

# FHSAA/NFHS Rule Changes 2019

## 40 Second Play clock

The 40- second play clock will provide more consistency as the ball must be snapped within 40 seconds after the end of the previous play and is not dependent on the referees' subjective signal. **YOU DO NOT NEED A VISBLE PLAY CLOCK ON YOUR FIELD FOR THIS TO WORK.** This will be used at Varsity and Sub-varsity games.

In the case where play is continuing with no stoppage or interruption, the offense will have 40 seconds from the end of the previous play to snap the ball. If play has been stopped (timeout or penalty), the offense will have 25 – seconds from the time the umpire sets the ball and the referee starts the ready for play following the administration of the timeout or penalty.

**Basic Premise:** The play clock will ALWAYS start at :40 seconds (started by BJ within 3 seconds of the end of the previous play) unless there is an administrative stoppage.

The following administrative stoppage situations are when the play clock will be set at :25 seconds under varsity timing rules.

<u>Situation</u>	<u>Play Clock</u>	<u>Referee Signal</u>
Administration of a foul & penalty	25 Seconds	Chop or Wind
At the start of a period	25 Seconds	Chop
Measurement	25 Seconds	Chop or Wind
Helmet Comes Off	25 Seconds	Chop or Wind
Injury	25 Seconds	Chop or Wind
Defense (Team B) awarded a 1st down	25 Seconds	Chop
After any score	25 Seconds	Chop
Start of Team A's possession in OT	25 Seconds	Chop
Inadvertent whistle	25 Seconds	Wind
Timeout by either team	25 Seconds	Chop
Timeout by official	25 Seconds	Chop
Touchback	25 Seconds	Chop
Untimed down	25 Seconds	Chop
Period Extension	25 Seconds	Chop

### Notes:

- This change only affects the play clock, not the game clock.
- The Back Judge has primary responsibility for the play clock and will signal at: 10 left and will visibly count the last: 05 seconds.
- Following the end of a down the Back Judge will (after seeing there are no penalties or other delays) start the 40-second play clock. The back Judge will start the 40-second play clock by raising hand over head and twirl index finger.
- All members of the crew will react to ball movement and ball placement as efficiently and as accurately as possible. (There are no warnings for waiting on the ready for play)
- If the: 40 - second play clock has started and runs down below: 25 seconds remaining and the ball is not yet placed on the ground and ready for play through no fault of the players (long run, long pass and ball is being

relayed back, etc.), the referee shall sound the whistle, reset the play clock to: 25 seconds and start the play clock (and possibly the game clock) on his whistle/signal.

- If the referee is re-setting the: 40 play clock, he will signal with both palms open in an over-the-head pumping motion to the back judge to reset the: 40 play clock. If the referee is re-setting the: 25 play clock, he will signal with one palm open in an over-the-head pumping motion to the back judge to reset the :25 play clock.
- Pre-game discussion is a must. Discuss procedures and 40-second clock start signals with head coaches. Identify that the play clock will start within 3 seconds after the previous play ends.
- Be consistent in starting the 40-second play clock, ball movement, spotting the ball and being in position for the snap.
- It is going to be necessary to have well trained ball personnel. It is recommended that at least 1 ball boy be on each sideline. TWO game balls from each team will be RECOMMENDED for each sideline. Ball boys should be easily identifiable with vests, t-shirts, etc. that contrast with the team uniforms on their sideline.
- The “box” man on the chain crew must hustle (RUN) to the next spot because once the ball is placed, the ball can be snapped because the 40 second clock will be running. As soon as the first down is signaled the “box” man must hustle (RUN) to the next spot. The chain crew is an extension of the officiating crew. Sideline rules will apply to the chain crew as well. Team personnel must avoid interfering with the chain crew and its operations. Stopping the game clock to signal first down will not cause the play clock to reset at 25 seconds.
- It is expected that the ball will be marked ready for play within 8-10 seconds of the end of the play. The umpire will stand over the ball until the box is set following Team A reaching the line to gain. Once the box is set, the umpire will step away from the ball and the ball may be snapped.

## TRAINING VIDEO LINK:

[40 Second play clock training video](#)

### **Additional changes:**

**BY STATE ASSOCIATION ADOPTION, USE OF VIDEO REVIEW ALLOWED FOR STATE POST-SEASON CONTESTS [1-3-7 NOTE (NEW), TABLE 1-7 – 1-3-7 NOTE (NEW)]** Rationale: By state association adoption, instant replay may only be used during state postseason contests to review decisions by the on-field game officials. This adoption would allow state associations to develop protocols for use of video replay.

**The FHSAA will begin vetting this through our committees during the 2019/2020 school year.**

### **IMPROVED VISIBILITY OF NUMBERS [1-5-1c, 1-5-1c(6) (NEW)]**

**Rationale:** The purpose of numbers on jerseys is to provide clear identification of players. In order to enhance the ability to easily identify players, the committee has clarified the size requirements for jersey numbers through the 2023 season. The committee also added a new requirement that, effective in the 2024 season, jersey numbers must be a single solid color that clearly contrasts with the body color of the jersey.

## **REDEFINED REQUIREMENTS FOR A LEGAL SCRIMMAGE FORMATION [2-14-1, 7-2-5a]**

**Rationale:** A legal scrimmage formation now requires at least five offensive players on their line of scrimmage with no more than four backs. This change will make it easier to identify legal and illegal offensive formations.

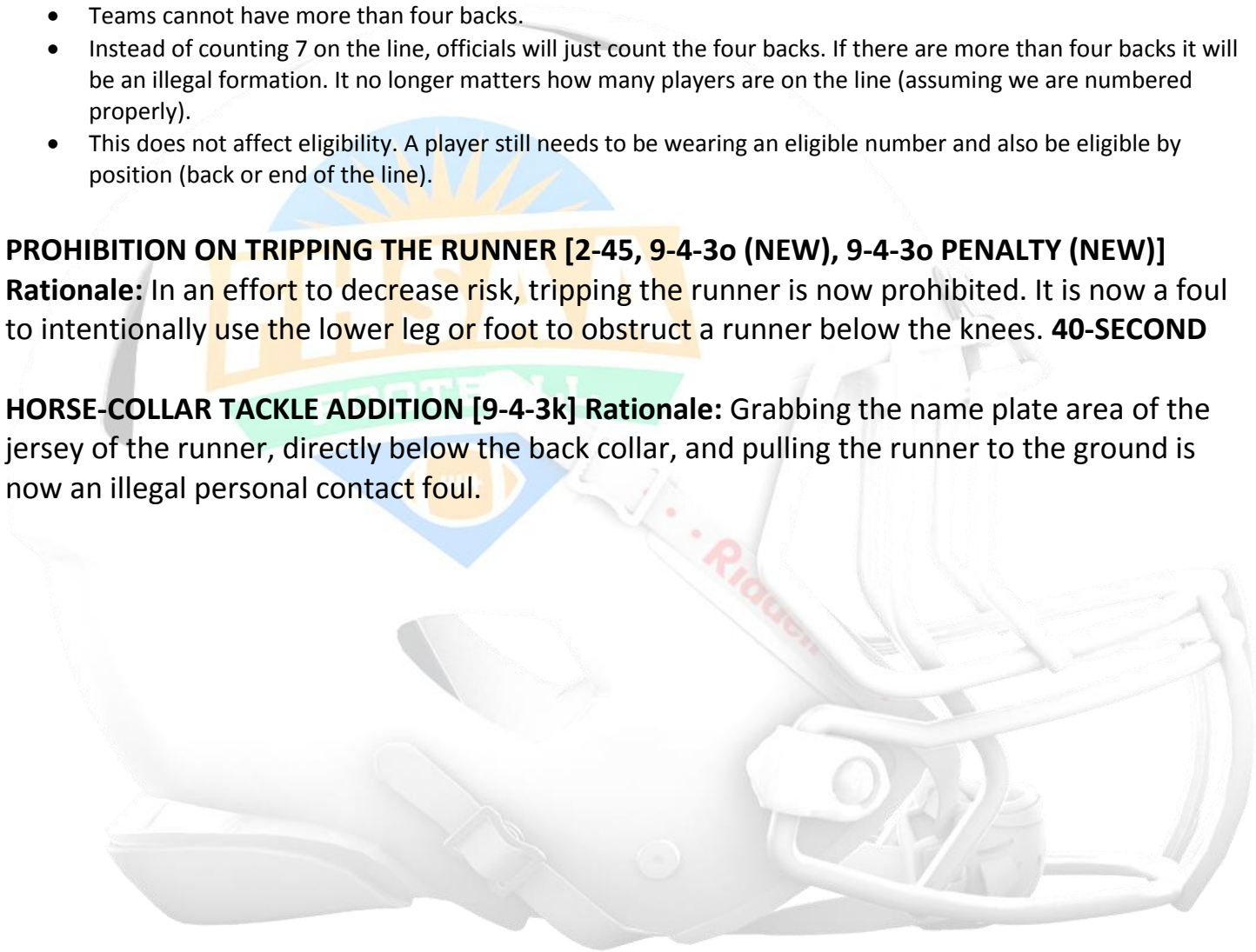
**It will change nothing for the teams assuming we have 11 players.**

- Teams still need the 5 players on the line numbered 50-79 (assuming a regular scrimmage play without the numbering exception).
- Teams cannot have more than four backs.
- Instead of counting 7 on the line, officials will just count the four backs. If there are more than four backs it will be an illegal formation. It no longer matters how many players are on the line (assuming we are numbered properly).
- This does not affect eligibility. A player still needs to be wearing an eligible number and also be eligible by position (back or end of the line).

## **PROHIBITION ON TRIPPING THE RUNNER [2-45, 9-4-3o (NEW), 9-4-3o PENALTY (NEW)]**

**Rationale:** In an effort to decrease risk, tripping the runner is now prohibited. It is now a foul to intentionally use the lower leg or foot to obstruct a runner below the knees. **40-SECOND**

**HORSE-COLLAR TACKLE ADDITION [9-4-3k] Rationale:** Grabbing the name plate area of the jersey of the runner, directly below the back collar, and pulling the runner to the ground is now an illegal personal contact foul.



## **ILLEGAL KICKING AND BATTING PENALTY REDUCED [9-7 PENALTY]**

**Rationale:** The penalty for illegally kicking or batting the ball was reduced from 15 yards to 10 yards.

## **2019 EDITORIAL CHANGES**

2-6-2d, 5-2-2, 5-2-4, 6-5-4, 7-2-5a, 8-5-2 EXCEPTION, 9-3-8 PENALTY, 10-4-2c EXCEPTION, 10-5-1j,

## **2019 POINTS OF EMPHASIS**

1. Proper Procedures for Weather Delays
2. Expanded Neutral Zone as it Applies to Run or Pass Options
3. Free-Blocking Zone and Legal Blocking

