

2012 SRI Bulletin 7

Crowd Noise:

Question: What, if any jurisdiction, do officials have over bands playing while the offense is trying to snap the ball?

Answer: The OSAA has a policy regarding bands, but it only applies to State Championship contests. The schools have pushed back on many occasions when the OSAA has attempted to make every league follow the same policy during the regular season. During the regular season, each league or conference dictates their own policy.

Also, NFHS rules do not specifically address crowd noise. The Referee can ask the home team AD to deal with the band director. In extreme situations, the Referee could consider band noise to be an unfair act by nonplayers under Rule 9-1 and impose whatever penalty he would deem appropriate. Again, however, I think this is for extreme situations.

Face Mask:

Simply touching the face mask is not a foul. The key word in Rule 9-4-3h is "grasp." The rule does not prohibit tackling a runner around the head, or even grabbing the helmet as long as the tackler's hands do not grasp the face mask, chinstrap or any edge of a helmet opening. If a foul is committed, the penalty is 5-yards for incidental grasping, or 15-yards for any twisting, turning or pulling. When in question, go with the 15-yard penalty.

Spiking the Ball:

Question: (From an AD) "Is there a rule for the amount of time needed to be left on the game clock for an offensive team to spike the ball before time expires? Kind of like the basketball rule of 3/10ths seconds or less needed to be a "tap" for a try. The reason I'm asking is because with 1.7 seconds remaining, a QB took the snap & spiked the ball - opposing coaching staff said that with less than 2 seconds remaining it is impossible to snap & spike. Please let me know where to look if it is addressed the NFHS rule book, or if there is some other "rule of thumb."

Answer: There's nothing in the NFHS books that quantifies a time frame for spiking the ball. 1.7 seconds seems pretty quick to snap and spike the ball, but I suppose it's possible. I suspect the real issue was with the timer. Was it the home team that spiked the ball? Maybe the (home team) timer had a slow finger on the switch! And that's the "rule of (the) thumb!"

Test Results:

The third most missed question (43.76%) on this year's rules test was: True or False....After a safety, unless moved by a penalty, R's free-kick line is K's 30-yard line. The correct answer is TRUE. This one's pretty basic. K kicks off from its' own 20-yard line following a safety. Free kick lines are always 10-yards apart, therefore R's free-kick line is K's 30-yard line. Rule 6-1-1b.

The fourth most missed question (43.39%) was: True or False....If the penalty is accepted for any foul which occurred before a change of possession, the kickoff must be repeated. The correct answer is FALSE. Another reading question! The key word is "must." Rule 6-1-7a says the kick is repeated only if acceptance of the penalty requires a replay of the down.

Backwards Pass:

Play: Quarterback is under heavy rush and scrambling with the only possible receiver being a back 4 yards ahead of him that is blocking. As the QB is hit, he gets spun so the desperation pass to this receiver goes backward to the ground. Can the intent of the throw, which was forward, be ruled or does the definition of backward pass govern the ruling? If forward, could intentional grounding be ruled since the eligible receiver was blocking and not looking for pass?

Ruling: Any hit or twist of the passer which might alter the intended direction is immaterial. Whether the pass is forward or backward is determined by the flight of the ball and the direction of the passer's arm on contact. In this play, both the direction of the ball and the passer's arm were moving towards his own goal line. Backwards pass. Rules 2-31-2 and 2-31-5. Case Book play 2.31.2.

In the case of a forward pass, even if the intended receiver is not looking for the ball and the pass is thrown in his general direction, there is no foul for intentional grounding. Rule 7-5-2d.

Holding:

Question: Offensive linemen block their player and if they get them to the ground they lay on the defensive player for the rest of the play, they don't use their hands to hold the opposing player down but shift their weight to keep the opposing player on the ground. Is this holding?

Answer: Yes, it is holding. Look at Rule 2-3-1 which defines blocking as obstructing an opponent by contacting him with ANY part of the body. Rule 2-3-2 prescribes legal blocking techniques. What you describe is not a legal blocking technique and is thus illegal under Rule 9-2-1a.

Although the word "body" is not specifically mentioned, the action you describe might also be construed as "restraining an opponent" and is illegal under Rule 9-2-1c.

Training Videos:

This week's first training video features several plays that deal with personal fouls, pass interference and roughing the kicker. The second video is from the LeMonnier series and talks about free kick situations.