

2009 SRI Bulletin #8

Play Cards:

Play cards WORN ON THE BELT are illegal equipment per Rule 1-5-3 as they have been ruled unsafe. Please note Rule Book page 84, #6 under Wearing Illegal Equipment/Adornments. Play cards worn on the arm are legal.

Basic Spot:

Play: 3rd and 10 from the A-30 yard line. The errant snap is muffed backwards by both A & B as no player is able to gain control of the ball. The ball is rolling around at the A-15 yard line when a B player intentionally kicks the ball into A's end zone where A recovers the ball and is downed. How is the penalty enforced?

Ruling: Look at Rule 10-4-5d. The basic spot is the succeeding spot when the final result of the play is a touchback. The succeeding spot following a touchback is the 20-yard line. The phrase "final result of the play" applies when the ball becomes dead in the end zone after Team A regains possession in their end zone following a new force by their opponent. B's kicking of the ball adds a new force. So, the basic spot is the 20 yard line; B fouls behind the basic spot are enforced from the basic spot; A's ball, 1st and 10 from the A-35.

Extra Down:

If a team is given a fifth down and the mistake is discovered before the ball becomes live for the down after the fifth down, the extra down is canceled and officials go back to what should have been the fourth down play. If not discovered in time, no change can be made.

If canceled, neither team has the option to take the result of a fifth-down play. If there is a score or penalties during an extra down, both are canceled except for flagrant and unsportsmanlike fouls which are penalized as dead-ball fouls. Please review Case Book play 5.1.1 Situation A.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct:

Play: Runner A34 breaks through the defensive secondary and goes 45 yards for a TD. At the 5-yard line, he slows his stride and crosses the goal line at half-speed. No defensive player is within 15 yards of A34 when he scores. The covering official throws a flag for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Ruling: Incorrect call. A34 has not done anything unsportsmanlike; he did not high-step, strut, run backwards or dive into the end zone, or direct any gesture or comment towards an opponent.

Comment: While some might think any alteration of the stride is taunting behavior, in the above play I believe the runner just slowed down because no defensive pressure was being applied to him. I also believe A34 was not attempting to focus attention upon himself. I would, however, remind A34 not to act in an unsportsmanlike manner; that's preventive officiating!