be two minutes in length or less.
- 5) Media time outs are not required, but home management must consult with the visiting team before a decision to waive media time-outs is made. The game officials must be informed of any decision to eliminate or modify the provisions of the media time outs.
- 6) The game time will resume on the ready for play or when the ball is free kicked, unless a team timeout was used for the media timeout.

G. Ball in Play

- 1) The ball shall be considered in play until an official stops the action by sounding his whistle or otherwise signals the ball dead.
- 2) The game shall not be stopped because of injury of a player until the ball is dead.
EXCEPTION: The ball becomes dead immediately when the ball carrier's helmet comes completely off.
- 3) The Referee shall not stop the game to impose a penalty until the ball is dead.

H. Delay of Game

- 1) The game shall not be delayed except by permission of the Referee. Any unauthorized delay shall be subject to a penalty.
 - a. If the Referee finds it necessary to suspend play while a player in the game has repair done to his equipment, that player shall be required to leave the game for a minimum of one play. If the player does not leave the game, the team is charged with a time- out.
 - b. If the Referee finds it necessary to suspend play while an injured player received medical attention on the field that player shall be required to leave the game for a minimum of one play. If the player does not leave the game, the team is charged with a time- out.
 - c. A dead ball is ready for play after the Referee blows his whistle and signals or otherwise orders the play clock to begin. Consuming more than 25 seconds to put the ball in play after it is made ready for play is an illegal delay.
 - d. If a Team B player intentionally interferes with the placement of the ball after the Referee has declared it ready for play, it is an illegal delay.

Penalty: Delay of Game - 5 yards, dead ball foul

1.9 Overtime

A. Coin Toss

If the score is tied at the end of the second half, there shall be a two-minute intermission, followed by an overtime period. Prior to the start of the overtime, the captains of both teams shall meet the Officials at center field to inform them of their choices. The Referee shall toss a coin with the visiting team captain making the call. The captain of the team winning the coin toss shall choose one of the following options:

- a. Offense or defense, with the offense at the 25 yard line to start the first series;
- b. Which end of the field will be used for both series of that overtime period.

The winner of the toss may not defer his choice. The loser of the toss shall exercise the remaining option for the first overtime period, and shall have first choice of the two options for subsequent even-numbered periods. The winner of the coin toss shall have first choice of the two options for subsequent odd-numbered periods. No additional coin toss is conducted in additional overtime periods. At the conclusion of the 2nd overtime period both teams must attempt a two-point conversion on the PAT, a one point PAT is not allowed.

B. Overtime period (s)

An overtime period shall consist of two series with each team putting the ball in play by a snap on or between the hash marks on the 25-yard line.

C. Team series

Each team retains the ball during a series until it scores or fails to make a first down. The ball remains alive after a change of team possession until it is declared dead, however, Team A may not have a first and ten if it again possesses the ball after a change of team possession.

D. Scoring

The team scoring the greater number of points during the regulation game and the overtime period (s) shall be declared the winner. There shall be an equal number of series as defined in C. above, in each extra period, except if Team B (the team first on defense in a given period) scores during a period other than on a try. If the teams remain tied at the end of an overtime period, a subsequent overtime period is played. Beginning in the third overtime period, teams scoring touchdowns must attempt a two-point conversion. A one-point try, although not illegal, will not score a point.

E. Fouls after Team B possession

1. Distance penalties by either team are automatically declined by rule in overtime periods. (Exception: Dead ball fouls and live ball fouls enforced as dead ball fouls)
2. Scores by the fouling team are cancelled
3. If there are offsetting fouls, whether one or both occur after Team B possession, the down is not replayed.

F. Timeouts

Each team will have one time-out in each overtime period. Time-outs do not carry over from the second half, or from any previous overtime period. Media time-outs are not permitted during any overtime period, nor may team time-outs be extended for media purposes.

1.10 Out of Bounds

A. Definitions:

- 1) Sidewalls are in play until a ball carrier makes contact with the wall as a result of defensive contact and play is blown dead. If a loose ball (fumble, muff, forward or backward pass, bat or kick) touches a wall the ball is dead, and the play will be blown dead.
 - a. If the ball is loose from a fumble or backward pass, the team last in possession shall retain possession if not in conflict with other rules
 - b. If the ball is loose during a free or scrimmage kick, the receiving team shall next put the ball in play
 - c. If the ball is a forward pass, it shall be ruled incomplete
- 2) Exception: **Both** end zone walls are considered live during a free kick **or** after being touched by a Team B player on a scrimmage kick; **receiving team/defensive players may recover and advance the ball and kicking team/offensive players may legally recover, but not advance the ball.**

AR – Free kick touches the ground or a team B player then hits the side wall at the 10 yard line. Ruling – The ball is dead when it hits the side wall. B's ball at the 10 yard line.

AR – Free kick touches the ground or a team B player then hits side wall at the 2 yard line. Ruling – The ball is dead when it hits the side wall. B's ball at the 5 yard line.

AR – Free kick does NOT touch the ground or a team B player then hits the top of the side wall at the 10 yard line and caroms over the wall. Ruling – The ball is dead when it hits the side wall. B's ball at the 25 yard line.

AR – Free kick hits side/back wall in the end zone and B recovers in the EZ but is tackled before advancing out of the EZ. Ruling – The ball remains live and since team B did not get it out of the EZ, it is a Rouge (1 pt for team A) team B's ball 1-10 from the 5-yard line.

AR – Free kick hits side/back wall in the end zone, and B recovers in the EZ and runs to midfield. Ruling – The ball remains live, the advance is legal. It will be team B's ball 1-10 from midfield.

AR – Free kick hits side/back wall in the end zone and A recovers it in the EZ. Ruling – TD for team A.

AR – Free kick hits side/back wall in the end zone and bounces out to the 5-yard line where team A recovers it and runs into the EZ with the ball. Ruling – The ball remains live when it hits the side/back wall in the EZ. It is a legal recovery by team A, but they cannot advance the ball. It will be A's ball 1-goal at the 5-yard line.

AR – Free kick hits a front line team B player and bounces back into team A's end zone and hits the wall. Ruling – the ball remains live and could be recovered by either team but only team B could advance.

AR – Scrimmage kick is touched by a team B player, then hits the side/back wall in the EZ and team A recovers it in the EZ. Ruling – TD for team A.

AR – Scrimmage kick is blocked by team B and bounces back into team A's EZ and contacts the wall in the end zone. Ruling – the ball is live and could be recovered by either team and advanced.

AR – A long scrimmage kick is muffed by team B in team B's end zone or the field of play (ex – at the 5-yard line), goes into B's EZ and hits the wall in the end zone. Ruling – the ball remains live, could be recovered by either team, but could only be advanced by team B. Team A cannot advance a muffed kick that is beyond the neutral zone.

Clarification – if the ball is recovered by team B and downed in the EZ or he is tackled in the EZ, it is a touchback, and NOT a safety. It would be team B's ball at the 5-yard line unless changed because of a penalty. This is the same is the NCAA rule.

- 3) A player who stands on the top of the end zone or side walls, or utilizes an end wall or side wall to enhance their vertical height shall be ruled out of bounds.

B. Rulings:

- 1) The ball shall remain in play when it is knocked or batted back into the field of play by a player who is off the ground and who has not touched the ground or any object outside the walls.
- 2) If a player gains possession of the ball while off the ground in bounds and is contacted by an opponent in a manner which causes him to land out of bounds in possession of the ball such player shall retain possession.
- 3) If a player gains possession of the ball near the sideline and touches the ground in bounds with his first step he shall retain possession even if his next step takes him out of bounds.

C. Kick Out of Bounds – Free Kicks

- 1) When a free kick goes out of bounds through the end zone **before** touching the ground or a player of the receiving team or it hits the goal assembly, it shall belong to the receiving team at the **25-yard line**. The back wall is considered to be live in the end zone when touched by a free kick.
 - a. If the ball hits the back wall of the end zone on the fly and remains in the end zone or field of play, it is a live ball.
 - b. If the ball hits the wall and goes over the wall, or goes over the wall on the fly the ball goes to the 25-yard-line.
 - c. If the ball bounces in the field of play and then hits the back wall the ball is considered live unless it goes into the stands.
 - d. No drive shall start inside the receiving team's 5-yard line. **EXCEPTION: If there is a penalty enforced, it is enforced and a team could start inside the 5-yard line.**

AR – On the KO, a block in the back is called on R at the 8 yard line. Ruling – enforce half the distance so R's ball at the 4 yard line.

AR – After a touchback with A-1-10-A5, team A commits a false start. Ruling – enforce half the distance, so A-1-12.5 at the 2.5.

- 2) When a free kicked ball goes out of bounds through the sideline, before touching the ground or a player of the receiving team it will belong to the receiving team at the 25- yard line If the ball goes out through the sideline on the kicking team's side of mid- field before touching the ground or a player of the receiving team, it belongs to the receiving team at the spot where it went out of bounds.
- 3) When a free kicked ball goes out of bounds through the sideline, after touching the ground or a player of either team and before possession is gained, it will belong to the receiving team at the spot the ball went out of bounds. If it goes out inside the five-yard line after it hits the ground or a player, the ball will be placed at the five-yard line.
- 4) When a free kick hits the ceiling, or any object suspended from the ceiling of the facility, it is immediately dead, and it will belong to the receiving team at the 25-yard line, unless the referee, with great certainty, can spot the ball at the spot it hit the ceiling behind the 25-yard line.

For the purposes of free kicks, beyond the 25-yard line means on the receiving team's side of the 25-yard line, and behind the 25-yard line means the kicking team's side of the 25-yard line. In some facilities, there may be certain items suspended from both the walls and the ceiling and appropriate ground rules shall be adopted prior to the beginning season.

D. Kick out of Bounds – Scrimmage Kick

- 1) A scrimmage kick that fails to cross the neutral zone continues in play. All players may catch or recover the ball behind the neutral zone and advance it
- 2) When a scrimmage kick that has crossed the neutral zone touches a player of the receiving team who is inbounds, any player may catch or recover the ball, but only team B could advance it. Team A cannot advance a muffed kick.
- 3) A player blocked by an opponent into a scrimmage kick that has crossed the neutral zone shall not be deemed to have touched the kick
- 4) An unsuccessful field goal attempt that has crossed the neutral zone and the ball untouched by Team B after it crossed the neutral zone and subsequently declared dead beyond the neutral zone will next be put in play at the dead ball spot or at the 5-yard line of Team B if declared dead in the end zone. Should the ball touch a wall, the ball will be placed at that spot or at the 5-yard line if the wall contact occurred inside the 5 -yard line.
- 5) Any field goal attempt that goes out of bounds over a side wall anywhere inside the opposing team's 25 yard line without making contact with the field of play, a player, or first touching the wall will be spotted at the 25 yard line.
- 6) Any field goal attempt that goes out of bounds between the 25 yard line and Team A's goal without making contact with the field of play, a player, or first touching a wall will be spotted at the yard line where it went out of bounds.

In some facilities, there may be certain items suspended from both the walls and the ceiling and appropriate ground rules should be adopted prior to the beginning season.

E. Lost Possession Out of Bounds

When on any play the ball is fumbled out of bounds or touches the wall, it shall belong to the team which last possessed the ball in the field of play. If the ball is fumbled backwards then the ball shall next be scrimmaged at the point where the ball went out of bounds. If the ball was fumbled forward, the ball is spotted at the point where the ball was fumbled.

F. Fumble Out of Bounds in Opponents Goal Area

When a player fumbles the ball from the field of play over the opponent's goal line and the ball goes out of bounds in the goal area or otherwise becomes dead, it shall be ruled as a touchback.

When a player fumbles the ball from the field of play over the opponent's goal line where an opponent recovers it and the ball is declared dead in the goal area, it shall be ruled a touchback and awarded to the opponent's team at its 5-yard line. If in attempting to run the ball out of the goal area the opponent's team commits an infraction the penalty shall be enforced from the 5-yard line.

G. Lost Possession Into Own Goal Area

When a player fumbles or passes the ball from the field of play into his own goal area where the ball is declared dead, a safety shall be awarded.

H. Fourth down Fumble Rule

Before a change of possession on fourth down and on tries, when a Team A fumble is caught or recovered by a Team A player other than the fumbler, the ball is dead. Any defensive player may still recover and advance a fumble. (NCAA fourth down fumble rule.)

1.11 Substitutions

- A. No substitute may enter the field of play at any time the ball is in play.

Penalty: Illegal Substitution – 5 yards, previous spot

- B. If the substitute enters the game to the extent that he can communicate with a teammate on the field he must remain in the game for at least one play.

- C. A player leaving the game shall proceed directly to the sideline on which his bench is located and, then, outside the field of play to his bench.

- D. A team shall not be permitted to use player substitution as a means of deceiving the opponent. While in the process of substitution or simulated substitution, Team A is prohibited from rushing quickly to the line of scrimmage with the obvious attempt of creating a defensive disadvantage. If the ball is ready for play, the officials will not permit the ball to be snapped until Team B has place substitutes in position and replaced players have left the field of play. Team B must react promptly with its substitutes.

Dead ball foul – Penalty: (1st offense) Delay of game on Team B for not completing its substitutions promptly, or delay of game on Team A for causing the play clock to expire - 5 yards (2nd and subsequent offenses) Unsportsmanlike conduct - 15 yards

- E. If Team A breaks its huddle with more than eight players or keeps more than 8 players in a formation for more than 3 seconds, it shall immediately be penalized for illegal substitution. Team B is allowed to briefly retain more than 8 players on the field to anticipate the offensive formation, but it may not have more than 8 players in its formation if the snap is imminent. Whether the snap is imminent or has just occurred, the officials shall stop the action.

Penalty: Illegal Substitution – 5 yards, dead ball foul

- F. If officials do not detect that a team has more than 8 players on the field until during the down or after the down, the infraction is treated as live ball.

Penalty: Illegal Substitution – 5 yards, previous spot

ARTICLE
2
SCORING

2.1 **Points for Scoring**

A. The point value for scoring plays shall be:

Touchdown	6 points
Field Goal by place kick	3 points
Field Goal by drop kick	4 points
Safety	2 points
PAT by running/passing/drop kick	2 points
PAT by place kick	1 point
PAT returned for score by defense	2 points
Receiving team unable to advance free kick out of end zone (Rouge)	1 point (kicking team)

“B snaps from 5 yard line after a rouge.”

B. The team having scored the most points at the conclusion of the game is declared the winner.

2.2 **Types of Scoring**

A. Touchdown

- 1) A touchdown is scored when a player with the ball in his possession:
 - a. Is in his opponent's goal area, or
 - b. Crosses or touches the plane of his opponent's goal line.
- 2) The ball becomes dead at the instant of scoring a touchdown.

B. Field Goal

- 1) A field goal is scored when a player kicks the ball:
 - a. By drop kick or by place kick from scrimmage formation
 - b. Between the opponent's uprights and over the crossbar
- 2) During a field goal attempt, the kicked ball may be caught/recovered in the goal area and advanced into the field of play by a defensive player. An unsuccessful field goal attempt that remains untouched by team B and is subsequently declared dead in the end zone will be declared a touchback. A kicked ball not breaking the plane of the goal line and being declared dead in the field of play belongs to Team B at the spot it became dead (unless inside the 5 yard line, then it will be placed at the 5 yard line).

C. Safety

- 1) A safety is scored when:
 - a. A player is in possession of the ball in his own team's goal area, other than on a free kick, and the ball is declared dead, or

b. A player is responsible for bringing or placing the ball anywhere behind his team's goal line by carry, kick, fumble, bat, or backward pass, and the ball is subsequently declared dead

c. When in question, it is a touchback, not a safety.

d. Momentum rule:

It is not a safety if a player between his five-yard line and his goal line:

1. Intercepts a pass or fumble; or recovers an opponent's fumble or backward pass; or catches or recovers a kick; and
2. His original momentum carries him into his own end zone; and
3. The ball remains behind his goal line and is declared dead in his team's possession there. This includes a fumble that goes from the end zone into the field of play and out of bounds.

If conditions 1-3 are satisfied above, the ball belongs to this player's team at the 5-yard line.

e. An accepted penalty for a foul leaves the ball on or behind the offending team's goal line.

D. Point After Touchdown (PAT)

- 1) After scoring a touchdown, the offense will have an attempt to score again by either a run, pass, or kick attempt from the **2-yard line**.

a. A kick attempt may be a place kick or a drop kick.

b. A two-point attempt may be tried from a scrimmage formation or may be attempted from a scrimmage kick formation. Two points are awarded upon running or passing successfully into the goal area. **If a team is going for a 2-pt conversion, the ball must be snapped from a hash, like any other scrimmage play.**

- 2) If the defense gains possession of the ball during the point after touchdown attempt, they may advance the ball into Team A's end zone and score two points.

E. Rouge

- 1) If a receiving team player fails to advance a free kicked ball out of his own end zone, the kicking team shall be awarded one point.

2) The ball will next be put in play by the receiving team at their own 5 yard line.

- 3) If the kicking team commits a foul during the free kick play, the 1 point Rouge will not be awarded and the play will be ruled a touchback.

The referees signal for a rouge is the right hand over the head signaling the number one.

ARTICLE
3
SCRIMMAGE

3.1 Lines of Scrimmage and Neutral Zone

The lines of scrimmage are imaginary lines that extend from sideline to sideline, parallel to the goal lines, and passing through the foremost and rear most points of the football. The area between the lines of scrimmage (the length of the football) is the neutral zone. The offensive line of scrimmage is on the offensive team's side of the football while the defensive line of scrimmage is on the defensive team's side of the football.

3.2 Alley

The alley is a zone designated by imaginary lines perpendicular to the outside shoulder of the offensive lineman, not to exceed five yards wide.

3.3 Box

- A. The box is a zone designated by imaginary lines perpendicular to the outside shoulder of the offensive lineman, not to exceed five yards wide, and five yards deep on either side of the line of scrimmage.
- B. No part of an offensive player in motion may be in the box at the snap.

Penalty: Illegal Motion – 5 yards, previous spot

3.4 Offensive Alignments

A. Positioning

- 1) There shall be at least four offensive players (center, guard, guard/tight end, and split receiver) set on the line of scrimmage at the snap; **two or three who will be ineligible receivers.** The ineligible receivers are the center and one guard who may be aligned on either side of the center. **The tight end is on either side of the center and to be eligible must raise his hand at least above his shoulder to declare his eligibility. To make sure it is seen by the umpire he is instructed to do so after breaking the huddle until he gets to the line of scrimmage. If the team is in a hurry up or no huddle, he should hold his hand above his head before going down into his stance. The umpire will extend the arm out to the side that the TE has declared to be eligible and will hold it there until the snap. If the umpire does not have an arm extended then there is not TE eligible for the play.**

An eligible receiver who is on the line of scrimmage and is set at the snap must line up at least three yards outside of the nearest guard or tight end. An eligible receiver who is a back and is set needs to be at least two yards outside the nearest guard. Offensive players may be set in two, three, or four point stances. To be considered on the line of scrimmage, offensive players must have their shoulders substantially parallel to the line of scrimmage. Offensive players are considered in the backfield when any part of their body does not intersect with an imaginary line drawn parallel to the goal lines, from sideline to sideline, through the waist of the center.

AR – As the offense breaks the huddle and comes to the line of scrimmage, neither guard raises his hand to declare himself as the tight end. Ruling – Legal but there will be no eligible TE for the play.

AR – As the offense breaks the huddle and comes to the line of scrimmage, neither guard raises his hand to declare himself as the tight end. On the play, one of the guards goes downfield and a legal forward pass crosses the line of scrimmage. Ruling – ineligible receiver downfield. Live ball 5 yard foul from the previous spot.

AR – On a short yardage play, team A puts a player in the offensive box behind and between the center and guard but his head breaks the imaginary line through the waist of the center. Ruling – illegal formation, live ball 5-yard foul, previous spot (since his head is breaking the line through the waist of the center, he is a lineman, not a back. To be legal as a back, he must have daylight between his head/body and the waist of the center.)

- 2) A team may not have an unbalanced line. They must be positioned as guard, center, guard/TE. They may not be positioned center, guard, guard/TE.
- 3) Only two backs, including the quarterback, may be in the offensive box at the snap, both of whom must have been in a set position for at least one second prior to the snap. The snap must be received by a back or quarterback in the box.
- 4) A player who is in motion at the snap may not block any of the three (3) defensive linemen, or be the lead blocker on a running play inside of the alley.

Penalty: Illegal Formation – 5 yards, previous spot

- ~~5) Any back that enters from the back of the box and receives a handoff or backwards pass must be in a stationary position at the snap.~~

~~**Penalty: Illegal Formation – 5 yards, previous spot**~~

It is no longer a foul for a back that enters from the back of the box who was in motion to receive a handoff or backwards pass to have been stationary at the snap. He may not be in motion and in the box at the snap.

B. Ineligible receivers downfield

On any legal forward pass play where the pass crosses the line of scrimmage, ineligible receivers may not be more than three yards downfield (expanded neutral zone) until the QB has released the pass if the pass crosses the line of scrimmage. Such restrictions end if a defensive player touches the pass.

Penalty: Ineligible Downfield – 5 yards, previous spot

3.5 Defensive Alignments

A. Positioning

- 1) There must be three defensive players on the line of scrimmage in the defensive box. **Defensive linemen must be in 3 or 4-point stance when the ball is snapped.** The defensive lineman covering the offensive center must be head to head with the center. The other two defensive linemen may be head to head with the guards or shaded to the inside or outside. In determining whether the defensive player has covered the offensive guard, **the officials shall use the outside foot of the offensive guards with the inside foot of the defensive lineman for the alignment.**

- 2) There must be at least one and no more than two defensive linebackers in the alley behind the defensive box between 5 and 6 yards from the line of scrimmage at the snap. One linebacker may blitz but only through the A gap on either side of the nose guard. When two linebackers are lined up in the box, the blitzing linebacker must declare himself by raising his hand. Although a linebacker may declare his eligibility to blitz, he is not required to blitz. Any linebacker in the alley and in the 5 – 6 yard zone cannot lean or move a foot, similar to the restrictions of an offensive lineman unless he vacates the alley and assumes a new legal defensive position prior to the snap. **If either linebacker moves to cover a receiver before the snap, he must be outside the alley at the snap UNLESS that receiver is in motion and the linebacker is in motion.**

Clarification – If there is only one linebacker, he does NOT have to raise his hand. He can blitz or not blitz. If there are 2 linebackers in the 5 – 6 yard zone, one of the two MUST raise his hand that he is the only one who can blitz. He does not have to blitz, but he is the only one of the two who can legally blitz.

AR- A linebacker is leaning in any direction at the snap. Ruling- illegal defense, live ball foul 5-yard penalty, previous spot.

AR- A linebacker moves one or two feet before the snap. Ruling- illegal defense, live ball foul 5-yard penalty, previous spot.

AR – One linebacker is in the box and he does not raise his hand. Ruling – legal and he can blitz but does not have to.

AR – Two linebackers are in between 5-6 yards at the snap and one of them raises his hand to declare as the potential blitzer. Before the snap either linebacker moves and is out of the alley and 5 yards or more beyond the line of scrimmage at the snap. The other linebacker does not blitz. Ruling – legal play (if the linebacker who stays in the alley between 5-6 yards is the one who raises his hand, he may blitz)

AR – Only one linebacker is between 5-6 yards at the snap. Before the snap he moves and is out of the alley and 5 yards or more beyond the line of scrimmage at the snap Ruling – illegal defense for not having at least one linebacker in the alley at the snap. 5-yard penalty, previous spot.

When the line of scrimmage is at or inside Team B's 5-yard line, linebackers may align themselves of the goal line, **however they must have their feet behind the heels of the adjacent defensive linemen.** Additionally, on any fourth down play with less than 5 yards to gain, the linebackers may line up on the line to gain, **however they must have their feet behind the heels of the adjacent defensive linemen. (Behind the heels is defined as daylight between the heel of the adjacent defensive lineman and the toe of the linebacker.)**

On snaps inside the 5-yard line or on the fourth down in less than five yards, if two linebackers blitz (both crossing the line of scrimmage) and the quarter back is still inside the pocket, it is a foul for a blitz in fraction.

- 3) Defensive lineman may drop into pass coverage at the snap. They need not step forward or engage an offensive lineman
- 4) Defensive players may not stunt **if within 3 yards of either side of the line of scrimmage**, which is defined as an intentional act involving two or more defensive linemen in which they maneuver around each other while rushing the line of scrimmage. **“Individual twists and other individual defensive techniques are permitted, but at no time within 3 yards on either side of the line of scrimmage can the defensive linemen end up on the other side of each other unless the QB is out of the pocket or beyond the LOS and is a runner.**

AR- Nose guard slants, defensive end loops behind the nose guard, the DE is within 3 yards from the line of scrimmage, and the quarterback is still in the pocket. Ruling- Illegal defense – (Illegal Twist)

AR- Defensive end slants, nose guard loops behind the defensive end, the nose guard is within 3 yards from the line of scrimmage, and the quarterback is still in the pocket. Ruling- Illegal defense – (Illegal Twist)

AR - Nose guard bull rushes upfield and slightly to a side. The QB takes one step to the side opposite the nose guard but is still in the pocket and then steps up in the pocket looking to pass. The defensive end is only one yard upfield and cuts inside or spins, crossing the NG and rushes the QB. Ruling- Illegal defense – (Illegal Twist)

AR – Nose guard drops back one yard and runs to the flats to cover a back out of the backfield but crosses the DE in the process. Ruling – no foul as this is not a stunt as he is guarding a receiver.

AR- Nose guard slants defensive end loops behind the nose guard after the quarterback is outside the pocket. Ruling- legal play

AR- Defensive end slants, nose guard loops behind the defensive end after the quarterback is outside the pocket. Ruling- legal play

- 5) Defensive linebackers/cornerbacks MAY line up on the line of scrimmage head up on a set eligible receiver who is not in the box (i.e., end, flanker, wingback, slot back). The eligible receiver does not have to be on the line of scrimmage for the defensive player to take a position on the line. Defensive linebackers/cornerbacks MAY NOT line up on the line of scrimmage if there is no corresponding set eligible receiver. In this case the linebacker/cornerback MUST BE at least five yards from the line of scrimmage.

Clarification – head up for the “5-yard belt rule” means the defender “has a piece” of the receiver. He could be shading on the inside or outside similar to a DE on a lineman but must “have a piece.”

- 6) “3 by 1 rule” – Defensive backs may be 3 yards outside the defensive end and one yard off the line of scrimmage if he was head up on a receiver in high motion before the motion starts.

AR - A defensive back is inside of the 5-yard belt, head up on a receiver and is inside the bottom of the numbers. The receiver goes in jet motion and the defensive player moves to a position at least 3 yards outside the defensive end and at least one yard off the line of scrimmage. Ruling- legal play.

AR - A defensive back is inside of the 5-yard belt, head up on a receiver and is inside the bottom of the numbers. The receiver goes in jet motion and the defensive player moves to a position inside of 3 yards outside the defensive end and is 2 yards off the line of scrimmage. Ruling- illegal defense. (If he is inside of 3 yards of the defensive end, he must be at least 5 yards from the line of scrimmage.)

AR - A defensive back is inside of the 5-yard belt, head up on a receiver and is inside the bottom of the numbers. The receiver goes in jet motion and the defensive player moves to a position 3 yards outside the defensive end but is on the line of scrimmage. Ruling- illegal defense. (He must be at least 1 yard off the line of scrimmage even if he 3 yards outside the defensive end if he is not head up or mirroring.)

AR - A defensive back is inside of the 5-yard belt, head up on a receiver and is inside the bottom of the numbers on a sgt receiver. Before the snap the defensive player moves to a position at least 3 yards outside the defensive

end and at least one yard off the line of scrimmage but is not head up on the set receiver at the snap. Ruling- illegal defense.

- 7) If outside the BOTTOM of the numbers, linebackers/cornerbacks can be within 5 yards and **does not** need to be head up on any receiver. It is **not** a foul if they stay outside the bottom of the numbers, or are moving from inside the bottom of the numbers to outside the bottom of the numbers at the snap.
- AR- A defensive back is inside of the 5-yard belt and head up on a receiver but is outside the bottom of the numbers. The receiver goes in jet motion and the defensive player stays outside the numbers, inside of 5-yards, and is still there at the snap. Ruling- no foul for illegal defense since he is outside the numbers at the snap.
- AR- A defensive back is inside of the 5-yard belt, head up on a receiver, and is inside the bottom of the numbers. The receiver goes in jet motion so the defensive player moves to outside the numbers, inside of 5-yards, and is still there at the snap. Ruling- no foul for illegal defense since he is outside the numbers at the snap.
- AR- A defensive back is inside of the 5-yard belt, is outside the bottom of the numbers, but there is no receiver he is head up on. The defensive back is still standing there at the snap. Ruling- no foul for illegal defense since he is outside the numbers at the snap.

- 8) A defensive linebacker/cornerback may mirror an eligible receiver in motion. Mirroring Rule- defensive linebacker/cornerback can either follow the receiver or retreat to five yards beyond the line of scrimmage if he isn't covering an eligible receiver who is in motion.
- Clarification- A defensive player is mirroring a receiver if he is even with him or a step behind if trying to mirror.

AR- Receiver goes in motion defensive player is not mirroring, is inside the 3 by 1 area, and is within 5 yards of the line of scrimmage at the snap. Ruling- illegal defense.

AR- Receiver goes in motion defensive player mirrors the receiver but stops at the alley and is inside of 5 yards at the snap. Ruling- illegal defense.

AR- Receiver goes in motion and the defensive player backs up to 5 yards, but does not mirror the receiver before the snap. Ruling- legal play.

AR- Receiver goes in motion and the defensive player is mirroring the receiver and as a result is inside the alley at the snap but still mirroring the receiver.

Ruling – legal play

Note: Officials need to consider the circumstances which may have caused a defensive player, while mirroring the actions of an offensive player, to be in the box at the snap, and may not allow the offense to generate penalties in this manner.

Clarification - On any running play, any defensive player, regardless of position, can come up and play run, including tackling an offensive player in the backfield. Also, as soon as the quarterback leaves the alley, he has become a runner, and any defensive player can play him as a runner. If he passes the ball while outside the alley, he has the normal protection an official would give any passer, but not the special protection of only one blitz, which he previously had in the alley.

Penalty: Illegal Defense or Blitz Infraction– 5 yards, previous spot

3.6 Scrimmage Play

A. Scrimmage Snap

The offensive team may put the football into play by means of a scrimmage snap once the Referee has given the ready for play signal. A scrimmage snap is initiated by the center that shall take his position over the football facing his opponent's goal line. He shall put the ball in play by snapping it back between his legs in one continuous motion to another offensive player who is behind the line of scrimmage in the backfield. The ball must leave the center's hands and he shall not touch the ball again until it has been in possession of another player.

Penalty: Illegal Snap – 5 yards, dead ball foul

B. Illegal Movements

- 1) The center shall not fake a snap or, having assumed his stance over the ball, bob his head, move his shoulders, flex his knees, or make some other movement simulating a snap in an effort to draw the defense across its line of scrimmage.

Penalty: False Start– 5 yards, dead ball foul

- 2) After the neutral zone is set, no Team A player may encroach on it.

Penalty: Encroachment—5 yards, dead ball foul

- 3) No Team B player may contact an opponent or the ball prior to the snap.

Penalty: Offside—5 yards, dead ball foul

- 4) No Team B player be in the neutral zone when the ball is snapped.

Penalty: Offside—5 yards, live ball foul

Rulings:

- a. Defensive player jumps in neutral zone, gets back with no contact with the offense, and returns to his three of four point stance. No foul.
 - b. Defensive player jumps through neutral zone with no contact with the offense, ball is not snapped. Unabated to the QB. Stop play, Offside on the defense.
 - c. Defense jumps in neutral zone, adjacent offensive player flinches or makes contact. Offside on the defense.
 - d. Defense jumps in neutral zone, no contact but the ball is snapped. Offside defense; the snap is played and offense gets choice of accepting the result of the play or replaying with penalty.
- 5) The offensive team may have up to **two** players in forward motion toward their opponent's goal-line at the scrimmage snap as long as:
 - a. They clearly started in motion while being in their backfield.
 - b. The players must be at or behind the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball.
 - c. They are not in the box at the scrimmage snap.
 - d. An offensive player in motion and in the box at the scrimmage snap is illegally in motion, and not eligible to receive a hand off or a pass. Players deeper than 5 yards may take a hand off, or receive a forward or backward pass.

With exception of the offensive player(s) in motion, all other offensive players shall remain motionless for a period of at least one second prior to the scrimmage snap.

Penalty: Illegal Motion – 5 yards, previous spot

- 6) No offensive player on the line of scrimmage may make any motion which simulates the start of the play prior to the scrimmage snap.
No offensive player in motion may run forward to the line of scrimmage and stop abruptly with the intent of drawing a defender into the neutral zone (**Freeze Motion**). It is not a foul if done simultaneously with the snap.

Penalty: False Start – 5 yards, dead ball foul

- 7) No offensive player in the backfield shall simulate the start of the play prior to the scrimmage snap. This includes the quarterback, having assumed his position under the center, bobbing his head, moving his shoulders or flexing his knees, making any quick movement, or any other movement or signal which is an attempt to simulate the start of the play prior to the scrimmage snap.

Penalty: False Start – 5 yards, dead ball foul

- 8) All offensive players must block above the waist. Initial contact must be above the waist.

Penalty: Illegal Block Below the Waist, – 15 yards, live ball foul

3.7 Series of Downs

A. Downs

- 1) The offensive team shall have a series of four downs to gain a distance of ten yards. **The ball will always be snapped from a hash mark, unless moved to the middle of the field for a field goal which is discussed in the section on kicking.** A down may be repeated following the application of a penalty. If in a series of four downs the offensive team has not gained the required ten yards, the ball shall be awarded to the opponent at the point where the ball became dead. If the required ten yards are gained, a new series is awarded to the offensive team. A series of downs may be interrupted:
- a. When the offensive team does not make its ten yards for a new series;
 - b. When the offensive team kicks the ball out of bounds or across the line of scrimmage;
 - c. When the ball is intercepted or recovered by the defense.
- 2) **No drive shall start inside a team's 5 yard line unless the enforcement of a penalty leaves it there.**
- 3) **After a free kick, the ball may only be moved to start the series on either hash if it ends up being a rouge. Otherwise the ball will be placed on the nearest hash.**

AR – KO ends in a rouge. Team A gets one point. Team B puts the ball in play from the 5 yard line and can start the series on the hash of their choice.

AR – KO is returned to the 8 yard line outside the right hash. Team B will have 1-10 from the right hash.

AR – KO is returned to the 10 yard line between the hashes. Team B will have 1-10 from the nearer hash.

Clarification – Before the game the umpire shall ask the head coach which hash he would like the ball to be placed on if it ends up right in the middle at the end of a play. If it ends up right in the middle, the umpire will default to the predetermined hash. The coach does not get his choice every time, but must decide before the game.

- 4) If a scrimmage kick ends in a touchback, team B can start their series on the hash of their choice.**

B. Measurement

- 1) The offensive or defensive team captain or on-field coach may request the Referee at any time for a measurement of distance required for an offensive team's new series of downs to be awarded. The Referee, in his discretion, may grant the request or not, but he may at any time make such a measurement himself.
- 2) If the offensive team has failed to make a new series by advancing the ball ten yards at the end of the four downs, the ball is not moved and its rear end becomes the forefront for the new series awarded the former defensive team, which has become the offensive team.

Exception: When the 4th down is inside the 5-yard line, the ball will be moved to the 5-yard line to start the next series.

Clarification – Team A could start a series inside of team B's 5-yard line.

ARTICLE
4
KICKING

4.1 Definitions

A. Kicked Ball

- 1) A kicked ball is the intentional striking of the ball by a player's foot or leg below the knee.
- 2) If a ball accidentally strikes a player's foot or leg, it shall not be ruled a kick.

B. Place Kick

- 1) A place kick is a legal kick made by kicking the ball after it has been placed in a fixed position on the ground. The ball may be held in position on the ground by a teammate of the kicker. No substance or device may be used to improve the kicker's footing.
- 2) A place kick may be used for a scrimmage kick or free kick.
- 3) On a free kick the ball may be placed on a one-inch tee. On a point after touchdown attempt a kicking tee may not be used.

C. Drop Kick

- 1) A legal dropkick by a player who drops the ball to the ground and kicks it when it is rising from the ground or is touching the ground.
- 2) A drop kick may be used for a scrimmage kick or a free kick.

4.2 Free Kick

A. Spot of Free Kick

- 1) The ball shall be kicked off by a place kick or drop kick from any point between the sidelines on the kicking team's goal line at the beginning of each half of the game, after a successful field goal, after a point after touchdown try and after a safety. All free kicks must occur from the goal line. Any penalty which requires enforcement on a succeeding play will be enforced on the first scrimmage play following the free kick.

B. Rules of Free Kick

- 1) The ball, unless touched by a member of the receiving team, must be kicked more than 10 yards towards the opponent's goal line before it may be legally touched by a member of the kicking team.

Penalty: Kicking Team Touching Violation – Receiving team may take possession of the ball at the spot the ball was first touched by a kicking team player. If there is an accepted penalty for a live ball foul by either team, or if there are off-setting fouls, the illegal touching privilege is canceled.

- 2) For kicks out of bounds, see Rule 1.10-C.
- 3) If the kicked ball is simultaneously recovered by players from each team or simultaneously touched by players from each team before going out of bounds, the ball belongs to the receiving team:

- a. At the spot of recovery, or
- b. At the spot of last touching, or
- c. At the spot where the ball went out of bounds.

4) **Rouge**

- a. If a receiving team player fails to advance a free kicked ball out of his own end zone, the kicking team shall be awarded one point.
- b. The ball will next be put in play by the receiving team at their own 5 yard line.
- c. If the kicking team commits a foul during the free kick play, the 1 point Rouge will not be awarded and the play will be ruled a touchback.

- 5) There is not certain number of player who need to be on both sides of the kicker for a scrimmage kick.

C. Offside on Free Kicks – Kicking Team

- 1) During a free kick, when the ball is kicked, no player of the kicking team shall be in advance of the ball, except the kicker and a teammate who may be holding the ball for the free kick.

Penalty: Offside – Re-kick or 10 yards from the succeeding spot

D. Offside on Free Kicks – Receiving Team

- 1) During a free kick, when the ball is kicked, all players of the receiving team must be a minimum of 10 yards from the kicking team's free kick line.

Penalty: Offside – Re-kick or 5 yards from the succeeding spot

E. Blocking By the Receiving Team

- 1) During a free kick, a player of the receiving team may block an in-bounds opponent commencing from the moment the ball is kicked, provided that the contact is made legally above the waist of the opponent and from the front or side.

Penalty: Illegal Block Below the waist or Clipping – 15 yards at the spot of foul or at the end of the run, option provided

F. Blocking by the Kicking Team

- 1) Before gaining possession, while the ball is loose from the kick:
 - a. A player of the kicking team shall not be permitted to block an opponent until his team is eligible to touch the kicked ball.

Penalty: Illegal Block – Re-kick or 5 yards from the succeeding spot

- 2) After gaining possession:
 - a. By the receiving team, any kicking team member may block opponents in accordance with the rules above the waist.

- b. By the kicking team, the ball is immediately dead so there would be no continuation of play including blocking. If the kicking team recovers a fumbled kick return, it may advance the ball and may block opponents in accordance with the rules above the waist.

4.3 Scrimmage Kick

- A. Definition – A scrimmage kick is a kick by the offense during one of its scrimmage downs or plays from scrimmage. It can be used for a field goal attempt or point after touchdown attempt.

- B. Scrimmage Formation

- 1) Offensive scrimmage formation for field goal and point after touchdown attempts consists of five linemen, a place kicker, a holder and another back/receiver. Eligibility of offensive players will be determined by their position, not by their number. No offensive player may be in motion at the snap. No kicking pad or tee is permissible. The kicker may take a direct snap for a drop kick.

If a team lines up in scrimmage kick formation, they may attempt a fake scrimmage kick. **Exception:** Rule 4.3-C.

- 2) Defensive scrimmage formation for field goal and point after touchdown attempts consists of four defensive linemen who must line up **helmet to helmet** with the offensive linemen. No defensive player will line up over the center. All four defensive linemen must be in a three or four-point stance at the snap. The remaining four defenders may line up anywhere else, as long as they remain behind the defensive line of scrimmage during the kick attempt. They may leap or otherwise attempt to block a scrimmage kick while behind the defensive line of scrimmage, but at no time may they use a teammate or opponent to enhance their vertical height. They may return or block for a return on an unsuccessful attempt.

Clarification – the defenders in a scrimmage kick formation must be “helmet to helmet” with the offensive guards and tackles and may not shade them to the inside or outside.

Penalty: Illegal Formation or Illegal Defense – 5 yards, previous spot

- C. If the ball is spotted inside Team A’s 4-yard line, and they elect to attempt a scrimmage kick, the ball MAY be moved out to the 4-yard line if they want. In addition, the ball MAY be spotted up to three yards outside either hash mark, or any point between the hash marks to avoid hitting the ceiling or an object suspended from the ceiling. If the ball is on the left hash, it may only be moved outside to the left, and if on the right hash, it may only be moved outside to the right.

Should a team elect to move the ball for a scrimmage kick, even from the hash to the middle of the field, they cannot fake the kick but must kick the ball. If the snap is muffed or miss-played, Team A may recover but not advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. Any advance by Team A beyond the line of scrimmage will be brought back, and the down will not be repeated. Penalties for fouls will be administered as in any other scrimmage situation unless in conflict with other rules.

AR – Ball is at 2-yard line and the team elects to move the ball to the 4-yard line for the FG attempt. Team A fakes the kick and throws or runs the ball for an apparent 1st down. Ruling – Illegal fake of scrimmage kick after the ball was moved. Team B’s ball at the previous spot.

AR – Team A elects to move the ball from the hash to the middle of the field for a FG attempt. They fake the kick and throw or runs the ball for an apparent 1st down.

Ruling – Illegal fake of scrimmage kick after the ball was moved. Team B's ball at the previous spot.

AR – Team A elects to move the ball outside a hash to avoid an overhead obstruction. They fake the kick and throw or runs the ball for an apparent 1st down. Ruling – Illegal fake of scrimmage kick after the ball was moved. Team B's ball at the previous spot.

AR – Team A leaves the ball where it is for a FG attempt. They fake the kick and throw or runs the ball for an apparent 1st down. Ruling – Legal play.

D. Roughing or Running Into Kicker or Holder

- 1) When it is obvious that the ball will be kicked, no opponent shall run into or rough the kicker or the holder of a place kick.
 - a. Roughing is a live-ball personal foul that endangers the kicker or holder.
 - b. Running into the kicker or holder is a live-ball foul that occurs when the kicker or holder is displaced from his kicking or holding position but is not roughed.
 - c. Incidental contact with a kicker or holder is not a foul.
 - d. The kicker's protection under this rule ends when he has had a reasonable time to regain his balance.
 - e. When a defensive player's contact against the kicker or holder is caused by an opponent's block (legal or illegal), there is no foul for running into or roughing.
 - f. A player who makes contact with the kicker or holder after touching the kick is not charged with running into or roughing the kicker.
 - g. When a player other than one who blocks a scrimmage kick runs into or roughs the kicker or holder, it is a foul.

Penalty: Running into kicker or holder – 5 yards, previous spot

Roughing the kicker or holder – 15 yards, automatic first down

4.4 Punting

- A. No punting is allowed.

Penalty: Illegal Kicking – 10 yards from previous spot and loss of down

4.5 Kicking Play Restrictions

- A. Reception of Kicks

- 1) A player of the receiving team within the boundary lines attempting to catch a kick, and so located that he could have caught a free kick or a scrimmage kick that is beyond the neutral zone, must be given an unimpeded opportunity to catch the kick. Protection terminates when the kick touches the ground or is touched by any player of Team B beyond the neutral zone or in the field of play on a free kick. If interference with a potential receiver is the result of a player being blocked by an opponent, it is not a foul. It is an interference foul if the kicking team contacts the potential receiver before, or simultaneous to, his first touching the ball.

Penalty: Kick Catch Interference – In the field of play, the receiving team will put the ball in play 15 yards in advance of the spot of the foul. In the goal area, the receiving team will put the ball in play 15 yards in advance of the 5-yard line

- 2) Kicked Ball Striking Uprights

- a. If the ball, after being free kicked, strikes the opponent's upright assembly in flight and returns to the field of play, the ball shall be declared dead and awarded to the receiving team at its 25 yard line.

- b. If a kicked ball on a field goal or point after touchdown attempt strikes an upright in flight and then proceeds through the uprights above the crossbar, it remains alive and scores points in accordance with the rules.
- c. If a kicked ball on a field goal or point after touchdown attempt strikes an upright in flight and does not go through the uprights for points, it is a touchback and would be team B's ball at the 5-yard line.

4.6

Fair Catch

- A. There shall be no fair catches. However, a receiving team player must be given an unimpeded opportunity to catch a kicked ball (Rule 4.5-A-1).

4.7

Penalty by team A during a kick play

- A. No one-point rouge is awarded if team A fouls during a play that would normally be a rouge.

AR - Team A is offside on a free kick in what would be a rouge. No one-point rouge for team A. Move the ball to the 5-yard line and enforce the penalty from the 5 to the 15. B-1-10 from the 15-yard line at the hash chosen by the coach.

- B. Penalties by team A are enforced from the dead ball spot on all kick plays.

AR - Team A commits a personal foul on the play and team B barely gets the ball out of the endzone, getting tackled at the 2-yard line. Ruling - Enforce the 15-yard penalty from the 2-yard line. B-1-10 from the 17-yard line at the nearest hash.

AR - Team A is offside on the play and team B returns the ball to the 13-yard line. Ruling - Enforce the 10-yard penalty from the 13-yard line. B-1-10 from the 23-yard line at the nearest hash.

- Exception - offside by either team on a free kick could be enforced from the dead ball spot or the offended team could elect to have the ball rekick.

**ARTICLE
5
PASSING**

5.1 Backward Pass

A. Definition

A backward pass is one thrown by a player parallel to or in the direction of his own end line.

B. Determinants of a Backward Pass

The point at which the ball is caught, strikes another player, an official, or the ground, or goes out of bounds is the factor, which determined whether it is a backward pass, regardless of the direction in which it goes afterwards.

C. Pass Striking the Ground

A backward pass striking the ground is not dead and may be recovered by either team without penalty and advanced.

D. Pass Out of Bounds

When a backward pass goes out of bounds in the field of play, the ball shall be put in play by scrimmage snap at the outer hash mark perpendicular from the point where the ball went out of bounds.

5.2 Forward Pass

A. Definition

A legal forward pass is one thrown by any offensive player from a point behind the line of scrimmage, towards the opponent's end line, to any eligible receiver. The location of the passer's entire body determines whether or not the player passing the ball is behind or beyond the line of scrimmage.

B. Legal Forward Pass

The offense shall make only one forward pass during a scrimmage down and it must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass – 5 yards from spot of foul and loss of down

C. Possession

During a forward pass, the ball is considered to be in possession of the offense until the pass is ruled complete or incomplete.

D. Eligibility of the Passer

- 1) The offensive player who throws a forward pass is called the passer
- 2) The passer does not need to be the first player to receive the ball (scrimmage snap) from the center.

E. Eligibility of Receivers

- 1) Any offensive player other than the center and two guards are an eligible receiver. One of the guards can be eligible if he declares his eligibility as discussed in rule 3-4-A.

a. All defensive players are eligible to touch or catch a forward pass.

- 2) In a kicking formation, a player is eligible if he lines up as an offensive end or in the backfield.

Clarification – in scrimmage kick formation, since there are 5 linemen, the inside three linemen are ineligible and all other offensive players are eligible.

- 3) If a forward pass is touched by, or touches a defensive player, all players of both teams become eligible receivers.

- 4) No originally ineligible offensive player may be downfield more than 3 yards (expanded neutral zone) until a legal forward pass play that crosses the line of scrimmage has been thrown.

Penalty: Ineligible Downfield -- 5 yards, previous spot

F. Illegal Touching

No originally ineligible player shall deliberately touch or catch a legal forward pass until it has touched an opponent.

Penalty: Illegal touching – 5 yards, previous spot

G. Complete Forward Pass

A pass is completed under the following conditions:

- 1) When caught by an eligible receiver, or by two or more such receivers simultaneously.
- 2) When caught by a defensive player or, simultaneously, by defensive players or when such a pass is touched by, or touches a defensive player and then is caught by any other player.
- 3) When caught simultaneously by players of both teams who maintain possession until the play is dead. The ball shall be awarded to the offense.
- 4) **If a receiver of either team catches a pass while off the ground and if contacted or not ends up over the wall and out of bounds in possession of the ball demonstrates possession to an official, the pass shall be ruled complete where he crossed the wall. EXCEPTION: The player who catches the ball cannot use the wall to his advantage by climbing on top of it or using it to jump off of.**

H. Incomplete Forward Pass

A forward pass shall be declared incomplete and the ball will next be put in play at the point of last scrimmage snap, with downs continuing:

- 1) When the ball strikes the ground or any overhead obstruction, flag, etc.
- 2) When the ball goes out of bounds, even if touched by a player in the field of play.
- 3) When the passer has commenced his forward passing motion with the ball moving forward and as a result of contact with an opponent, the ball leaves the passer's hand and strikes the ground.
- 4) When the ball first contacts a sidewall or end wall before being caught. No pass completion can occur on a ricochet off a side wall or end wall.

I. Intentional Grounding

If an offensive passer deliberately, in the official's opinion, throws the ball out of bounds or to an area in which there is not an eligible receiver for the purpose of avoiding loss of yardage, his team shall be penalized.

Penalty: Intentional Grounding – loss of down at spot of foul (point at which pass was thrown). If pass is thrown from the goal area, a safety shall be awarded to the defense subject to the options provided.

It is not intentional grounding if the quarterback is outside the alley and throws the ball so that it first touches the ground or goes out of bounds beyond the line of scrimmage.

J. Pass Interference

- 1) Offensive pass interference is when contact by an offensive team player interferes with a defensive team player beyond the line of scrimmage. Offensive team players contacting defensive team players within 1 yard of the line of scrimmage shall not be deemed as offensive pass interference.
 - a. Any offensive player may interfere with an opponent anywhere in bounds after the pass has been touched.
 - b. Prior to the pass being completed or declared incomplete, an offensive player may interfere with an opponent anywhere in bounds provided that the pass is thrown to a receiver behind the line of scrimmage.

Penalty: Offensive Pass Interference – 15 yards, previous spot

- 2) Defensive pass interference is contact by a defensive player on an eligible offensive player beyond the line of scrimmage. Such interference must be ruled as intent by a defensive player to impede an eligible offensive player from receiving a catchable forward pass. Defensive pass interference occurs only after a legal forward pass is thrown.
 - a. Prior to a pass being thrown beyond the defensive line of scrimmage, a defensive player occupying a position beyond the line may use his hands or arms to ward off an opponent who threatens his defensive position as a potential blocker. Once an offensive receiver reaches the same yard line as the defensive player, he is no longer a threat to block the defensive player.

PENALTY—Team A's ball at the spot of the foul, first down, if the foul occurs fewer than 15 yards beyond the previous spot. If the foul occurs 15 or more yards beyond the previous spot, Team A's ball, first down, 15 yards from the previous spot.

When the ball is snapped on or inside the Team B 17-yard line and outside the Team B two-yard line, and the spot of the foul is on or inside the two-yard line, the penalty from the previous spot shall place the ball at the two-yard line, first down. No penalty enforced from outside the two-yard line may place the ball inside the two-yard line.

If the previous spot was on or inside the 2-yard line, first down halfway between the previous spot and the goal line.

- 3) A defensive player may make contact with an offensive team eligible receiver with which he is aligned on in the first five (5) yards off the line of scrimmage, provided that defensive player is pressing the offensive receiver.
 - a. A defensive player may not contact (***“chuck”***) an eligible receiver who is more than five (5) yards beyond the defensive line of scrimmage and is not a potential blocker. Also, a defensive player may not initiate contact with an eligible receiver

with which they are not aligned inside of the belt (Ricochet Motion). This is regardless whether the passer is in the alley or not. The fact the ball is not thrown in that direction has no bearing on this foul.

Clarification – Ricochet motion should NOT be called when the offense throws a screen pass to that side of the field.

b. Ricochet motion – once ANY motion starts, a DB who is head up on a SET receiver may not go to guard another receiver EVEN if he gets there before the snap. He may guard anyone if he goes back to 5 yards.

Penalty: Illegal contact--5 yards, previous spot, automatic first down

- 4) Pass interference shall not be penalized if, in the judgment of the official:
- a. During the pass, offensive and defensive players make contact in a simultaneous attempt to catch or bat the ball, or
 - b. During the pass, the ball has been touched by an eligible player, or
 - c. The pass is clearly uncatchable

K. Interception in the Goal Area

- 1) An intercepted ball that is fumbled in the defensive goal area may be legally recovered by the offense for a touchdown.
- 2) For any rough play fouls (personal fouls) by the offensive team in the field of play or in the defensive goal area after the defense intercepts a pass in its own goal area where the ball is ruled dead, the penalty will be administered from the defensive team's 5-yard line.
- 3) A pass intercepted by a defensive player in the field of play **between the 5 yard line and the goal line** and his momentum carries him into his end zone where the ball is declared dead, the ball will be placed at the 5-yard line.

5.3 Hand-Off

A. Definition—A hand off on a scrimmage play is made when the ball is handed by one offensive team player to another behind the offensive line of scrimmage. There is no restriction on the number of hand-offs that can be made on any one-scrimmage play.

B. Ineligible to Receive Hand-Off

No originally ineligible offensive receiver or lineman may receive a hand-off.

Penalty: Illegal handing – 5 yards, previous spot

**ARTICLE
6
FOULS AND PENALTIES**

6.1 Illegal Tactics

A. Holding

Holding is using the hands and/or arms to grasp, encircle, or hinder an opponent, except the ball carrier. Holding hands or interlocking arms during any play is prohibited.

Penalty: Holding – 10 yards

During a legal forward pass play in which the pass crosses the neutral zone, if before the pass is touched there is holding by Team B beyond the neutral zone against an eligible receiver (other than pass interference), the penalty includes an automatic first down.”

PENALTY—10 yards and automatic first down

B. Clipping

Clipping is a block against an opponent in which the force of the initial contact is from behind and at or below the waist.

Penalty: Clipping – 15 yards

C. Block in the Back

A block in the back is blocking an opponent, except the ball carrier, from the rear in such a manner that the player contacts the opponent's back, above the waist. The application of a penalty is determined by the initial contact, which must be observed by the official, and shall not be called, if, in the official's judgment:

- 1) The block occurs in the area between the offensive guards, within 2 yards of either side of the scrimmage zone and is executed by an offensive player who, at the scrimmage snap, was positioned within this area, or
- 2) The initial contact is made on the side of the opponent, or
- 3) The opponent could see the blocker approaching and deliberately turned his body in order to be contact from behind.

Penalty: Block in the back - 10 yards

D. Crack Back Blocking

An offensive player is not permitted to move toward the original position of the ball at the snap and contact an opponent unless the block is in front and above the waist. An offensive player in motion at the snap is not permitted to move toward the original position of the ball at the snap and contact the defensive end. Any split receiver may contact the defensive linebackers. A stationary split receiver or running back may block the defensive end.

Penalty: Illegal Crackback Block – 15 yards

E. Chop Blocking

Chop Blocking is contacting an opponent below the waist at the time another player is already engaging that opponent above the waist or vice versa.

Penalty: Chop Block – 15 yards

F. Cut Blocking (Block below the Waist)

Cut Blocking is contacting an opponent at or below the waist

Penalty: Illegal Cut Block (Block below the Waist)– 15 yards

G. Pyramiding

It is illegal for a player to use the body of another player in any manner to elevate himself in an attempt to block a field goal or point after touchdown attempt.

Penalty: Pyramiding – 15 yards

H. Tripping

There shall be no tripping of any player. Tripping is intentionally using the lower leg or foot to obstruct an opponent below the knee

Penalty: Tripping – 15 yards

I. Aiding the Runner

It is illegal to assist the forward progress of a ball carrier by grasping, pulling or lifting him.

Penalty: Aiding the Runner– 5 yards

J. Personal Fouls or Unnecessary Roughness

A player shall be penalized for any personal foul or act of unnecessary roughness against an opponent except if that contact, in the opinion of the officials, is caused by the movement of the opponent. Personal fouls/acts of unnecessary roughness include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Piling on by a player who falls or jumps on the ball carrier after the play has terminated.
- 2) Contacting an opponent out of bounds in any manner
- 3) Contacting the passer unnecessarily
- 4) Contacting the kicker, holder, or snapper less than one second after he has snapped the ball, during a scrimmage kick.
- 5) Grasping and twisting, turning or pulling an opponent's face mask or helmet opening.
- 6) All players are prohibited from grabbing the inside back collar of the shoulder pads or jersey, or the inside collar of the side of the shoulder pads or jersey, and immediately pulling the ball carrier down. This does not apply to a ball carrier, including a potential passer, who is inside the offensive box.
- 7) Using the helmet to butt, ram, or spear an opponent.
- 8) Continuous contact of an opponent above the shoulders
- 9) Targeting. No player shall target and initiate contact to the head or neck area of a defenseless opponent with the helmet, forearm, hand, fist, elbow or shoulder.

Note 1: There is no automatic ejection for a targeting foul. However, a suspension could be imposed following a video review by the league office.

Note 2: “Targeting” means that a player takes aim at an opponent for purposes of attacking with an apparent intent that goes beyond making a legal tackle or a legal block or playing the ball. Some indicators of targeting include but are not limited to:

- Launch—a player leaving his feet to attack an opponent by an upward and forward thrust of the body to make contact in the head or neck area
- A crouch followed by an upward and forward thrust to attack with contact at the head or neck area, even though one or both feet are still on the ground
- Leading with helmet, forearm, fist, hand or elbow to attack with contact at the head or neck area
- Lowering the head before attacking by initiating contact with the crown of the helmet.

Defenseless players:

- a player in the act of or just after throwing a pass
- a receiver attempting to catch a pass, or one who has just completed a catch and has not had time to protect himself or has not clearly become a ball carrier
- a kicker in the act of kicking or just after kicking a ball, or during the kick return
- a kick returner attempting to catch or recover a kick
- a player on the ground
- a player obviously out of the play
- a player who receives a blind side block
- a ball carrier whose forward progress has been stopped
- a quarterback any time after a change of possession

- 10) Any other act of roughness or unfair play.

Penalty: Personal Foul or Unnecessary Roughness – 15 yards if by the offense, and 15 yards and automatic first down if by the defense. If the infraction is flagrant in the judgment of the official, the player shall be ejected from the contest.

K. Roughing the Passer

Because the act of passing often puts the quarterback (or any other player attempting a pass) in a position where he is particularly vulnerable to injury, special rules against roughing the passer apply. The Referee has principal responsibility for enforcing these rules. Any physical acts against passers during or just after a pass which, in the Referee’s judgment, are unwarranted by the circumstances of the play will be called as fouls. The Referee will be guided by the following principles:

- 1) Roughing will be called if, in the Referee’s judgment, a pass rusher clearly should have known that the ball had already left the passer’s hand before contact was made; pass rushers are responsible for being aware of the position of the ball in passing situations; the Referee will use the release of the ball from the passer’s hand as his guideline that the passer is now fully protected; once a pass has been released by a passer, a rushing defender may make direct contact with the passer only up through the rusher’s first step after such release (prior to second step hitting the ground); thereafter the rusher must be making an attempt to avoid contact and must not continue to “drive through” or otherwise forcibly contact the passer; incidental or inadvertent contact by a player who is easing up or being blocked into the passer will not be considered significant.
- 2) A rushing defender is prohibited from committing such intimidating and punishing acts as “stuffing” a passer into the ground or unnecessarily wrestling or driving him down after the passer has thrown the ball, even if the rusher makes his initial contact with the

passer within the one-step limitation provided for in (1) above. When tackling a passer who is in a virtually defenseless posture (e.g., during or just after throwing a pass), a defensive player must not unnecessarily or violently throw him down and land on top of him with all or most of the defender's weight. Instead, the defensive player must strive to wrap up or cradle the passer with the defensive player's arms.

- 3) In covering the passer position, Referees will be particularly alert to fouls in which defenders impermissibly use the helmet and/or facemask to hit the passer, or use hands, arms, or other parts of the body to hit the passer in the head, neck, or face (see also the other unnecessary roughness rules covering these subjects). A defensive player must not use his facemask or other part of his helmet against a passer who is in a virtually defenseless posture — for example, (a) forcibly hitting the passer's head, neck, or face with the helmet or facemask, regardless of whether the defensive player also uses his arms to tackle the passer by encircling or grasping him, or (b) lowering the head and violently or unnecessarily making forcible contact with the "hairline" or forehead part of the helmet against any part of the passer's body. This rule does not prohibit incidental contact by the mask or non-crown parts of the helmet in the course of a conventional tackle on a passer. A defensive player must not "launch" himself (spring forward and upward) into a passer, or otherwise strike him in a way that causes the defensive player's helmet or facemask to forcibly strike the passer's head, neck, or face—even if the initial contact of the defender's helmet or facemask is lower than the passer's neck. Examples: (a) a defender buries his facemask into a passer's high chest area, but the defender's trajectory as he leaps into the passer causes the defender's helmet to strike the passer violently in the head or face; (b) a defender, using a face-on posture or with head slightly lowered, hits a passer in an area below the passer's neck, then the defender's head moves upward, resulting in strong contact by the defender's mask or helmet with the passer's head, neck, or face (one example of this is the so-called "dip-and-rip" technique).
- 4) A rushing defender is prohibited from forcibly hitting, in the knee area or below, a passer who has one or both feet on the ground, even if the initial contact is above the knee. It is not a foul if the defender is blocked (or fouled) into the passer and has no opportunity to avoid him;
- 5) The Referee must blow the play dead as soon as the passer is clearly in the grasp and control of any tackler behind the line, and the passer's safety is in jeopardy;
- 6) A passer who is standing still or fading backwards after the ball has left his hand is obviously out of the play and must not be unnecessarily contacted by the defense through the end of the play or until the passer becomes a blocker, or until he becomes a runner upon taking a hand-off or backward pass from a teammate or picking up a loose ball, or, in the event of a change of possession on the play, until the passer assumes a distinctly defensive position. An opponent may not unnecessarily initiate helmet-to-helmet contact to the quarterback at any time after the possession changes.
- 7) When the passer goes outside the pocket area and either continues moving with the ball (without attempting to advance the ball as a runner) or throws while on the run, he loses the protection of the one-step rule provided for in (1) above, but he remains covered by all the other special protections afforded to a passer in the pocket (Numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7), as well as the regular unnecessary-roughness rules applicable to all player positions. If the passer stops behind the line and clearly establishes a passing posture, he will then be covered by all of the special protections for passers.

Penalty: Roughing the Passer: 15 yards from the succeeding spot and automatic first down; disqualification if flagrant

The penalty is added to the end of the last run when it ends beyond the neutral zone and there is no change of team possession during the down.

Note: When in question about a roughness call or potentially dangerous tactic on the quarterback, the Referee should always call roughing the passer.

L. Coaches on the Field

General guidelines

- The coach must be behind the referee before the start of the play
- The coach must be close enough that he could touch the wall

1. During a timeout, one (1) coach is allowed on the field in the huddle. If a team comes to the sideline in front of the team box, there is no limit to the number of coaches who may confer with the team.
2. During live play, one coach from each team is allowed on the field. He must be behind the referee and be within an arm's length of the wall at the snap and throughout the entire down. If the play comes back towards him (i.e. interception or fumble recovery) the coach must attempt to get out of the way of play rather than step into the field of play. Between plays, the coach may come out to the numbers to converse with his team, but never beyond the numbers.
3. Special team coaches are allowed on the field for scrimmage kicks. During the down the coach must be against the side wall.
4. No coaches are allowed on the field during free kicks.
5. Coaches shall remain on their own team's sideline if the team benches are on opposite sides.
6. If both team benches are on the same sideline, the home team shall determine the side of the field the home team coach shall use.
7. If coaches address officials in a professional manner, officials may respond to questions or offer explanations.

Penalty – First infraction: Sideline warning – no yardage penalty. Second and third infractions – 5 yards from the succeeding spot. Fourth and subsequent infractions – 15 yards from the succeeding spot.

7) Unsportsmanlike conduct on a coach is 15 yards but does not cause the team to lose the privilege of having a coach on the field on offense or defense."

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike conduct —15 yards and Automatic First DownM. Illegal Interference

No substitute, coach, authorized attendant or any person subject to the rules, other than a player or official, may interfere in any way with the ball or a player while the ball is in play.

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike conduct —15 yards

If a fan reaches over the wall and causes a visiting team's pass to be incomplete, the down is replayed. If the visiting team catches the ball after it has been touched by a fan in the field of play, the visiting team may decide whether to replay the down or take the result of the play. If a fan touches the ball on a fumble, the ball is dead and the visiting team may again choose to take the result of the play or replay the down. If fan interference occurs on a pass by the home team, no violation occurs, the ball is dead and there is no replay.

On a free kick, it is automatically a re-kick if a fan interferes with the ball. Should the visiting team be a victim of fan interference on the final play of either half, they will have the option of running one untimed down.

6.2 Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- A. The Rules Committee has declared its total abhorrence of rough play and unnecessary roughness. Officials are instructed that no tolerance is to be given to this type of play. Unsportsmanlike fouls are enforced as dead ball fouls.

General Application

- 1) The penalty for an unsportsmanlike foul is always applied at the spot where the ball would next be put in play:
- 2) If the foul occurs during a scoring play, the score shall count and the penalty shall be applied at the spot where the ball would next be put on play. The non-offending team can choose the following spots:
 - a. After a touchdown, it may be penalized on the point after touchdown or on the first scrimmage play after the subsequent kickoff
 - b. After a successful point after touchdown, penalize on the first scrimmage play after the subsequent kickoff.
 - c. All kickoffs shall be from the goal line, and any penalty which would move the kickoff to another yard line shall be enforced on the first scrimmage play after the kickoff.
- 3) Rough Play (Fighting)

A player shall be penalized and disqualified from any further game participation for any act of rough play against an opponent. Fouls for rough play, whether during a live ball or during a dead ball are enforced as dead ball fouls. These include, but are not limited to:

- a. Striking or swinging at an opponent with a fist, knee, or elbow in any manner whether physical contact is made, or
- b. Kicking or kicking at an opponent whether or not physical contact is made, or
- c. Any act or action considered by the Referee to warrant disqualification.

Penalty: Personal Foul – 15 yards

- 4) Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Any player or coach may be penalized for any act, which, in the opinion of the officials, is objectionable conduct. Objectionable/Unsportsmanlike Conduct fouls are enforced as dead ball fouls. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Foul or demeaning language, including vulgarities, abusiveness, and racial slurs, objectionable gestures, or spitting, directed at opponents, officials, or spectators.
Note: If an official in his normal position along a sidewall can hear any of this, it is assumed that the fans can hear it as well. This type of behavior has no place in a fan friendly setting and should be penalized as unsportsmanlike conduct.
- b. Throwing the ball at an opponent, official, an occupant in the opponent's bench area.
Visiting team players may not throw or hand the ball into the stands or take the ball into the bench area.

- c. Interfering with the placement of the official's flag marking the spot of a foul.
- d. Continued objectionable conduct after a penalty has been applied
- e. Artificial Arena Noise. The Arena PA systems **MUST STOP** being used once the offensive team has broken the huddle or comes to the line of scrimmage if no huddle is used. The coach and administration will be warned one time and then all subsequent penalties for unsportsmanlike delay of game will be administered against the head coach or subsequent coaches.
- f. **Gesturing and taunting from the players on the field to players in the bench, and from bench players to players on the field is a problem and it incites future problems. These must be called without warning and every time they occur. PENALTY—15 yards and automatic first down if by the defense – enforce as a dead ball foul and can be banked if on or after a scoring play.**

AR – After scoring at TD, A88 runs by the team B bench and taunts players in the bench area. Penalty – UNS on A88 is enforced on the try, or banked and enforced after the kick-off return. (Team B chooses to bank the foul and they return the ball to the 10 yard line on the KO. Now enforce the 15 yard penalty and it will be B-1-10 at the 25.)

7.1-C-8-D AR - After scoring at TD, B25 yells racial slurs at a team A player. Penalty – UNS on B25 is enforced on the try, or banked and enforced after the kick-off return. (Team A chooses to bank the foul and team B returns the ball to the 25 yard line on the KO. Now enforce the 15 yard penalty and it will be B-1-10 at the 12.5 yard line.)

Clarification – Players on the field will be charged individually with a UNS and two UNS fouls of a player results in disqualification of that player.

Clarification – Any UNS called on a player or coach in the bench area and not on the field will not be charged to a specific player or coach, but to the bench. They will not go towards a disqualification of a player.

Clarification – Any player or coach could be disqualified from the game with their first UNS at the discretion of the officials.

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Foul – 15 yards

5) Disqualifications

- a) Any player may be disqualified, and substitution permitted, for any act of rough play, or excessive objectionable or unsportsmanlike conduct.
- b) A player shall be disqualified for a second foul in the same game for rough play or excessive objectionable or unsportsmanlike conduct. **A coach shall be disqualified for a second unsportsmanlike conduct foul**
- c) **When a player or coach is ejected from a game, he must leave the playing field immediately and must remain in the locker room of his team until the completion of the game.**
- d.) **Players who are ejected during a game are automatically suspended without pay for the following game. Player has the right to appeal if they feel that they are ejected without cause.**

Note: The definition of fighting is the swinging at and hitting or the swinging at and missing of an opponent.

Penalty: Excessive Misconduct or Unsportsmanlike Infraction – 15 yards plus disqualification

ARTICLE
7
APPLICATION OF PENALTIES
(CIF follows NCAA penalty enforcement fundamentals)

7.1 Definitions

A. Loss of Down

- 1) In any penalty “loss of a down” means that the down upon which the foul occurred is not repeated.

B. Spots

- 1) The enforcement spots are: the previous spot, the spot of the foul, the succeeding spot and the spot where the run or scrimmage kick ends.

C. Enforcement Spots

- 1) Dead ball—the enforcement spot for a foul committed when the ball is dead is the succeeding spot
- 2) Snap—the enforcement spot for fouls occurring simultaneously with a snap is the previous spot
- 3) Free kick—the enforcement spot for fouls occurring simultaneously with the free kick, or penalties carried over from a touchdown or point after attempt is the spot where the ball will next be put in play following the free kick.
- 4) Running plays—the basic enforcement spots for fouls that occur during a running play in the field of play or end zone are as follows:
 - a. When the run ends beyond the neutral zone, the basic enforcement spot is the end of the related run (Exceptions: Offensive team facemask, illegal use of hands, holding and illegal blocks and personal fouls, behind the neutral zone, are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind the offensive team’s goal line.)
 - b. When the run ends behind the neutral zone before a change of team possession, the basic enforcement spot is the previous spot (Exceptions: Offensive team facemask, illegal use of hands, holding and illegal blocks and personal fouls, behind the neutral zone, are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind the offensive team’s goal line.)
 - c. When there is no neutral zone, the basic enforcement spot is the end of the related run.
- 5) Pass play—the basic enforcement spot for fouls during a legal forward pass play is the previous spot. Exceptions:
 - a. Roughing the passer enforcement on a completed forward pass from the end of the last run when that run ends beyond the neutral zone, and there is no change of team possession during the down.
 - b. Offensive team facemask, illegal use of hands, holding and illegal blocks and personal fouls, behind the neutral zone, are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind the offensive team’s goal line.

- 6) Kick plays—The basic enforcement spot for fouls that occur during a legal free kick play before possession is gained or regained or the ball is declared dead by rule is the succeeding spot. The offended team shall also have the option to re- kick instead. Exceptions:
 - a. Interference with the opportunity to make a catch—spot foul
 - b. Post scrimmage kick enforcement: The enforcement spot is the spot where the scrimmage kick ends when Team B fouls occur
 - 1) During a scrimmage kick play in which the ball crosses the neutral zone;
 - 2) The kick is not a try, a successful field goal, or in an extra period;
 - 3) Before the end of the kick;
 - 4) When team A does not have possession of the ball when the down ends. Team B fouls behind the post scrimmage kick spot are spot fouls.
- 7) Behind the goal line
 - a. The enforcement spot is the 5 yard line for fouls by the opponents of the team in possession after a change of team possession (not on a try) in the field of play when the run ends behind the goal line.
 - b. The basic enforcement spot is the 5 yard line for fouls that occur after a change of team possession (not on a try) in the end zone and the ball remains in the end zone where it is declared dead.
 - c. The enforcement spot is the goal line for fouls by the opponents of the team in possession after a change of team possession in the end zone (not on a try) when the run ends behind the goal line and any subsequent loose ball is recovered in the field of play.
- 8) Fouls during or after a touchdown, field goal or try
 - a. Dead ball or unsportsmanlike fouls on a successful touchdown or after the touchdown and before the ball is ready for play on the try may either be enforced on the succeeding try or the first scrimmage play following the subsequent kick-off; if there is no kick-off, the penalty is enforced on the try;
 - b. Defensive pass interference fouls on the try are penalized half the distance to the goal line, or if the try is successful the penalty is declined;
 - c. Live ball fouls on scoring plays (touchdowns and field goals) will be penalized by rule. To accept a score, the penalty must be declined. A successful field goal may be cancelled and the penalty enforced by rule.
 - d. Personal fouls and unsportsmanlike fouls during and after a try are penalized on the first scrimmage play following the subsequent kick-off;
- 9) Half the Distance Enforcement Procedures
 - a. No distance penalty, including tries, shall exceed half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line. Exception: Defensive pass interference.

7.2 Penalty Enforcement Fundamentals

- A. Any penalty may be declined, but a disqualified player must be removed.
- B. When a foul is committed, the penalty shall be completed before the ball is declared ready for play for the next down.
- C. A foul that occurs simultaneously with the snap or free kick is considered as having occurred during that down.
- D. When two or more live-ball fouls are committed by the same team, the referee shall explain the alternative penalties to the field captain of the offended team, who may then elect to accept only one of the penalties.
- E. If live ball fouls are committed by both teams, each such foul is an offsetting foul, the penalties cancel each other and the down is replayed. (Exception: When there is a change of possession during the down, the team last gaining possession may decline offsetting fouls and thereby retain possession after completion of the penalty for its infraction if it had not fouled before its last gaining possession.)
- F. When Team B's foul calls for post scrimmage kick enforcement, Team B may decline offsetting fouls and accept post scrimmage kick enforcement.
- G. Any dead ball fouls, or a live ball foul which is administered as a dead-ball foul, do not offset and all such dead ball or live ball fouls are administered enforced separately and in their order of occurrence. Exception: When dead ball unsportsmanlike or personal fouls by both teams are reported to the referee and before any of the penalties have been completed, the fouls offset, the number or type of down established before the fouls occurred is unaffected, and the penalties are canceled, except that any disqualified player must leave the game.
- H. When a live ball is committed by one team and one or more dead ball fouls are committed by either team, both the live ball and dead ball fouls are enforced, in the order of their occurrence, provided that the live ball is enforced first.
- I. For any penalty enforcement not covered in this rule book refer to the current NCAA rule book.

CIF Summary of Penalties:

LOSS OF DOWN

Illegal forward pass or handing
Intentional grounding
Illegal kicking
Illegal batting

AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN

Defensive pass interference or illegal contact with an eligible receiver

Holding against an eligible receiver and the ball crosses the line of scrimmage

Unnecessary roughness/personal foul on defense, including:

- Striking, kicking, kneeing, elbowing, etc.
- Piling on, late hit
- Facemask
- Illegal helmet contact (spearing, butt blocking, face tackling)
- Illegal contact to the head/helmet
- Roughing the passer/kicker/holder/snapper

Unsportsmanlike conduct (defense)

Personal fouls on defense

Five (5) YARD PENALTIES

Coach interference /Coach Sideline violation
Illegal Substitution
Illegal motion
Offensive motion man in the box at the snap
Blitzing infraction
Illegal defense
Illegal twist
Illegal contact of a receiver past 5 yards
Illegal formation
Aiding the runner

Snap infraction
False start
Offside
Encroachment
Illegal forward pass/handing
Ineligible receiver downfield
Illegal touching
Any equipment violations
Running into the kicker/holder
Delay of game
Tight End not declaring

Ten (10) YARD PENALTIES

Holding

Block in the Back
Illegal kicking
Illegal batting

Fifteen (15) YARD PENALTIES

Block below waist (cut block)
Chop block
Clipping
Crack back block
Defensive Pass Interference
Face Mask
Hurdling
Horsecollar tackle
Illegal contact out of bounds
Illegal contact above the shoulders

Fifteen (15) YARD PENALTIES

Illegal contact with snapper
Kick Catch Interference
Offensive pass interference
Personal fouls
Roughing the passer
Roughing kicker/holder
Roughing the snapper
Piling on
Pyramiding (use another player's body for advantage)
Unnecessary Roughness or fighting
Unsportsmanlike Conduct
Contact with an official
Visiting team player handing, tossing, or throwing a ball into the stand

DISQUALIFICATION

Fighting

Two unsportsmanlike fouls on the same player. Coaches are not DQ'd for two UNS fouls but could be for any reason after just one UNS if warranted.

Contact with an official

Flagrant personal fouls

SPECIAL ENFORCEMENTS

Coach interference—at least 5 yards, up to awarding a score.

Fan interference— If a fan reaches over the wall and causes a visiting team's pass to be incomplete, the down is replayed. If the visiting team catches the ball after it has been touched by a fan in the field of play, the visiting team may decide whether to replay the down or take the result of the play. If a fan touches the ball on a fumble, the ball is dead and the visiting team may again choose to take the result of the play or replay the down. If fan interference occurs on a pass by the home team, no violation occurs, the ball is dead and there is no replay. On a free kick, it is automatically a re-kick if a fan interferes with the ball. Should the visiting team be a victim of fan interference on the final play of either half, they will have the option of running one untimed down.

Penalties occurring after a change of possession in overtime

By Team B: No score by B can occur

By Team A: Penalties are automatically declined and Team B is awarded its team

Possession on the 25-yard line

By both teams: Penalties are automatically declined and the down is NOT replayed

Exception: Dead ball fouls or live ball fouls enforced as dead ball fouls, which are enforced at the succeeding spot

ARTICLE

INSTANT REPLAY

Purpose and Philosophy:

8.1 Instant replay is a process whereby video review is used to confirm, reverse or let stand certain on-field decisions made by game officials.

8.2 The instant replay process operates under the fundamental assumption that the ruling on the field is correct. After reviewing the play, the official may reverse a ruling if and only if the video evidence convinces him beyond all doubt that the ruling was incorrect. Without such indisputable video evidence, the official must allow the ruling to stand.

8.3 Reviewable plays:

1. Turnovers
2. Scoring plays
3. Catch/no catch

8.4 The home team is responsible for providing a red flag for both teams to use for the game. All replay reviews must be a challenge by the head coach. At team must have a timeout left to challenge a play. The coach must throw the red flag on the field before the snap of the next play. If a coach calls a timeout, if he wants to challenge the previous play, he must do so IMMEDIATELY after calling the timeout. He may not throw the red flag after the timeout has begun.

Teams get two challenges for the game. If both the challenges they made were correct, they will get a third challenge. After that, there are no more challenges available to that team.

HUDL sideline practice mode will be used for the replay process. The league has the right to change what will be used for the replay process if they feel the need to. The home team must provide the officials with an IPAD, tablet, or laptop for the review process. They can project the IPAD or laptop to a bigger monitor of the home team provides that for better quality. This viewing must be where the officials can view it in an area outside the team bench area, and ideally in an area off the field and not by the fans.

If after three minutes of viewing the play the officials cannot change the call, the rule on the field will "stands" as called.