

UNITED FOOTBALL LEAGUE



2011 PLAYING RULES

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COMMISSIONER**

Synopsis of 2011 UFL Rule Changes

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Rule 1 Field

Section 1 Dimensions

Playing Lines

The game shall be played on a rectangular field, 360 feet in length and 160 feet in width. The lines at each end of the field are termed End Lines. Those on each side are termed Sidelines. Goal Lines shall be established in the field 10 yards from and parallel to each end line. The area bounded by goal lines, end lines, and sidelines is known as the Field of Play. The areas bounded by goal lines, end lines, and sidelines are known as the End Zones.

Field of Play

The areas bounded by goal lines and lines parallel to, and 70 feet 9 inches inbounds, from each sideline, are known as the Side Zones. The lines parallel to sidelines are termed Inbound Lines. The end lines and the sidelines are also termed Boundary Lines.

The playing field will be outlined by a solid white border a minimum of 6 feet wide along the end lines and sidelines. An additional broken limit line 6 feet further outside this border is to encompass the playing field in the non-bench areas, and such broken line will be continued at an angle from each 32-yard line and pass behind the bench areas (all benches a minimum 30 feet back from the sidelines). In addition, within each bench area, a yellow line 6 feet behind the solid white border will delineate a special area for coaches, behind which all players, except one player charting the game, must remain. If a club's solid white border is a minimum of 12 feet wide, there is no requirement that the broken restraining line also be added in the non-bench areas. However, the appropriate yellow line described above must be clearly marked within the bench areas.

Section 2 Markings

Line Markings

At intervals of 5 yards, yard lines (3-41-2) parallel to the goal lines shall be marked in the field of play. These lines are to stop 8 inches short of the 6-foot solid border. The 4-inch wide yard lines are to be extended 4 inches beyond the white 6-foot border along the sidelines. Each of these lines shall be intersected at right angles by short lines 70 feet, 9 inches long (23 yards, 1 foot, 9 inches) in from each side to indicate inbounds lines.

Inbound Lines

In line with the Inbound Lines there shall be marks at 1-yard intervals between each distance of 5 yards for the full length of the field. These lines are to begin 8 inches from the 6-foot solid border and are to measure 2 feet in length.

Bottoms of numbers indicating yard lines in multiples of 10 must be placed beginning 12 yards in from each sideline. These are to be 2 yards in length.

Two yards from the middle of each goal line and parallel to it, there shall be marked in the Field of Play, lines 1 yard in length.

All boundary lines, goal lines, and marked lines are to be continuous lines. These, and any other specified markings, must be in white, and there shall be no exceptions without authorization of the League Office. Field numerals must also be white.

Care must be exercised in any end-zone marking or decoration or club identification at the 50-yard line that said marking or decorations do not in any way cause confusion as to delineation of goal lines, sidelines, and end lines. Such markings or decorations must be approved by the League Office.

The four intersections of goal lines and sidelines must be marked, at inside corners, by weighted pylons. In addition, two such pylons shall be placed on each end line (four in all).

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

Goal Line

All measurements are to be made from the inside edges of the line marking the boundary lines. Each goal line marking is to be in its end zone so that the edge of the line toward the field of play (actual goal line) is 30 feet from the inside edge of the end line. Each goal line is to be eight inches wide.

All lines are to be marked with a material that is not injurious to eyes or skin. It is desirable that the yard line markers be flexible in order to prevent injury. No benches or rigid fixtures should be nearer than 10 yards from sidelines.

In stadiums where ground rules are necessary, because of fixed conditions that cannot be changed, they will be made by the League Office. Otherwise they will be made by mutual agreement of the two coaches. If the two coaches cannot agree, the Referee is the final authority after consulting the officiating crew.

Section 3 Goal

Crossbar

In the plane of each end line there shall be a centrally placed horizontal Crossbar 18 feet 6 inches in length, the top face of which is 10 feet above the ground. The goal is the vertical plane extending indefinitely above the crossbar and between the lines indicated by the outer edges of the goal posts.

Goal Posts

All goal posts will be the single-standard type, offset from the end line and bright gold in color. The uprights will extend 30 feet above the crossbar and will be no less than 3 inches and no more than 4 inches in diameter. A colored ribbon 4 inches by 42 inches is to be attached to the top of each post.

Clarification: Goal posts must be padded in a manner prescribed by the league.

Section 4 Players' Benches

Players' Benches

At the option of the home team, both the players' benches may be located on the same side of the field. In such a case, the end of each bench shall start at the 45-yard line and continue towards the adjacent goal line.

Clarification: When both benches are located on the same side of the field, the chain crew and line men are to operate on opposite side of the field from the benches. See 15-4-1.

Section 5 Chain Crew and Ball Boys

Chain Crew and Ball Boys

Members of the chain crew and the ball boys must be uniformly identifiable as specified by the League Office. White shirts are to be worn by members of the chain crew.

Section 6 Sideline Markers

Sideline Markers

The home club must provide and use the standard set of sideline markers that have been approved by the League Office.

Rule 2 Game Ball

Section 1

Ball Dimensions

The Game Ball must be a “Wilson,” hand selected, bearing the signature of the Commissioner of the league, Michael Huyghue. The ball shall be made up of an inflated (12 1/2 to 13 1/2 pounds) urethane bladder enclosed in a pebble grained, leather case without corrugations of any kind. It shall have the form of a spheroid and the size and weight shall be: long axis, 11 to 11 1/4 inches; long circumference, 28 to 28 1/2 inches; short circumference, 21 to 21 1/4 inches; weight, 14 to 15 ounces. The Referee shall be the sole judge as to whether all balls offered for play comply with these specifications.

Section 2

Ball Supply

Each team will make 12 primary balls available for testing by the Referee two hours prior to the starting time of the game to meet League requirements. A pump is to be furnished by the home club. In the event a home team ball does not conform to specifications, or its supply is exhausted, the Referee shall secure a proper ball from the visitors and, failing that, use the best available ball. Any such circumstances must be reported to the League Office. In case of rain or a wet, muddy, or slippery field, a playable ball shall be used at the request of the offensive team’s center. The Game Clock shall not stop for such action (unless undue delay occurs).

Clarification: It is the responsibility of the home team to furnish playable balls at all times by attendants from either side of the playing field.

Rule 3 Definitions

Section 1 Play Situation (P.S.)

Play Situation

A Play Situation (P.S.) is an official decision on a given statement of facts and serves to illustrate the intent, application, or amplification of a rule. Additional Clarifications are often used for the same purpose (3-33).

Technical Terms

Technical Terms are such terms that have a fixed and exact meaning throughout the code. Because of their alphabetical arrangement in Rule 3, certain ones are used prior to being defined. In such cases they are accented only the first time they are used.

Section 2 Ball in Play, Dead Ball

Ball in Play

Article 1 The Ball is in Play (or Live Ball) when it is:

- (a) legally free kicked (6-1-1), or
- (b) legally snapped (8-1-1).

It continues in play until the down ends (3-7-1; 8-4-1).

Dead Ball

Article 2 A Dead Ball is one that is not in play. The time period during which the ball is dead is Between Downs. This includes the interval during all time outs (including intermission) and from the time the ball becomes dead until it is legally put in play.

Loose Ball

Article 3 A Loose Ball is a live ball that is not in player possession, i.e., any kick, pass, or fumble. A loose ball that has not yet struck the ground is In Flight. A loose ball (either during or after flight) is considered in possession of the team (offense) whose player kicked, passed, or fumbled the ball. A Loose Ball ends when a player secures possession or when the down ends if that is before such possession. (For exception, see 6-5-1-Exc. 3).

Fumble

Article 4 A Fumble is any act, other than a pass or kick, which results in loss of player possession. The term Fumble always implies possession. (8-7-3).

Clarification: If a player pretends to fumble and causes the ball to go forward, it is a forward pass and may be considered illegal (8-1-2-Pen. a, c).

P.S. 3.1 While runner A1 is in possession, B1 grabs the ball away from him. Ruling: Fumble.

P.S. 3.2 While runner A1 is in possession, B1 bats or kicks the ball away from him. Ruling: A foul during a fumble. Kicking a ball in player possession is a foul (12-1-9).

Muff

Article 5 A Muff is the touching of a loose ball by a player in an unsuccessful attempt to obtain possession of it.

Clarification:

1. A muff does not change the status of a loose ball.
2. Any ball intentionally muffed forward is a bat and may be a foul. (3-2-5-g; 12-1-8; 9-2-4; 3-15-3-Clarification 1).

Touching the Ball

Touching the Ball refers to any contact. Ordinarily there is no distinction between a player touching the ball with his hands or any part of his body being touched by it except as specifically provided for (6-1-10-Exc., 6-2-4).

Clarification: The result of the touching is sometimes influenced by the intent or the location.

Touching Free Kick

(a) See 6-1-4-c and 6-2-4 for touching a free kick.

Intent or Location of Touching

(b) See 6-1-4-Exc. for touching a free kick before it goes out of bounds between the goal lines.

Ineligible Player Touching a Pass

(c) See 8-1-8 for ineligible offensive player touching a forward pass on, behind, or beyond the line.

Pushed Into a Kick

(d) See 6-2 for touching a scrimmage kick on or behind the line, and also 6-2-4 for -being pushed into a kick by an opponent.

Touching Kick During An Attempted Field Goal

(e) See 11-5-1-b for touching a kick during an attempted field goal.

Simultaneous Touching

(f) Simultaneous touching by two opponents of a fumble, pass, or kick is treated under their respective sections.

Bat or Punch

(g) A Bat or Punch is the intentional striking of the ball with hand, fist, elbow, or forearm. See 12-1-8.

Player Inbounds

Article 6 A player (5-2-2) is inbounds when he first touches both feet or any other part of his body, other than his hands, to the ground within the boundary lines (1-1). See (3-21-1) for a player out of bounds.

Clarification: Unless otherwise stated in the Rules, a player is deemed to be inbounds.

Player Possession

Article 7 A player is in possession when he is in firm grip and control of the ball inbounds (See 3-2-3).

To gain possession of a loose ball (3-2-3) that has been caught, intercepted, or recovered, a player must have complete control of the ball and have both feet, or any other part of his body other than his hands, completely on the ground inbounds and maintain control of the ball long enough to perform any act common to the game. If the player loses the ball while simultaneously touching both feet or any other part of his body on the ground, or if there is any doubt that the acts were simultaneous, there is no possession. This rule applies in the field of play and in the end zone. The terms catch, intercept, recover, advance, and fumble denote player possession, as distinguished from touching or muffing.

Clarification 1: A player who goes to the ground in the process of attempting to secure possession of a loose ball (with or without contact by an opponent) must maintain control of the ball throughout the process of contacting the ground, whether in the field of play or the end zone. If he loses control of the ball, and the ball touches the

ground before he regains control, there is no possession. If he regains control prior to the ball touching the ground, it is a catch, interception, or recovery.

Clarification 2: If a player goes to the ground out-of-bounds (with or without contact by an opponent) in the process of attempting to secure possession of a loose ball at the sideline, he must **maintain** complete and continuous control of the ball throughout the process of contacting the ground, or the pass is incomplete.

Clarification 3: If a player has control of the ball, a slight movement of the ball will not be considered loss of possession. He must lose control of the ball in order to rule that there has been a loss of possession.

Catch

A catch is made when a player inbounds secures possession of a pass, kick, or fumble in flight (8-1-3).

Clarification 1: It is a catch if in the process of attempting to catch the ball, a player secures control of the ball prior to the ball touching the ground and that control is maintained after the ball has touched the ground.

Clarification 2: In the field of play, if a catch of a forward pass has been completed, and there is contact by a defender causing the ball to come loose before the runner is down by contact, it is a fumble, and the ball remains alive. In the end zone, the same action is a touchdown, since the receiver completed the catch beyond the goal line prior to the loss of possession, and the ball is dead when the catch is completed.

Interception

An interception is made when a pass (forward or backward) is caught by an opponent of the passer.

Recover

The term recover indicates securing possession of a loose ball by either the offense or defense after it has touched the ground.

Clarification 1: If there is any question by the covering official(s) as to whether a forward pass is complete, intercepted, or incomplete, it always will be ruled incomplete.

Clarification 2: Recovery does not imply advance, unless so stated.

Clarification 3: If a player would have caught, intercepted, or recovered a ball inbounds but is carried out of bounds, player possession will be granted (8-1-3-Item 6).

Section 3 Blocking

Legal Block

Blocking is the act of obstructing or impeding an opponent by contacting him with any part of the blocker's body.

A block in the back is a block delivered from behind an opponent and above his waist. It is not a block in the back if the opponent turns away from the blocker before the contact occurs or if both of the blocker's hands are on the opponent's side.

A block below the waist occurs when a blocker makes initial contact with any part of his body below the waist of an opponent, other than the runner, who has one or both feet on the ground. A blocker who makes contact above the waist and slides below the waist has not blocked below the waist.

Clarification: If an opponent uses his hands to ward off a block, and the blocker contacts the opponent below the waist, it is not a block below the waist unless the blocker is obviously intending to deliver a low block.

Section 4 Chucking

Chucking

Chucking occurs when a defender wards off an eligible receiver who is in front of him by quickly extending his arm(s) and returning it to a flexed position, or maintains continuous contact with the receiver. The defender may not contact the receiver when he has moved beyond the point that is even with the defender. Chucking is permissible only within five yards of the line of scrimmage.

Section 5 Clipping

Clipping

Clipping is throwing the body across the back of the leg of an eligible receiver or charging or falling into the back of an opponent below the waist after approaching him from behind, provided the opponent is not a runner.

Clarification: See 12-2-9 for additional interpretations or restrictions concerning clipping in close line play.

P.S. 3.3. Runner A1 advances 10 yards and is hit from behind by B1, who throws his body across the back of A1's leg. Ruling: Legal, because A1 was a runner; had he not been, it would be a clip.

Section 6 Disqualified Player

Disqualified Player

A Disqualified Player is one who is banished from further participation in the game and must return to his team's dressing room immediately for any of the following:

- (a) flagrant striking, kneeing, or kicking an opponent (12-2-1);
- (b) flagrant roughing of a kicker, passer, or any other opponent (12-2-6 and 12-2-13);
- (c) a palpably unfair act (12-3-3);
- (d) flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct by players or non-players (Rule 13); or
- (e) repeat violation of a suspended player rule (5-4-Pen. c).

Clarification: Disqualified players are not to reappear in their team's uniform nor are they allowed access to any area other than to which spectators have.

Section 7 Down

Down

Article 1 A Down is a period of action that starts when the ball is put in play (3-2-1) and ends when ball is next dead (8-2-1).

Scrimmage Down

A down that starts with a snap is known as a Scrimmage Down (3-29).

Fair Catch Kick Down

A down that starts with a fair catch kick is known as a fair catch kick down (10-2-4; 11-4-3).

Free Kick Down

A down that starts with a free kick is known as a Free Kick Down (6-1-1).

Series of Downs

Article 2 A Series of Downs is the four consecutive charged scrimmage downs allotted to the offensive team during which it must advance the ball to a yard line called the necessary line in order to retain possession (8-1-1).

Necessary Line

The Necessary Line is always 10 yards in advance of the spot of the snap (which starts the series) except when a goal line is less than 10 yards from this spot. In that case the necessary line is the goal line.

Charged Down

When the offensive team has been in possession constantly during a scrimmage down, the down is counted as one of a series except as provided for a foul (14-8), and is known as a Charged Down.

First Down

The initial down in each series is known as the First Down, and if it is a charged down, subsequent charged downs are numbered consecutively until a new series is declared for either team (10-1-1).

Section 8 Drop Kick**Drop Kick**

A Drop Kick is a kick by a kicker who drops the ball and kicks it as, or immediately after it touches the ground.

Section 9 Fair Catch**Fair Catch**

A Fair Catch is an unhindered catch of a free or scrimmage kick (3-18-3) that has crossed the line of scrimmage by a receiver who has legally signaled his intent to make such a catch (7-2-2-Item 1).

Mark of the Catch**Article 1**

The Mark of the Catch is the spot where the ball is caught by a receiver who made a valid or invalid fair catch signal (7-2-2), or where the ball is located after a penalty for fair catch interference (7-1-1-Pen. b) or for running into the maker of a fair catch (10-2-3-c).

Clarification: For fair catch kick, see 10-2-4-a and 11-4-3.

Section 10 Field Goal**Field Goal**

A Field Goal is made by kicking the ball from the field of play through the plane of the opponents' goal by a drop kick or a placekick either:

- (a) From behind the line on a play from scrimmage; or
- (b) During a fair catch kick. See 11-4-3; 3-9 and 10-2-4-a.

Section 11 Foul and Spots of Enforcement

Foul

Article 1 A Foul is any infraction of a playing rule. The Spot of Enforcement (Basic Spot) is the spot from which a penalty will be enforced. Four such spots are commonly used (14-1):

Spots of Enforcement

- (a) Spot of Foul – where a foul was committed or is, by rule, deemed to have been committed.
- (b) Previous spot – where the ball was last put in play.
- (c) Spot of backward pass or fumble – where a backward pass was made or a fumble occurred.
- (d) Succeeding spot – where the ball would next have been put in play if no penalty had been enforced.

Clarification: After a penalty enforcement, the ball is next put in play at the nearest inbounds line if the penalty enforcement would leave the ball outside the inbounds line.

Enforcement After Touchdown

Exception: If a foul occurs after a touchdown and before the ready for play signal for a Try, the succeeding spot is the spot of the next kickoff.

Clarification: A penalty is never enforced from the spot of a legal kick from scrimmage (6-5-1).

An enforcement includes a declination (14-6). See 14-1-5 for definition of basic spot and 3 and 1 rule.

Dead Ball Foul

Article 2 Types of Fouls

(a) A Dead Ball Foul (or a subsequent foul) is a personal foul (12-2) or unsportsmanlike foul (12-3) that occurs after a down ends and before the next snap or free kick (14-5). See 14-1-7 to 10.

Clarification: A dead ball foul is always enforced from the succeeding spot.

Multiple Foul

(b) A Multiple Foul is two or more fouls by the same team during a down (14-4).

Double Foul

(c) A Double Foul is one or more fouls by each team during a down.

P.S. 3.4. A 1-10 A30. Runner A1 runs out of bounds on the A38, after which A2 clips B1 on the A35. Ruling: A 2-17 A23. The personal foul occurred after the down ended. Enforce the penalty from the succeeding spot and the down counts.

P.S. 3.5. B1 holds eligible receiver A1 on the line of scrimmage. B2 was offside. Ruling: Multiple foul. Team A can enforce either penalty, but not both.

P.S. 3.6. A56 is offside. B1 commits pass interference. The pass is complete, incomplete, or intercepted. Ruling: Double foul. The penalties offset by rule. Replay the down.

P.S. 3.7 The offensive team clips after Runner A1 scored. Ruling: A foul between downs because the down ended when the score was made. Penalize on subsequent kickoff. See 14-1-7 and 14-5.

P.S. 3.8. A 1-10 A30. A1 runs out of bounds at the A38. Team A committed an illegal shift. After the play ended, A22 knocked B54 down. Ruling: This is considered a multiple foul even though one foul occurred before the snap and the other occurred after the play ended. B can enforce the penalty for the illegal shift (A 1-15 A25) or for the personal foul (enforced from the succeeding spot) (A 2-17 A23), but not both.

P.S. 3.9. A 1-10 A30. A1 runs out of bounds at the A38. A22 held B54 in the backfield. B25 knocked A1 down after he was out of bounds. Ruling: This is considered a double foul even though the Team A foul occurred during the live ball action and the Team B foul occurred after the play was over.

Section 12 Free Kick

Free Kick

Article 1 A Free Kick is one that puts the ball in play to start a free kick down (3-2-1, 6-1-1): It includes a kickoff and a safety kick (6-1-1-b):

Free Kick Lines

Article 2 The Free Kick Line for the kicking team is a yard line through the most forward point from which the ball is to be kicked (6-2-1-a).

The Free Kick Line for the receiving team is a yard line 10 yards in advance of the kicking team's free kick line (6-1-2-b).

Section 13 Handing the Ball

Article 1 Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one teammate to another without passing or kicking it.

(a) Except where permitted by rule, handing the ball forward to a teammate is illegal.

(b) Loss of player possession by unsuccessful execution of attempted handling is a fumble charged to the player that last had possession. A muffed handoff (legal or illegal) is a fumble, and the ball remains alive.

(c) A forward handoff occurs when the ball is handed (regardless of the direction of the movement of the ball) to a player who is in advance of the player who hands the ball off.

Section 14 Huddle

Huddle

A Huddle is the action of two or more players of the offensive team who, instead of assuming their normal position for the snap, form a group for getting the signal for the next play or for any other reason (8-2-5).

Section 15 In Touch and Impetus

In Touch

Article 1 A Ball is In Touch if:

(a) after it has come from the field of play, it is touched or possessed by a player who is standing on or behind the goal line or has not re-established himself in the field of play.

(b) while it is loose, it touches anything on or behind a goal line.

Clarification 1: A ball in the end zone which is carried towards the field of play is still in touch. It is a safety or touchback if any part of the ball is on, above, or behind the goal line (plane) when dead. In such a case, the ball must be entirely in the field of play in order not to be in touch.”

Clarification 2: A ball in the end zone which is carried toward the field of play is still in touch. It is a safety or touchback if any part of the ball is on or above or behind the goal line (plane) when dead. In such a case, the ball must be entirely in the field of play in order not to be in touch.

Ball Dead in Touch

Article 2 A Ball Dead in Touch is one dead on or behind a goal line and it is either a touchdown, a safety, or touchback, a field goal, or termination of a Try (11-3).

Clarification 1: Sometimes a safety, touchdown, or Try (unsuccessful) is awarded because of a foul. In such cases they are penalties. Also Clarification exceptions 8-4-2-Exc. 3, and 8-4-2-A.C.

Clarification 2: Momentum is an exception to dead in touch. See 11-5-1-Exc. 2

Impetus

Article 3 Impetus is the action of a player who gives momentum to the ball and sends it in touch. The impetus is attributed to the offense except when the defense sends the ball in touch by a new momentum by muffing a ball which is at or nearly at rest; illegally batting a kick, fumble, or backward pass which has struck the ground; or illegally kicking any ball (12-1-9).

Clarification 1: If a **passive** player is pushed or blocked into any kick or into a backward pass after it has struck the ground, and if such pushing or blocking is the primary factor that sends such a loose ball in touch, the impetus is by the pusher or blocker, and the pushed (blocked) player will not be considered to have touched the ball. See 6-2-4.

Clarification 2: Momentum is not applicable (11-5-1-Exc. 2)

Kicker

Section 16 Kicker

A Kicker is the player of the offensive team who legally punts, placekicks, or dropkicks the ball. The offensive team is known as the Kickers during a kick.

A Receiver is any defensive player during a kick. The defensive team is known as the Receivers during a kick.

Kickoff

Section 17 Kickoff

A Kickoff is a free kick used to put the ball in play:

- (a) At start of the first and third periods;
- (b) After each Try;
- (c) After a successful field goal (10-1-1-a); and
- (d) At the start of overtime.

Onside Kick

If a kicker obviously attempts to kick a ball short and the ball never goes 20-yards, it is declined as an onside kick (this also applies to a safety kick).

Scrimmage Line

Section 18 Line of Scrimmage

Article 1 The Line of Scrimmage is the yard line (plane) passing through the forward point of the ball after it has been made ready for play. The term scrimmage line, or line, implies a play from scrimmage.

Player on Line

Article 2 A Player of Team A is on his line:

- (a) when his shoulders face Team B's goal line, and
- (b) if he is the snapper, no part of his body is beyond the line at the snap,
- (c) if he is a non-snapper, his helmet must break the vertical plane that would pass through the belt line of the snapper.

Clarification: Interlocking legs are permissible.

P.S. 3.10 A1 assumes a three-point stance with his shoulders facing B's goal line. One hand is on the ground and it is on or not more than one foot behind his line. Neither of his feet nor the other hand is within one foot of his line. A1's helmet is even with the belt line of the center. **Ruling:** A1 is legally on his line.

Ball Crosses Line

Article 3 The ball has crossed the scrimmage line (crosses line) when, during a play from scrimmage, it has been run, fumbled, passed, or legally kicked by a Team A player, through the plane of the line and has then touched the ground or any one beyond the line.

Section 19 Neutral Zone, Start of Neutral Zone, and Encroaching

Neutral Zone

The Neutral Zone is the space between the forward and backward points of the ball (planes). It starts when the ball is ready for play. (See neutral zone infraction, 7-4-4)

Encroaching

A player is Encroaching (8-4-3) on the neutral zone when any part of his body is in it and contact occurs prior to the snap. The official must blow his whistle immediately.

Clarification: The Back Judge is responsible for the 40/25-second count with the start of the neutral zone (4-6-1 and 4-7-2).

Section 20 Offside

Offside

A player is Offside when any part of his body is in the neutral zone, or is beyond the free kick line, or fair catch kick line, when the ball is put in play.

Exceptions:

- (a) The snapper may be in the neutral zone, provided he is not beyond the line (3-18-2).
- (b) The holder of a placekick for a free kick may be beyond the free kick line (10-1-3-b-1).
- (c) The holder of a fair catch kick may be beyond the fair catch kick line (11-4-3).
- (d) The kicker may be beyond the line, but his kicking foot may not be (10-1-3-b-2).

Section 21 Out of Bounds and Inbounds Spot

Player or Official Out of Bounds

Article 1 A player or an Official is Out of Bounds when he touches:

- (a) A boundary line; or
- (b) Anything other than a player, an official, or a pylon on or outside a boundary line.

Ball Out of Bounds

Article 2 The Ball is Out of Bounds when:

- (a) the runner is out of bounds;
- (b) while in player possession, it touches a boundary line or anything other than a player or an official on or outside such line; or
- (c) a loose ball touches a boundary line or anything on or outside such line.

Inbounds Spot

Article 3 The Inbounds Spot is a spot 70 feet 9 inches in from the sideline on the yard line passing through the spot where the ball or a runner is out of bounds between the goal lines. Under certain conditions, the ball is dead in a side zone or has been placed there as the result of a penalty. See 8-5-1 and 8-6-2.

Clarification: Ordinarily the out-of-bounds spot is the spot where the ball crossed a sideline. However, if a ball, while still within a boundary line, is declared out of bounds because of touching anything that is out of bounds, the out-of-bounds spot is on the yard line through the spot of the ball at the instant of such touching.

P.S. 3.11 Runner A1, with his feet inbounds, touches an official who is touching a sideline.

Ruling: Inbounds.

P.S. 3.12 Runner A1, touches the defensive team's pylon with any part of his body. **Ruling: Not out of bounds. The runner is not out of bounds until he touches anything other than a player, an official, or a pylon on or outside the boundary line. Position of the ball is determined by its position when the runner touches out of bounds.**

P.S. 3.13 Runner A1 fumbles backwards, and the loose ball touches B1 who is standing on sideline, and then rebounds into the field of play where B1 falls on it. **Ruling: Dead ball and out of bounds as soon as the loose ball touches the player on sideline. Offensive team's ball at inbounds spot. Start game clock on ready for play signal.**

P.S. 3.14 Runner A1 touches the defensive team's pylon with any part of his body. **Ruling: The runner is not out of bounds until he touches anything other than a player, an official, or a pylon on or outside the boundary. Position of the ball is determined by its position when the runner touches out of bounds.**

Section 22 Pass and Passer

Pass and Passer

Article 1 A Pass is the movement of the ball caused by a runner who throws, shoves (Shovel pass), or pushes (push pass) the ball (3-28-1).

Clarification: The term is also used to designate the action of a player who causes a pass as in, "He will pass the ball."

Forward Pass

Article 2 It is a Forward Pass if:

- (a) the ball initially moves forward (to a point nearer the opponent's goal line) after leaving the passer's hands; or
- (b) the ball first strikes the ground, a player, an official, or anything else at a point that is nearer the opponent's goal line than the point at which the ball leaves the passer's hand.

Clarification 1: When a Team A player is holding the ball to pass it forward, any intentional movement forward of his hand starts a forward pass. If a Team B player contacts the passer or the ball after forward movement begins, and the ball leaves the passer's hand, a forward pass is ruled, regardless of where the ball strikes the ground or a player.

Clarification 2: When a Team A player is holding the ball to pass it forward, any intentional forward movement of his hand starts a forward pass. It is a fumble if the player loses possession of the ball as he is attempting to tuck it back toward his body.

Clarification 3: If the player loses possession of the ball while attempting to re-cock his arm, it is a fumble.

Clarification 4: A fumble or muff going forward is disregarded as to its direction, unless the act is ruled intentional. In such cases, the fumble is a forward pass (8-1-1) and the muff is a bat (12-1-8).

P.S. 3.15 A pass legally handed forward to an eligible pass receiver is followed by a forward pass in flight from behind the line. **Ruling:** A legal pass because the first handoff is not considered a forward pass.

P.S. 3.16 A pass is legally handed forward to an eligible pass receiver, who muffs the ball and it is recovered by the defensive team. **Ruling:** Not an incomplete pass. It is treated as a fumble and the defensive team keeps the ball.

Passer, Passing Team

Article 3 A player who makes a legal forward pass is known as the Passer until the pass ends. The teammates of any player who passes forward (legally or illegally) are known collectively as the Passing Team or Passers.

Backward Pass

Article 4 A Backward Pass (8-4-1) is any pass that is not a forward pass.

Forward, Beyond, in Advance of

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

- (1) Forward, Beyond, or In Advance Of are terms that designate a point nearer the goal line of the defense unless the defense is specifically named. Converse terms are Backward or Behind.
- (2) A pass parallel to a yard line or an offensive player moving parallel to it at the snap is considered backward.
- (3) If a pass is batted, muffed, punched, or kicked in any direction, it does not change its original designation. However, such an act may change the impetus (3-14-3) if sent in touch or may be a foul (12-1-8, 12-1-9).

P.S. 3.17 The ball, moving backwards in the hands of A1, is possessed by A2 who is in advance of A1. **Ruling:** Illegal forward handing unless A2 is behind his line and is eligible to receive a forward pass.

P.S. 3.18 The ball moving forward in the hands of A1, is possessed by A2 who is behind A1. **Ruling:** A backward pass.

Section 23 Placekick

Placekick

A Placekick is a kick made by a kicker while the ball is in a fixed position on the ground except as provided for a permissible manufactured tee at kickoff (6-1-1-Clarification). The ball may be held in position by a teammate. See 11-5-4.

Section 24 Pocket Area

Pocket Area

The Pocket Area applies from the normal tackle position on each side of the center and extends backwards to the offensive team's own end line.

Section 25 Post-Possession Foul

Post-Possession Foul

If Team A legally kicks the ball from scrimmage and the receivers foul after the ball has been kicked but before gaining possession, the foul is treated as if it had occurred after the physical change of possession. For a foul to be post-possession, the ball must cross the line of scrimmage and the receivers must retain possession of the ball. See 6-5-1-Exc. 3.

Section 26 Punt

Punt

A Punt is a kick made by a kicker who drops the ball and kicks it while it is in flight (6-1-1).

Section 27 Runner and Running Play

Runner

Article 1 The Runner is the offensive player who is in possession of a live ball (3-2-1), i.e., holding the ball or carrying it in any direction.

Running Play

Article 2 A Running Play is a play during which there is a runner and which is not followed by a kick or forward pass from behind the scrimmage line. There may be more than one such play during the same down (14-1-12).

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

- (1) The exception to a running play is significant only when a foul occurs while there is a runner prior to a kick or pass from behind the line (8-6-1, 6-5-1, and 14-1-12).
- (2) The statement, a player may advance, means that he may become a runner, make a legal kick (6-1-1), make a backward pass (8-7-1), or during a play from scrimmage, an offensive player may throw a forward pass (8-1-1) from behind his scrimmage line, provided it is the first such pass during the down and the ball had not been beyond the line of scrimmage previously.

P.S. 3.19 Receiving team player B1 catches a kickoff, advances, and fumbles. Kicking team player A2 recovers and advances. **Ruling: While runners B1 and A2 were in possession, there were two running plays during the same down.**

Section 28 Safety

Safety

A safety occurs when the ball is dead on or behind a team's own goal line, provided the impetus (3-15-3) came from a player of that team and it is not a touchdown (11-2).

Momentum

Clarification: It is not a safety if a defensive player in the field of play intercepts a pass or catches or recovers a fumble, backward pass, scrimmage kick, free kick, or fair catch kick and his original momentum carries him into his end zone where the ball is declared dead in his team's possession. Instead the ball belongs to the defensive team at the spot where the ball was intercepted, caught or recovered. (11-5-1, Exc. 2)

Section 29 Scrimmage, Play From Scrimmage

Scrimmage Down

A Scrimmage Down is one that starts with a snap (3-31). From Scrimmage refers to any action from the start of the snap until the down ends or if Team A loses possession and Team B secures possession. Any subsequent action during the down, after a change of team possession, is Not from Scrimmage.

Scrimmage Line

Clarifications: The term scrimmage line, or line, implies a play by Team A from scrimmage. Line is used exclusively for brevity and is not to be confused with side, end, or yard line. Line is also used for free kick line or fair catch kick line. For given reasons, action during a free kick down (10-1), or fair catch kick down, is sometimes referred to as a play not from scrimmage.

Section 30 Shift

Shift

A Shift is the action of two or more offensive players who (prior to a snap), after having assumed a set position, simultaneously change the position of their feet by pivoting to or assuming a new set position with either one foot or both feet (8-4-8).

Section 31 Snap and the Snapper

Snap and the Snapper

A Snap is a backward pass that puts the ball in play to start a scrimmage down. The Snapper is the offensive player who attempts a snap. See 8-6-3, for conditions pertaining to a legal snap.

Section 32 Additional Clarifications (A.C.)

Additional Clarifications

Additional Clarifications (A.C.) are descriptive paragraphs used to amplify a given rule, which would otherwise be too cumbersome in its scope or wording. A Play Situation (P.S.) is often used for the same purpose (3-1).

Clarifications are usually more specific and apply to a particular situation. They are also used to indicate pertinent references to other rules.

Section 33 Suspended Player

Suspended Player

A Suspended Player is one who must be withdrawn, for at least one down, for correction of illegal equipment (5-4).

Section 34 Tackling

Tackling

Tackling is the use of hands, or arms, or shoulders by a defensive player in his attempt to hold a runner or bring him to the ground (12-1-6).

Section 35 Team A and B, Offense and Defense

Offense and Defense

Article 1 Whenever a team is in possession (3-2-7), it is the Offense and its opponent is the Defense.

Team A and Team B

Article 2 The team that puts the ball in play is Team A, and its opponent is Team B. For brevity, a player of Team A is referred to as A1 and his teammates as A2, A3, etc. Opponents are B1, B2, etc.

Clarification: A team becomes Team A when it has been designated to put ball in play, and it remains Team A until a down ends, even though there might be one or more changes of possession during the down. This is in contrast with the terms Offense and Defense. Team A is always the offense when a down starts, but becomes the defense if and when B secures possession during the down, and vice versa for each change of possession.

Change of Possession

Article 3 A Change of Possession occurs when a player of the defensive team secures possession of a ball that has been kicked, passed or fumbled by a player of the offensive team, or when the ball is awarded to the opposing team by rule. A change of possession includes but is not limited to:

- a) An interception of a forward pass; or
- b) A catch or recovery of a fumble or backward pass; or
- c) A catch or recovery of a scrimmage kick, free kick or fair catch kick
- d) When the offensive team fails to reach the line to gain on fourth down
- e) When the offensive team misses a field-goal attempt.

Section 36 Time Out or Time In

Time Out

Article 1 A Time Out is an interval during which the Game Clock is stopped (4-4) and includes the intermissions (4-1-2 and 3).

Clarification: The term Time Out (general) is not to be confused with a charged team time out, which is specific. (4-5-1).

Time In

Article 2 Time In is the converse (4-3) and is also used to indicate when the clock -operator is to start the game clock.

Touchback

Section 37 Touchback

A Touchback is the situation in which a ball is dead on or behind a team's own goal line, provided the impetus came from an opponent and it is not a touchdown (11-6).

Touchdown

Section 38 Touchdown

A Touchdown is the situation in which any part of the ball, legally in possession of a player inbounds, is on, above, or behind the opponent's goal line (plane), provided it is not a touchback (11-2).

Tripping

Section 39 Tripping

Tripping is the use of the leg or foot in obstructing any opponent (including a runner) (12-1-5-c).

Try

Section 40 Try

A Try is an opportunity given the team that has just scored a touchdown to score one or two additional points during one scrimmage down (11-3).

Section 41 Yard Line, Own Goal

Own Goal

Article 1 A team's Own Goal during any given period is the one it is guarding. The adjacent goal line is known as its (own) goal line.

Yard Line

Article 2 A Yard Line is any line and its vertical plane parallel to the end line. The Yard Lines (marked or unmarked) in the field of play are named by number in yards from a team's goal line to the center of the field.

Clarification: The yard line 19 yards from team A's goal line is called A's 19-yard line. The yard line 51 yards from A's goal line is called B's 49-yard line. (For brevity, these are referred to as A's 19 and B's 49.)

Rule 4 Game Timing

Section 1 Periods, Intermissions, Halftime

Length of Game

Article 1 The length of the game is 60 minutes, divided into four periods of 15 minutes each. In the event the score is tied at the end of four periods, the game is extended by an overtime period(s) as prescribed in Rule 16.

Intermissions

Article 2 There will be intervals of at least two minutes between the first and second periods (first half) and between the third and fourth periods (second half). During these intermissions all playing rules continue in force, and no representative of either team shall enter the field unless he is an incoming substitute, or a team attendant or trainer, entering to see to the welfare of a player.

Penalty: For illegally entering the field: Loss of 15 yards from the succeeding spot (13-1-6-Pen.).

The Back Judge times the two-minute intermissions and shall sound his/her whistle (and signal visibly) after one minute and 50 seconds. The Referee shall sound his/her whistle immediately thereafter for play to start and for the play clock operator to start the 25-second clock. See 4-6-2.

Halftime

Article 3 Between the second and third periods, there shall be an intermission of 12 minutes, plus any prescribed delay times established by the League office for teams to return to their locker rooms. During this intermission, play is suspended, and teams may leave the field. The Back Judge will time halftime. See 13-1-1 for fouls by non-players between halves.

Official Time

Article 4 The stadium electric clock shall be the official time. The game clock operator shall start and stop the clock upon the signal of any official in accordance with the rules. The Line Judge (15-5-2) shall supervise timing of the game, and in case the stadium clock becomes inoperative, or if it is not being operated correctly, he or she shall take over official timing on the field.

Clarification: Game officials can correct the game clock only before the next legal snap or kick, including an untimed down or try.

Section 2 Starting a Period or Half

Kickoff on Schedule

Article 1 Both teams must be on the field to kick off at the scheduled time for the start of each half. Prior to the start of the game, both teams are required to appear on the field at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled kickoff in order to ensure sufficient time for proper warm-up. Designated members of the officiating crew must notify both head coaches personally of the scheduled time for kickoff prior to the start of each half.

Penalties:

- (a) **For delaying the start of a half: Loss of 15 yards from the spot of the kickoff as determined by 6-1-2-a.**

- (b) For failure to appear on the field at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled kickoff: Loss of the coin-toss option for both halves and overtime, and loss of 15 yards from the spot of the kickoff.**

Toss of Coin

Article 2 Not more than three minutes before the kickoff of the first half, the Referee, in the presence of both team's captains (limit of six per team, all of whom must be uniformed members of the Active List) shall toss a coin at the center of the field. Prior to the Referee's toss, the call of "heads" or "tails" must be made by the captain of the visiting team, or by the captain designated by the Referee if there is no home team. Unless the winner of the toss defers his choice to the second half, he must choose one of two privileges, and the loser is given the other. The two privileges are:

- (a) The opportunity to receive the kickoff, or to kick off; or
- (b) The choice of goal his team will defend.

Penalty: For failure to comply: Loss of coin-toss option for both halves and overtime, and loss of 15 yards from the spot of the kickoff for the first half -only.

For the second half, the captain who lost the pregame toss is to have the first choice of the two privileges listed in (a) or (b), unless one of the teams lost its first and second half options pursuant to 4-2-1, or unless the winner of the pregame toss deferred his choice to the second half, in which case he must choose (a) or (b) above. Immediately prior to the start of the second half, the captains of both teams must inform the Referee of their respective choices. A captain's first choice from any alternative privileges listed above is final and not subject to change.

Change of Goals

Article 3 At the end of the first and third periods, the teams must change goals. Team possession, the number of the succeeding down, the relative position of the ball on the field of play, and the line to gain remain the same.

Section 3 Starting the Game Clock

Free Kick Down

Article 1 The game clock operator shall start the game clock (time in) after a free kick when the ball is legally touched in the field of play. The game clock shall not start if:

- (a) the receiving team recovers the ball in the end zone and does not carry the ball into the field of play;
- (b) the kicking team recovers the ball in the field of play; or
- (c) the receiving team signals for and makes a fair catch.

P.S. 4.1 a) With three seconds remaining in the second quarter, A1 attempts an onside kick from the A30. The kick is caught or recovered legally at the A41: a) by A2, b) by B1 who signals for and completes a fair catch, c) by B1 on his feet and he immediately goes to the ground, or d) by B1 on the ground and he makes no effort to get up or advance.

Rulings:

- a) A's ball, first-and-10 on A41. Three seconds on the clock. (No time runs off the clock).
- b) B's ball, first-and-10 on A41. Three seconds on the clock. (No time runs off the clock).

c) B's ball, first-and-10 on A41. Two seconds on the clock. (One second runs off the clock)

d) B's ball, first-and-10 on A41. Two seconds on the clock. (One second runs off the clock)

P.S. 4.1 b) During the last two minutes of the game the offensive team safety kicks from the A20. **Ruling: Time in starts when the safety kick is legally touched by any player in the field of play.**

Clarification: No extension of the automatic timeouts in this section shall be allowed unless any player requests a team timeout, or the Referee orders a team timeout or suspends play.

Scrimmage Down

Article 2 Following any time out (3-36), the game clock shall be started on a scrimmage down when the ball is next snapped, except in the following situations:

- (a) Whenever a runner goes out of bounds on a play from scrimmage, the game clock is started when an official spots the ball at the inbounds spot, and the Referee gives the signal to start the game clock, except that the clock will start on the snap:
- (1) after a change of possession;
 - (2) after the two-minute warning of the first half; or
 - (3) inside the last five minutes of the second half.

P.S. 4.2 With three minutes remaining in the 1st Qtr., Back A2 takes a handoff and runs out of bounds at the A27. **Ruling: Stop game clock. Time in on Referee's signal.**

P.S. 4.3 B7 intercepts a forward pass and runs out of bounds at the A14. **Ruling: Stop game clock. Time in on snap.**

- (b) If the player who originally takes the snap is tackled behind the line of scrimmage prior to the two-minute warning, the game clock starts when the Referee signals that the ball is ready for play. (The play clock starts at 40 seconds immediately after the tackle.)
- (c) If there is an injury timeout prior to the two-minute warning, the game clock is started as if the injury timeout had not occurred.
- (d) If there is an excess team timeout after the two-minute warning, the game clock is started as if the excess timeout had not occurred.
- (e) If there is a Referee's timeout, the game clock is started as if the Referee's timeout had not occurred.
- (f) If the game clock is stopped after a down in which there was a foul by either team, following enforcement or declination of a penalty, the game clock will start as if the foul had not occurred, except that the clock will start on the snap:

- (1) if the foul occurs after the two-minute warning of the first half;
- (2) if the foul occurs inside the last five minutes of the second half; or
- (3) if a specific rule prescribes otherwise.

P.S. 4.4 Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 goes to the A40 where he is tackled. During A1's run, A2 clipped B1 at the A35. **Ruling: A's ball second-and-20 on A20. Game Clock starts on ready-to-play signal after penalty is enforced except inside the last two minutes of the first half or the last five minutes of the second half.**

P.S. 4.5 Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 goes to the A40 and steps out of bounds there. During A1's run, A2 clipped B1 at the A35. **Ruling: A's ball second-and-20 on A20.**

Game clock starts with Referee's ready signal as ball was dead when runner ran out of bounds, except inside the last two minutes of first half or inside last five minutes of the second half.

- (g) If a fumble (forward or backward) or backward pass by any player goes out of bounds, the game clock starts when an official places the ball at the inbounds line, and the Referee signals that the ball is ready for play. This is true throughout the game.
- (h) When there is a 10-second runoff, the game clock starts when the Referee signals that the ball is ready for play.
- (i) During the Try, which is an untimed down.
- (j) When a specific rule prescribes otherwise.

Fair Catch Kick Down

Article 3 The game clock operator shall start the game clock for a fair-catch kick down when the ball is kicked.

Section 4 Stopping the Game Clock

The game clock operator shall stop the game clock (timeout) upon a signal by any official or upon his own positive knowledge:

- (a) at the end of a down in which there is a free kick or fair-catch kick;
- (b) when the kicking team recovers a scrimmage kick that has been touched by the receiving team beyond the line of scrimmage;
- (c) when the ball is out of bounds;
- (d) when the ball is dead on or behind a goal line;
- (e) at the end of a down during which a foul occurs;
- (f) when a forward pass is incomplete;
- (g) when the player who originally takes the snap is tackled behind the line of scrimmage, (except after the two-minute warning in either half);

P.S. 4.6 Quarterback A1 drops back to pass and is tackled behind the line. Ruling: Except after the two-minute warning in either half, stop the game clock until the ball can be re-spotted at the succeeding spot. (40-second play clock starts when the timeout or dead ball signal is given).

- (h) at the time of a foul for which the ball remains dead or is dead immediately;
- (i) when the Referee signals the two-minute warning for a half;
- (j) when a down is completed during which or after there is a change of possession; or
- (k) when any official signals a timeout for any other reason.

Section 5 Timeouts

Charged Team Timeouts

Article 1 The Referee shall suspend play while the ball is dead and declare a charged team timeout upon the request for a timeout by the head coach or any player to any official.

Item 1: Three Timeouts Allowed. A team is allowed three charged team timeouts during each half.

Item 2: Length of Timeouts. Charged team timeouts shall be two minutes in length, unless the timeout is not used by television for a commercial break. Timeouts shall be 30 seconds in length when the designated number of television commercials in a quarter has been

exhausted or television does not use the timeout for a commercial break, if it is a second charged team timeout in the same dead-ball period, or when the Referee so indicates.

Item 3: Consecutive Team Timeouts. Each team may be granted a charged team timeout during the same dead-ball period, but a second charged team timeout by either team during the same dead-ball period is prohibited. Such team timeouts may follow a Referee's timeout or any automatic timeouts in Section 4 above.

Item 4: Unsportsmanlike Conduct. An attempt to call an excess team timeout or to call a second timeout in the same dead-ball period by Team B in an attempt to "freeze" a kicker, will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct and will subject the offending team to a 15-yard penalty (See 12-3). This will apply to field goal or Try attempts.

Clarification 1: If an attempt is made to call a timeout in such situations, the officials shall not grant a timeout; instead, play will continue, and a penalty will be called, with customary enforcement. If a timeout is inadvertently granted, the penalty shall also be enforced. See 12-3-1-v.

Clarification 2: If, to stop the game clock, a team calls a timeout after a play ends, but the opponents committed a foul, the team shall not be charged with the timeout, as the foul would have stopped the clock.

Injury Timeouts

Article 2 If an official determines a player to be injured, or if attendants from the bench come on the field to assist an injured player, an injury timeout will be called by the Referee. P.S. 4.7 Runner A1 is tackled and appears injured since he does not move. **Ruling: Official should call timeout for injured player. Official should not try to determine if player is injured. Timeout is not charged if conditions are not violated.**

Clarification: If, to stop the game clock, a team calls a timeout after a play ends, but a player on the opponent's team is injured enough to require medical attendants to come onto the field, the team calling the timeout shall not be charged with it.

Injury Timeouts Prior to Two-Minute Warning of Either Half

Article 3 When an injury timeout is called, the injured player must leave the game for the completion of one down. The player will be permitted to remain in the game if:

- (a) either team calls a charged team timeout;
- (b) the injury is the result of a foul by an opponent; or
- (c) the period ends or the two-minute warning occurs before the next snap.

At the conclusion of an injury timeout, the game clock will start as if the injury timeout had not occurred. If either team takes, or is charged with, a timeout, the clock will start on the snap.

Injury Timeouts After Two-Minute Warning of Either Half

Article 4 After the two-minute warning of a half, the following shall apply:

- (a) If the injured player's team has not used its three charged timeouts, it will be charged a team timeout, unless:
 - (i) the injury is the result of a foul by an opponent;
 - (ii) the injury occurs during a down in which there is a change of possession, a successful field goal, or an attempted Try; or
 - (iii) the opponent calls a timeout.
- (b) If a team has used its three charged team timeouts, an excess team timeout shall be called by the Referee, unless:
 - (i) the injury is the result of a foul by an opponent;

- (ii) the injury occurs during a down in which there is a change of possession, a successful field goal, or an attempted Try; or
- (iii) the opponent calls a timeout.

Penalty: For the second and each subsequent excess team timeout after the two-minute warning, loss of five yards from the succeeding spot for delay of game.

(c) The player must leave the game for the completion of one down, unless:

- (i) the injury is the result of a foul by an opponent; or
- (ii) either team calls a charged team timeout.

(d) No yardage penalty will be assessed for the first excess team timeout, but a 10-second runoff of the game clock may be applicable pursuant to (f) below. At the conclusion of an excess timeout taken while the game clock is running, the clock shall start with the ready-for-play signal. For any excess timeout charged to the defense, the play clock is reset to 40 seconds.

(e) If the Referee has already called an excess team timeout in that half for a team, any subsequent excess timeout for that team will result in a five-yard penalty. (Such penalty shall be considered a foul between downs and will not offset a foul by the defense or be part of a multiple foul by the offense.)

(f) If an excess team timeout is charged against the team in possession of the ball, and the game clock was running when the excess timeout was called, the time on the game clock shall be reduced by 10 seconds, if the defense so chooses.

P.S. 4.8 Offensive team A, in the last two minutes of the half and the clock running:

a) Requests its fourth time out because of an injured player. **Ruling: Granted. No five-yard penalty. Player has to be removed. Ten-second runoff.** Game clock starts on the ready-for-play signal.

b) Requests its fifth time out because of an injured player. **Ruling: Granted. Five-yard penalty. Player has to be removed. Ten-second runoff.** Game clock starts on the ready-for-play signal.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS:

- (1) Either half can end as the result of the 10-second runoff referenced in (f) above.
- (2) If an injury timeout is called for both teams during or after a down, charged team timeouts and/or excess team timeouts are charged as appropriate, but no yardage or 10-second runoff penalties shall be enforced.
- (3) If a foul by either team occurs during a down in which there is also an injury, such foul does not affect the charging of an excess timeout, but it does prevent a 10-second runoff that may result from the excess timeout, because the foul stopped the clock.
- (4) The Rules Committee deprecates feigning injuries, with subsequent withdrawal, to obtain a timeout without penalty. Coaches are urged to cooperate in discouraging this practice.
- (5) There can never be a 10-second runoff against the defensive team.
- (6) See Rule 15 (Overtime/Sudden-Death Procedures) for application to overtime games.

Referee's Timeout

Article 5 Provided that calling timeout is not in conflict with another rule, the Referee may suspend play and stop the clock (Referee's timeout) at any time without penalty to either team when playing time is being consumed because of an unintentional delay. Such situations include but are not limited to the following:

- (a) when there is the possibility of a measurement for a first down, or if the Referee is consulting with a captain about one;
- (b) when there is an undue pileup on the runner, or while determining possession after a fumble while the game clock is running;
- (c) when there is an undue delay by officials in spotting the ball for the next snap;
- (d) if the snap is made before the officials can assume their positions. See 4-6-5-b if it is a repeated act;
- (e) when there is an injury to an official or member of the chain crew;
- (f) during an officials' conference (see 15-1-6); or
- (g) while repairing or replacing game equipment, except player equipment.

After a Referee's timeout, the game clock will start pursuant to Rule 4, Section 3, as if the Referee's timeout had not occurred.

Section 6 Delay of Game

40-Second Play Clock

Article 1 It is a delay of the game if the ball is not put into play by a snap within 40 seconds after the start of the play clock. The play clock operator shall time the interval between plays upon signals from game officials. The 40-second interval starts when a play ends, unless Article 2 below applies.

25-Second Play Clock

Article 2 In the event of certain administrative stoppages or other delays, a team will have 25 seconds, beginning with the Referee's whistle, to put the ball in play by a snap or a kick. Such stoppages include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) a change of possession;
- (b) a charged team timeout;
- (c) the two-minute warning;
- (d) the expiration of a period;
- (e) a penalty enforcement;
- (f) a Try; or
- (g) a Free Kick.

A 25-second interval will be used in these situations, even if the 40-second clock is already counting down.

Interruption of Play Clock

Article 3 If the play clock is stopped prior to the snap for any reason, after the stoppage has concluded, the time remaining on the play clock shall be the same as when it stopped, unless:

- (a) the stoppage has been for a charged team timeout, the two-minute warning, the expiration of a period, a penalty enforcement, or an Instant Replay challenge prior to the two-minute warning, in which case the play clock shall be reset to 25 seconds;
- (b) the stoppage has been for an Instant Replay review after the two-minute warning that results in a reversal, in which case the play clock shall be reset to 25 seconds;

- (c) the stoppage has been for an excess timeout while time in is charged to the defense, in which case the play clock shall be reset to 40 seconds; or
- (d) fewer than 10 seconds remain on the play clock, in which case it shall be reset to 10 seconds.

Ball Remains Dead

Article 4 If the ball is not put in play within the applicable period, the Back Judge shall blow his or her whistle for the foul, and the ball remains dead. See 14-6-Exc. 4.

Other Delay of Game Fouls

Article 5 Other examples of action or inaction that are to be construed as delay of the game include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) a player unnecessarily remains on a dead ball or on a runner who has been downed;
- (b) the snapper repeatedly snaps the ball after the neutral zone is established and before the Referee can assume his position (see 8-6-3-c);
- (c) undue delay by either team in assembling after a timeout;
- (d) a defensive player aligned in a stationary position within one yard of the line of scrimmage makes quick and abrupt actions that are not a part of normal defensive player movement and are an obvious attempt to cause an offensive player(s) to foul (false start). (The Referee shall blow his/her whistle immediately.);
- (e) spiking or throwing the ball in the field of play after a down has ended, except after a score;

Penalty: For delay of the game: Loss of five yards:

- (a) from the succeeding spot if it occurs between downs. The ball remains dead; or**
- (b) from the previous spot if the ball was in play.**

Section 7 Actions to Conserve Time

Illegal Acts

Article 1 A team is not permitted to conserve time inside of one minute of either half by committing any of the following acts:

- (a) a foul by either team that prevents the snap (i.e., false start, encroachment, neutral zone infraction, etc.)
- (b) intentional grounding;
- (c) an illegal forward pass thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage;
- (d) throwing a backward pass out of bounds;
- (e) spiking or throwing the ball in the field of play after a down has ended, except after a touchdown; or
- (f) any other intentional foul that causes the clock to stop.

When actions referred to above are committed by the offensive team while the game clock is running, officials will, in addition to enforcing the applicable yardage penalty, run 10 seconds off the game clock. The game clock will start on the ready-for-play signal. If the offensive team has timeouts remaining, it will have the option of using a timeout in lieu of a 10-second runoff, in which case the game clock will start on the snap after the timeout. The defense always has the option to decline the 10-second runoff and have the yardage penalty enforced, but if the yardage penalty is declined, the 10-second runoff is also declined.

If the action is by the defense, in addition to enforcing the applicable yardage penalty, the play clock will be reset to 40 seconds, and the game clock will start on the ready signal, unless the offense chooses to have the clock start on the snap. If the defense has

timeouts remaining, it will have the option of using a timeout in lieu of the game clock being started.

P.S. 4.9 With eight seconds remaining in the first half, A1 throws a backward pass out-of-bounds. **Ruling: Half over, 10-second runoff for conserving time.**

P.S. 4.10 With seven seconds remaining in the first half and the game clock running, guard A1 commits a false start. **Ruling: Half over, 10-second runoff for conserving time.**

Clarification 1: More than two successive delay penalties during the same down, after a warning, is unsportsmanlike conduct (12-3-1-n).

Clarification 2: Certain acts of delay may involve stopping the game clock immediately. Repeated violations of the substitution rule to conserve time are unsportsmanlike conduct (5-2-2 and 12-3-1-m).

Substitution Violation After Two-Minute Warning

Article 2 Inside one minute of either half, if there is a violation of the substitution rule while the ball is dead and the game clock is running, in addition to the applicable yardage penalty for illegal substitution, there will be a 10-second runoff pursuant to Article 1 above.

Penalty: For Illegal Substitution: Loss of five yards (unless a larger distance penalty is applicable) and a 10-second runoff.

Defensive Fouls During Last 40 Seconds

Article 3 In the last 40 seconds of either half, if there is a defensive foul prior to the snap while the game clock is running, the half will end, unless the defense takes a charged team timeout; or the offense chooses to have the Game Clock start on the snap.

Section 8 Extension of a Period or a Half

Ball in Play

Article 1 If time expires at the end of any period while the ball is in play, the period continues until the down ends.

Period Extended

Article 2 At the election of the opponent, a period may be extended for one untimed down, if any of the following occurs during a down during which time in the period expires:

(a) If there is a foul by the defensive team that is accepted, the offensive team may choose to extend the period by an untimed down after enforcement of the penalty. If the first or third period is not so extended, any accepted penalty is enforced before the start of the succeeding period.

(b) If there is a foul by the offense, there shall be no extension of the period. If the foul occurs on the last play of the half, a score by the offense is not counted. However, the period may be extended for an untimed down, upon the request of the defense, if the offensive team's foul is for:

- (1) illegal touching of a kick;
- (2) fair-catch interference;
- (3) a palpably unfair act;
- (4) a personal foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul committed prior to an interception of a forward pass or the recovery of a backward pass or fumble; or
- (5) a foul by the kicking team prior to a player of the receiving team securing possession of the ball during a down in which there is a safety kick, a scrimmage kick, or a free kick.

P.S. 4.11 Fourth-and-10 on B40. On the last play of the first quarter, offensive team misses an attempted field goal. Defensive team was offside. There is a strong wind at Team A's back. **Ruling: Offensive team has option of extending period by an untimed down. It can put ball in play from the B35 and kick the same way. If the period is not extended, it would be fourth and five on the B35 at start of second period.**

P.S. 4.12 Third-and-10 on A45. Offensive team is offside. Quarterback A1 throws a legal pass which is completed to end A2 who runs for a score. Time for second half expired during play. **Ruling: No score and game over as it was an offensive foul on last play of half.**

P.S. 4.13 Fourth-and-10 on A20. A punt is touched illegally by kicking team player A1 on the A45 who falls on the ball as time runs out in second half. **Ruling: One scrimmage down allowed, if desired, by receivers from the A45. Untimed down as it was an illegal touch.**

(c) If a double foul occurs during the last down of either half, the period shall be extended by an untimed down.

Exceptions: The half is not extended if:

- (1) both fouls are dead-ball fouls;
- (2) if there is a major-minor double foul ("5 vs. 15"), and the major foul is by the offense, or if the major foul is a dead ball personal foul by the defense (see 14-3-1-Exc.); or

Clarification: Dead ball personal fouls by either team at the end of a half are enforced on the ensuing kickoff (14-1-7).

(3) if there is a double foul with a change of possession ("clean hands" rule, see 14-3-2) that does not involve a replay of the down.

(If a double foul occurs on the last play of the first or third periods, the period is not extended.)

P.S. 4.14 B1 intercepts at midfield on the last play of either half. On runback, B2 clips at the A40. A1 piles on after runner B1 is tackled on the A30. **Ruling: Extend the period with an untimed down from A40. B's ball. See 14-3-3.**

(d) If a touchdown is made on the last play of a period, the Try attempt shall be made (except during a sudden-death period).

(e) If no fair-catch signal is given and the kickers interfere with the receiver's opportunity to catch a kick, the receiving team may extend the period by a down from scrimmage.

(f) If a fair-catch is signaled and made, the receivers may choose to extend the period by a fair-catch kick down (7-2-4). If the first or third period is not so extended, the receivers may start the succeeding period with a snap or fair-catch kick (11-5-3).

P.S. 4.15 The offensive team punts as time for the half expires. B1 gives a valid fair-catch signal and catches the ball on the A35. **Ruling: The receiving team may extend the period by a fair-catch kick (7-2-4, 11-5-3).**

(g) If a fair catch is signaled and the kickers interfere with a receiver's opportunity to catch a kick, the receiving team may extend the period by either a down from scrimmage or a fair-catch kick (7-2-4).

(h) If a safety results from a foul during the last play of a half, the score counts. A safety kick is made if requested by the receivers.

If the first or third period is extended for any reason, or if a touchdown occurs during the last play of such a period, any additional play, including a Try attempt, shall be completed before the teams change goals.

If any period is extended for any reason, it shall continue until the completion of a down free from any foul specified in (a) through (i) above.

Rule 5 Players, Substitutes, Equipment, and General Rules

Section 1 Players

Number of Players

Article 1 The game is played by two teams of 11 players each. If a snap, free kick, or fair-catch kick is made while a team has fewer than 11 players on the field of play or the end zone, the ball is in play, and there is no penalty. If a team has more than 11 players on the field of play or the end zone when a snap, free kick, or fair-catch kick is made, the ball is in play, and it is a foul.

Penalty: For more than 11 players on the field of play or the end zone while the ball is in play: Loss of five yards from the previous spot.

Players Numbered by Position

Article 2 All players must wear numerals on their jerseys in accordance with Rule 5, Section 4, Article 3(c). Such numerals must be by playing position, as follows:

- (a) quarterbacks, punters, and placekickers: 1-19;
- (b) running backs and defensive backs: 20-49;
- (c) centers: 50-79;
- (d) offensive guards and tackles: 60-79;
- (e) wide receivers: 10-19 and 80-89;
- (f) tight ends: 80-89;
- (g) defensive linemen: 50-79 and 90-99; and
- (h) linebackers: 50-59 and 90-99.

If a player changes his position during his playing career in the UFL, and such change moves him from a position as an ineligible pass receiver to that of an eligible pass receiver, or from a position as an eligible pass receiver to that of an ineligible pass receiver, he must be issued an appropriate new jersey numeral. A change in jersey numeral is not required if the change is from an ineligible position to another ineligible position, or from an eligible position to another eligible position, provided that the player has participated at least one season at his position prior to the change.

Any request to wear a number for a special position not specified above (e.g., H-back) must be made to the Commissioner.

During the training camp period when playing rosters are larger, the League will allow duplication and other temporary deviations from the numbering scheme specified above, but the rule must be adhered to for all players during the regular and post season. Clubs must make numerals available to adhere to the rule, even if it requires returning to circulation a numeral that has been withheld for any reasons. See 5-3-1 for reporting a change of position.

Section 2 Substitutes and Withdrawn Players

Number of Players in Huddle

Article 1 There can never be more than 11 players in the offensive huddle while the play clock is running.

Substitute Becomes Player

Article 2 A substitute becomes a player when:

(a) he participates in at least one play (including a play negated by penalty prior to the snap or during the play); or

(b) he is on the field of play or the end zone when a snap, fair-catch kick, or free kick is made, or when a snap, fair-catch kick, or free kick is imminent.

A player becomes a substitute when he is withdrawn from the game and does not participate in at least one play. A play negated by penalty prior to the snap or during the play counts as a missed play.

Legal Substitutions

Article 3 Any number of substitutes may enter the field of play or the end zone while the ball is dead.

Illegal Substitutions

Article 4 If a substitute enters the field of play or the end zone while the ball is in play, it is an illegal substitution. If an illegal substitute interferes with the play, it may be a palpably unfair act (see 12-3-3).

Offensive Substitutions

Article 5 The following are applicable to any offensive substitute who is entering the game:

(a) He must move onto the field of play or the end zone as far as the inside of the field numerals prior to the snap to be a legal substitution. If he does not, and is on the field of play or end zone at the time of a legal snap, he is an illegal substitute.

(b) If he approaches the huddle and communicates with a teammate(s), he is required to participate in at least one play before being withdrawn. Violations of this rule may be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Clarification: The intent of the rule is to prevent teams from using simulated substitutions to confuse an opponent, while still permitting a player(s) to enter and leave without participating in a play in certain situations, such as a change in a coaching decision on fourth down, even though he has approached the huddle and communicated with a teammate. Similarly, if a player who participated in the previous play leaves the playing field by mistake, and returns to the playing field prior to the snap, he is not required to reach the inside of the field numerals, provided that the defense has the opportunity to match up with him. However, a substitute (i.e., someone who did not participate in the previous play) is required to reach the inside of the field numerals.

Withdrawn Players

Article 6 A player or players who have been replaced must leave the playing field or end zone on their own team's side between the end lines prior to the next snap, free kick, or fair-catch kick.

Disqualified and Suspended Players

Article 7 A player must be withdrawn and substituted for when he is disqualified (see 12-2, 12-3) or suspended (see 5-4). A suspended player may re-enter after at least one legal snap, provided that the reason for his suspension has been corrected. A disqualified player must leave the playing field enclosure and go to the team locker room within a reasonable time.

Penalties for Illegal Substitution or Withdrawal

Article 8 Penalties for illegal substitution or withdrawal are:

(a) **For 12 or more players in the offensive huddle (whistle blown immediately and ball remains dead):** Loss of five yards from the succeeding spot.

(b) **For a substitute entering the field during a live ball:** Loss of five yards (from previous spot).

(c) For interference with the play by a substitute who enters the field during a live ball: Palpably unfair act (see 12-3-3)

(d) For an offensive substitute who does not move onto the field as far as the inside of the field numerals: Loss of five yards from the previous spot.

(e) For an offensive substitute who moves onto the field inside the field numerals and leaves without participating in one play: Unsportsmanlike Conduct.

(f) For a withdrawn player on the field at the snap, free kick, or fair-catch kick: Loss of five yards from the previous spot.

(g) For a withdrawn player clearing the field on the opponents' side or across an end line: Loss of five yards from the previous spot.

(h) For illegal return of a suspended player: Loss of five yards from the previous spot if discovery is made while the ball is in play, or five yards from the succeeding spot if discovered between downs, in which case the ball remains dead.

(i) For return of a disqualified player: Loss of 15 yards from the previous spot if discovery is made while the ball is in play, or 15 yards from the succeeding spot if discovered between downs, in which case the ball remains dead, and, in either case, exclusion from the playing field enclosure.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS:

If the illegal return of a player is not discovered until the end of a down, but prior to the start of the next one, enforcement is from the previous spot. Otherwise, enforcement is from the succeeding spot as a foul between downs (see 14-5).

Procedure Following Timeout or Change of Possession

Article 9 Following a timeout or change of possession, the ball will not be declared ready for play until the offense has brought 11 players into its huddle inside the inbounds lines (hash marks). If the offensive team refuses to leave the sideline prior to the ball being declared ready for play, it will be warned once. Thereafter, the offense will be penalized 15 yards for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Penalty: For Unsportsmanlike Conduct after a warning: Loss of 15 yards from the succeeding spot.

If there is an offensive substitution that occurs after the offensive team has broken its huddle, the game and play clock will be stopped, and the defense will be allowed an opportunity to matchup.

Defensive Matchups Following Substitutions

Article 10 If a substitution is made by the offense, the offense shall not be permitted to snap the ball until the defense has been permitted to respond with its substitutions. While in the process of a substitution (or simulated substitution), the offense is prohibited from rushing quickly to the line of scrimmage and snapping the ball in an obvious attempt to cause a defensive foul (i.e., too many men on the field). If, in the judgment of the officials, this occurs, the following procedure will apply:

(a) The Umpire will stand over the ball until the Referee deems that the defense has had a reasonable time to complete its substitutions.

(b) If a play takes place and a defensive foul for too many players on the field results, no penalties will be enforced, except for personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct, and the down will be replayed. At this time, the Referee will notify the head coach that any further use of this tactic will result in a penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Clarification: The quick-snap rule does not apply after the two-minute warning of either half, or if there is not a substitution by the offense.

(c) On a fourth down punting situation, the Referee and the Umpire will not allow a quick snap that prevents the defense from having a reasonable time to complete its substitutions. This applies throughout the entire game.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Article 11 Using entering substitutes, legally returning players, substitutes on sidelines, or withdrawn players to confuse opponents, or lingering by players leaving the field when being replaced by a substitute, is unsportsmanlike conduct. See 12-3-1-k. The offense is prevented from sending simulated substitutions onto the field toward its huddle and returning them to the sideline without completing the substitution in an attempt to confuse the defense.

Penalty: For Unsportsmanlike Conduct after a warning: Loss of 15 yards from the succeeding spot.

Section 3 Changes in Position

Reporting Change of Position

Article 1 An offensive player wearing the number of an ineligible pass receiver (50-79 and 90-99) is permitted to line up in the position of an eligible pass receiver (1-49 and 80-89), and an offensive player wearing the number of an eligible pass receiver is permitted to line up in the position of an ineligible pass receiver, provided that he immediately reports the change in his eligibility status to the Referee, who will inform the defensive team. He must participate in such eligible or ineligible position as long as he is continuously in the game, but prior to each play he must again report his status to the Referee, who will inform the defensive team. The game clock shall not be stopped, and the ball shall not be put in play until the Referee takes his or her normal position.

Returning to Original Position

Article 2 A player who has reported a change in his eligibility status to the Referee is permitted to return to a position indicated by the eligibility status of his number after:

- (a) a team timeout;
- (b) the end of a quarter;
- (c) the two-minute warning;
- (d) a foul;
- (e) a replay challenge;
- (f) a touchdown;
- (g) a completed kick from scrimmage;
- (h) a change of possession; or
- (i) if the player has been withdrawn for one legal snap. A player withdrawn for one legal snap may re-enter at a position indicated by the eligibility status of his number, unless he again reports to the Referee that he is assuming a position other than that designated by the eligibility status of his number.

Article 3

Each offensive and defensive team is permitted to have one player on the field with a speaker in his helmet. Clubs that have a player whose principal position is as a non-quarterback (e.g., wide receiver, running back) and who also is used as a quarterback from time to time must have two helmets for that player—one with and one without radio components.

When the backup quarterback enters the game for the first time, or re-enters the game if he has previously been in the game and removed, he must report to the Referee.

Whenever the backup defensive user enters or re-enters the game wearing a helmet with a speaker, he must report to the Umpire. If the primary defensive user subsequently re-enters the game wearing a helmet with a speaker, he must report to the Umpire. If the primary and backup players have been removed from the game, no other player may wear the radio speaker in his helmet. Teams must use other methods to communicate signals to their players.

For special teams' plays, only one player per team with a receiver will be permitted on the field.

A team may not have two players in the game at the same time with speakers in their helmets. It is not necessary that the offensive player with the speaker in his helmet receive the snap.

The coach-to-player system is not subject to the equity rule. In the event one club experiences coach-to-defense radio system malfunction or failure, the other club does not have to shut down its system and may continue using it. However, if the coaches' intercom system has been completely shut down on both sidelines pursuant to the equity rule, all coaches' headsets must be removed, and radio communications from the sidelines to the field must be conducted by walkie-talkie only.

Penalty: If a player fails to notify the Referee of a change in his status when required: Loss of five yards for illegal substitution.

Section 4 Equipment, Uniforms, Player Appearance

General Policy

Article 1

Throughout the game-day period while in view of the stadium and television audience, including during pregame warm-ups, all players must dress in a professional manner under the uniform standards specified in this Section 4. They must wear equipment offering reasonable protection to themselves while reasonably avoiding risk of injury to other players. They generally must present an appearance that is appropriate to representing their individual clubs and the United Football League. The term uniform, as used in this policy, applies to every piece of equipment worn by a player, including helmet, shoulder pads, thigh pads, knee pads, and any other item of protective gear, and to every visible item of apparel, including but not limited to pants, jerseys, wristbands, gloves, stockings, shoes, visible undergarments, and accessories such as headwear coverings, worn under helmets and hand towels. All visible items worn on game-day by players must be issued by the club or the League, or, if from outside sources, must have approval in advance by the League office.

Team Colors

Article 2 Pursuant to the official colors established for each UFL club in the League Constitution and Bylaws, playing squads are permitted to wear only those colors or a combination of those colors for helmets, jerseys, pants, and stockings; provided that white is also an available color for jerseys and mandatory color for the lower portion of stockings [see 5-3-3-(i), "Stockings," below]. Each player on a given team must wear the same colors on his uniform as all other players on his team in the same game. Before September 1 each

year, home clubs are required to report to the League office their choice of jersey color for their home games of that forthcoming season (including postseason, in the event that the club should become a host for such a game), and visiting clubs must wear the opposite. For preseason, regular season, or postseason games, the two competing teams may wear jerseys in their official colors (non-white), provided the Commissioner determines that such colors are of sufficient contrast.

Mandatory Equipment, Apparel

Article 3 All players must wear the equipment and uniform apparel listed below, which must be of a suitably protective nature, must be designed and produced by a professional manufacturer, and must not be cut, reduced in size, or otherwise altered unless for medical reasons approved in advance by the League Office; provided, however, that during pregame warm-ups players may omit certain protective equipment at their option, except that helmets must be worn. Where additional rules are applicable to specific categories of mandatory equipment or apparel, or where related equipment is optional, such provisions are also spelled out below.

Helmets, Face Protectors

(a) Helmet with chin strap (white only) fastened and facemask attached. Facemasks must not be more than $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch in diameter and must be made of rounded material; transparent materials are prohibited.

Clear (transparent) plastic face shields for eye protection are optional. Tinted eye shields may be worn only after the League office is supplied with appropriate medical documentation and approval is subsequently granted. The League office has final approval.

No visible identification of a manufacturer's name or logo on the exterior of a helmet or on any attachment to a helmet is permitted unless provided for under a commercial arrangement between the League and manufacturer; in no event is identification of any helmet manufacturer permitted on the visible surface of a rear cervical pad.

Jerseys

(b) Jersey must cover all pads and other protective equipment worn on the torso and upper arms, and must be appropriately tailored to remain tucked into the uniform pants throughout the game. Tear-away jerseys are prohibited. Mesh jerseys with large fish-net material (commonly referred to as "bullet-hole" or "port-hole" mesh) are also prohibited. Surnames of players in letters a minimum of $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inches high must be affixed to the exterior of jerseys across the upper back above the numerals; nicknames are prohibited. All fabrics must be approved by the League office prior to production.

Numerals

(c) Numerals on the back and front of jerseys in accordance with Rule 5, Section 1, Article 2. Such numerals must be a minimum of 8 inches high and 4 inches wide, and their color must be in sharp contrast with the color of the jersey. Smaller numerals should be worn on the tops of the shoulders or upper arms of the jersey. Small numerals on the back of the helmet or on the uniform pants are optional.

Pants

(d) Pants must be worn over the entire knee area; pants shortened or rolled up to meet the stockings above the knee are prohibited. No part of the pants may be cut away unless an appropriate gusset or other device is used to replace the removed material.

Shoulder Pads

(e) Shoulder pads must be completely covered by the uniform jersey.

Stockings

(f) Stockings must cover the entire area from the shoe to the bottom of the pants, and must meet the pants below the knee. Players are permitted to wear as many layers of stockings and tape on the lower leg as they prefer, provided the exterior is a one-piece stocking that includes solid white from the top of the shoe to the mid-point of the lower leg, and approved team color or colors (non-white) from that point to the top of the stocking. Uniform stockings may not be altered (e.g. over-stretched, cut at the toes, or sewn short) in order to bring the line between solid white and team colors lower or higher than the mid-point of the lower leg. No other stockings and/or opaque tape may be worn over the one-piece, two-color uniform stocking. Barefoot punters and placekickers may omit the stocking of the kicking foot in preparation for and during kicking plays.

Shoes

(g) Shoes must be of standard football design, including “sneaker” type shoes such as basketball shoes, cross-training shoes, etc. League approved shoes are permitted with black, white, and one team color. Each player may select among shoe styles previously approved by the League Office. All players on the same team must wear shoes with the same dominant color. A player may wear an unapproved standard football shoe style as long as the player tapes over the entire shoe to conform to his team’s selected dominant color. Logos, names, or other commercial identification on shoes are not permitted to be visible unless advance approval is granted by the League Office (see Article 7). Size and location of logos and names on shoes must be approved by the UFL. The logo or name of the shoe manufacturer must not be reapplied to the exterior of taped shoes unless advance approval is granted by the League Office. Kicking shoes must not be modified (including using a shoelace wrapped around toe and/or bottom of the shoe), and any shoe that is worn by a player with an artificial limb on his kicking leg must have a kicking surface that conforms to that of a normal kicking shoe. Punters and placekickers may omit the shoe from the kicking foot in preparation for and during kicking plays. Punters and placekickers may wear any combination of shoes provided that the colors are consistent with those selected by the team and with the policy listed above.

Other Prohibited Equipment, Apparel

Article 4 In addition to the several prohibited items of equipment and apparel specified in Article 3 above, the following are also prohibited:

Projecting Objects

(a) Metal or other hard objects that project from a player’s person or uniform, including from his shoes.

Uncovered Hard Objects, Substances

(b) Hard objects and substances, including but not limited to casts, guards or braces for hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, hip, thigh, knee, shin, unless such items are appropriately covered on all edges and surfaces by a minimum of $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch foam rubber or similar soft material. Any such item worn to protect an injury must be reported by the applicable coaching staff to the Umpire in advance of the game, and a description of the injury must be

provided. If the Umpire determines that an item in question, including tape or bandages on hands or forearms, may present undue risk to other players, he may prevent its use at a time before or during a game until the item is removed or appropriately corrected.

Detachable Toe

(c) Detachable kicking toe.

Torn Items

(d) Torn or improperly fitting equipment creating a risk of injury to other players, e.g. the hard surfaces of shoulder pads exposed by a damaged jersey.

Improper Cleats

(e) Shoe cleats made of aluminum or other material that may chip, fracture, or develop a cutting edge. Conical cleats with concave sides or points which measure less than $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch in diameter at the tips, or cleats with oblong ends which measure less than $\frac{1}{4}$ - by $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch at the end tips are also prohibited. Nylon cleats with flat steel tips are permitted.

Improper Tape

(f) Opaque, contrasting color tape that covers any part of the helmet, jersey, pants, stockings, or shoes; transparent tape or tape of the same color as the background material is permissible for use on these items of apparel. Players may use opaque, white, black, or one dominant club color tape on hands and arms, provided it conforms to 5-4-4(b) above (“Uncovered Hard Objects, Substances”) and 5-4-4(h) below (“Approved Glove Color on Linemen”). Opaque tape on shoes is permitted, provided it is the same color as the shoe, and provided it does not carry up into the stocking area.

Items Colored Like Football

(g) Headgear or any other equipment or apparel which, in the opinion of the Referee, may confuse an opponent because of its similarity in color to that of the game football. If such color is worn, it must be broken by stripes or other patterns of sharply contrasting color or colors.

Approved Glove Color

(h) Gloves, wrappings, elbow pads, and other items worn on the arms below or over the jersey sleeves by interior offensive linemen (excluding tight ends) which are of a color different from that which is mandatorily reported to the League office by the club before September 1 each year. Such reported color must be white or other official color of the applicable team, and, once reported, must not be changed throughout that same season. Players at other positions (non-interior linemen) also may wear gloves provided they are a solid white, solid black, or a solid color that is an official color of the applicable club. Gloves may also be a tri-color combination of black, white, and one (1) official color of the applicable club. Gloves may also be a bi-color combination of black or white with one (1) official color of the applicable team. Clubs are not required to designate to the League office by September 1, the color of gloves that will be worn by their non-interior linemen.

Adhesive, Slippery Substances

(i) Adhesive or slippery substances on the body, equipment, or uniform of any player; provided, however, that players may wear gloves with a tackified surface if such tacky substance does not adhere to the football or otherwise cause handling problems for players.

Garments Under Jerseys

(j) Quarterbacks will be allowed to wear under the game jersey a solid-color T-shirt, turtleneck, or sweatshirt (consistent with team undergarment color) with sleeves cut to any length, as long as both sleeves are evenly trimmed and the edges are sewn and hemmed. All other players may wear garments under game jerseys only if the undergarment sleeves either (a) do not extend below the sleeves of the jersey; or (b) are full length to the wrist. No other sleeve lengths for garments under jerseys are permitted for players other than quarterbacks. Players may not wear long sleeved undergarments that include pebble-grip sleeves. Any garments under jerseys that are exposed at the neck or sleeve area and that carry an exposed logo or commercial name must be licensed by and approved by the League Office for wear on the field (see Article 7). All members of the same team who wear approved undergarments with exposed necks or sleeves must wear the same color on a given day, which color must be white or a solid color that is an official team color (solid means that sleeves must not carry stripes, designs, or team names).

Prohibited Headwear Coverings

(k) Players are not permitted to wear bandannas, stockings, or other unapproved headwear anywhere on the field during the pregame, game, or postgame periods, even if such items are worn under their helmet.

Recommended Equipment

Article 5 It is recommended that all players wear hip pads, thigh pads, and knee pads which reasonably avoid the risk of injury. Unless otherwise provided by individual team policy, it is the players' responsibility and decision whether to follow this recommendation and use such pads. If worn, all three forms of pads listed above must be covered by the outer uniform. Basketball type knee pads are permitted but must also be covered by the outer uniform.

Optional Equipment

Article 6 Among the types of optional equipment that are permitted to be worn by players are the following:

Rib Protectors

(a) Rib protectors ("flak jackets") under the jersey.

Wrist Bands

(b) Wrist bands, provided they are white or black only.

Towels

(c) Towels, provided they are white. Players are prohibited from adding to these towels personal messages, logos, names, symbols, or illustrations. Such towels also must be attached to or tucked into the front waist of the pants, and must be no larger than 6 x 8

inches (slightly larger size may be issued to quarterbacks, or may be folded to these limits for wearing in games). A player may wear no more than one towel. Players are prohibited from discarding on the playing field any loose towels or other materials used for wiping hands and the football. Streamers or ribbons, regardless of length, hanging from any part of the uniform, including the helmet, are prohibited.

Headwear Coverings

(d) When players are on the field, as defined in Article 1, during the pregame, game and postgame periods, they may wear approved caps, approved cold weather gear, or other approved headwear for medical purposes only, as determined by the League Office. Any permissible headwear must be approved by the League office, and if worn under the helmet, no portion may hang from or otherwise be visible outside the helmet.

Logos and Commercial Identification

Article 7 Throughout the period on game-day that a player is visible to the stadium and television audience (including in pregame warm-ups, in the bench area, and during postgame interviews in the locker room or on the field), players are prohibited from wearing, displaying, or orally promoting equipment, apparel, or other items that carry commercial names or logos of companies, unless such commercial identification has been approved in advance by the League office. The size of any approved logo or other commercial identification involved in an agreement between a manufacturer and the League will be modest and unobtrusive, and there is no assurance that it will be visible to the television audience. Subject to any future approved arrangements with a manufacturer and subject to any decision by the Commissioner to suspend enforcement temporarily of this provision governing shoes, visible logos and names of shoes are prohibited, including on the sole of the shoe that may be seen from time to time during the game.

Personal Messages

Article 8 Throughout the period on game-day that a player is visible to the stadium and television audience (including in pregame warm-ups, in the bench area, and during postgame interviews in the locker room or on the field), players are prohibited from wearing, displaying, or otherwise conveying personal messages either in writing or illustration, unless such message has been approved in advance by the League office. Items to celebrate anniversaries or memorable events, or to honor or commemorate individuals, such as helmet decals, arm bands and jersey patches on players' uniforms, are prohibited unless approved in advance by the League office. All such items must relate to team or League events or personages. The League will not grant permission for any club or player to wear, display, or otherwise convey messages, through helmet decals, arm bands, jersey patches, or other items affixed to game uniforms or equipment, which relate to political activities or causes, other non-football events, causes or campaigns, or charitable causes or campaigns. Further, such armbands and jersey patches must be modest in size, tasteful, non-commercial, and non-controversial; must not be worn for more than one football season; and if approved for use by a specific team, must not be worn by players on other teams in the League.

General Appearance

Article 9 Consistent with the equipment and uniform rules of this Section 4, players must otherwise present a professional and appropriate appearance while before the public on game-day. Among the types of activities that are prohibited are use of tobacco products (smokeless included) while in the bench area and use of facial makeup. The Referee is

authorized to use his or her judgment in determining whether any other unusual appearance or behavior is in violation of this Article 9.

Penalties:

(a) For violation of this Section 4 discovered during pregame warm-ups or at other times prior to the game, player will be advised to make appropriate correction; if violation is not corrected, player will not be permitted to enter the game.

(b) For violation of this Section 4 discovered while player is in game, player will be advised to make appropriate correction at the next change of possession; if violation is not corrected, player will not be permitted to enter the game. Provided, however, if the violation involves the competitive aspects of the game (e.g. illegal kicking toe of shoe, an adhesive or slippery substance), player will be suspended immediately (removed from the game for one play) upon discovery.

(c) For repeat violation: Disqualification from game.

(d) For illegal entry or return of a player suspended under this Section 4: Loss of five yards from succeeding spot and removal until properly equipped after one down.

(e) For violation of this Section 4 detected in the bench area: Player and head coach will be asked to remove the objectionable item, properly equip the player, or otherwise correct the violation. The involved player or players will be disqualified from the game if correction is not made promptly.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

Clarification 1: In addition to the game-day penalties specified above, the Commissioner may subsequently impose independent disciplinary action on the involved player, up to and including suspension from the team's next succeeding game, preseason, regular season, or postseason, whichever is applicable.

Clarification 2: If a player is suspended (removed from the game for one play) for having adhesive or slippery substances on his body, equipment, or uniform, he must remain out of the game for one play, even if there is a team timeout, the two-minute warning, or the end of a period.

Clarification 3: If a player (kicker) is suspended (removed from the game for one play) for having an illegal kicking shoe, he must remain out of the game for one play, unless there is a team timeout, the two-minute warning, or the end of the period.

Rule 6 Scrimmage Kick

Section 1 Kick From Scrimmage

Kick Behind Line of Scrimmage

Article 1 Team A may attempt a punt, drop kick, or placekick from behind the line of scrimmage.

Penalty: For a punt, drop kick, or placekick that is kicked from beyond the line of scrimmage or not from scrimmage: Loss of 10 yards from the spot of the kick.

Clarification 1: This is not considered illegally kicking the ball.

Clarification 2: A foul for a punt, drop kick, or placekick from beyond the line shall be called only when the player's entire body and the ball are beyond the line. This includes when the player is either airborne or touching the ground.

Kicking Team Players on Line During Kick

Article 2 During a kick from scrimmage, only the end men (eligible receivers) on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap, or an eligible receiver who is aligned or in motion behind the line and is more than one yard outside the end man, are permitted to advance more than one yard beyond the line before the ball is kicked.

Penalty: For advancing more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage before the ball is kicked: Loss of five yards.

Blocking During Kick

Article 3 The following blocking rules apply during a scrimmage kick down:

(a) All players on the receiving team are prohibited from blocking below the waist, except for players on the line of scrimmage who are lined up on or inside the normal tight end position. Immediately at the snap, such players are permitted to block low.

After the ball has been kicked, all players on the kicking team are prohibited from blocking below the waist for the remainder of the down.

(b) Prior to the ball being kicked, the kicking team is subject to the blocking restrictions applicable to the offense, and the receiving team is subject to the blocking restrictions applicable to the defense, except that a kicking team player may use his hands to ward off, push, or pull aside a receiver who is legally or illegally attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield.

(c) After the ball is kicked and goes beyond the line of scrimmage, and until the kick ends (either team secures possession of the ball, or the ball is dead by rule), the kicking team is subject to the blocking restrictions of the defense, and the receiving team is subject to the blocking restrictions of the offense. (For the exception prohibiting a block in the back by the kicking team while the ball is in flight, see 12-1-4-Clarification). After the kick ends, both teams are subject to the normal restrictions applicable to offense and defense.

Exception: If the ball goes beyond the line of scrimmage and returns behind the line untouched by the receiving team beyond the line, the blocking restrictions do not change, and the kicking team continues to be subject to the blocking restrictions of the offense and the receiving team to the blocking restrictions of the defense.

(d) After the ball has been kicked, and until the receiving team establishes possession, the yardage for penalties by either team should be enforced as for offensive fouls, unless the ball does not go beyond the line of scrimmage, or the ball goes beyond the line and returns behind the line untouched by the receiving team beyond the line.

Kicking Team Player Voluntarily Out of Bounds

Article 4 During a punt that crosses the line of scrimmage, and prior to a change of possession, it is a foul if a kicking team player goes out of bounds voluntarily (without being contacted) prior to the end of the kick.

Penalty: Loss of five yards.

Section 2 Touching a Scrimmage Kick

Touching Behind the Line

Article 1 Any touching of the ball behind the line of scrimmage by a kicking team player is legal, even if the ball has crossed the line and returns behind the line.

First Touching Beyond the Line

Article 2 “First touching” is when a player of the kicking team touches a scrimmage kick that is beyond the line of scrimmage before it has been touched by a player of the receiving team beyond the line. If the ball is first touched by a player of the kicking team, it remains in play. First touching is a violation, and the receivers shall have the option of taking possession of the ball at the spot of first touching, provided no penalty is accepted on the play, or at the spot where the ball is dead. First touching does not offset a foul by the receivers.

Clarification: If the receiving team gains possession, subsequently loses possession, and fouls after the kicking team gains possession, the spot of first touching is disregarded, and the kicking team retains possession. See Rule 14, Section 3, Article 1, Exception 5.

Item 1: A Team B player is deemed not to have touched a kick if such touching occurs in the immediate vicinity of the line in an attempt to block the kick.

Item 2: The ball is dead, and the result of the play is a touchback, if a player of the kicking team touches the goal line or end zone with any part of his body and (1) simultaneously touches the ball in the field of play, or (2) subsequently touches the ball in the field of play while not touching the goal line or end zone, but before re-establishing himself in the field of play.

Clarification: The spot of first touching is normally the yard line at which the ball is at when touched. If the first touching occurs while the ball is in the air above or beyond the goal line, and prior to the ball touching the goal line or the ground beyond the goal line, the spot of first touching is deemed to be the spot from which the touching player left the field of play, but in no event inside the receiving team’s one-yard line.

Kicking Team Player Out of Bounds

Article 3 A player of the kicking team, who has been out of bounds, may not touch a scrimmage kick beyond the line of scrimmage until it has been touched by a kicking team player who has not been out of bounds, or by a player of the receiving team beyond the line.

Clarification: If a player touches the ball before he has re-established himself inbounds, the ball is out-of-bounds at the spot of the touch, and there is no foul.

Penalty: For illegal touching of a scrimmage kick by a kicking team player who has been out of bounds: **Loss of five yards. If the illegal touching is inside the receiver's five-yard line, in addition to the other specified options, the receiving team may elect to take a touchback.**

Blocked Into Kick

Article 4 There is no distinction between a player touching a ball or being touched by it, but a player is not considered to have touched the ball if he is blocked into it by an opponent, provided he is in a passive position and not blocking. A player who is engaged with and blocking his opponent when he contacts the ball is deemed to have touched the ball.

Section 3 Catch or Recovery of a Scrimmage Kick

Kickers Catch or Recover Behind Line

Article 1 When a scrimmage kick is caught or recovered by the kicking team behind the line of scrimmage, the kicking team may advance, even if the ball has crossed the line and returned behind the line (see 3-27-2, A.C. 2).

Clarification: If the kicking team catches or recovers a kick behind the line during a try-kick, the ball is dead as soon as it is evident that the kick has failed, and no advance is permitted (11-3-2).

Item 1: Same Series of Downs. If the ball has returned behind the line untouched by the receiving team beyond the line, and the kicking team catches or recovers the ball, the existing series of downs continues unless the kicking team advances the ball to the line to gain, in which case there is a new series of downs.

Item 2: New Series of Downs. If the ball has returned behind the line after being touched by the receiving team beyond the line, and the kicking team catches or recovers the ball, by rule there has been a change of possession, and the kicking team will be awarded a new series of downs.

Kickers Catch or Recover Beyond Line

Article 2 When the kickers catch or recover a kick beyond the line of scrimmage, the ball is dead at the spot of recovery, even if a member of the receiving team has first touched the ball.

Item 1: Legal Catch or Recovery. If the receiving team touches the ball beyond the line, a subsequent catch or recovery by the kicking team is legal, but the ball is dead. In the event of such a catch or recovery, it is first-and-10 for the kickers, or if the ball is caught or recovered by the kickers in the receiver's end zone, it is a touchdown for the kickers. See 8-3-1-d.

Item 2: Illegal Catch or Recovery. If the kickers catch or recover a kick beyond the line that has not been touched beyond the line by the receiving team, the ball is dead, and it is first-and-10 for the receivers at the spot of catch or recovery (see 11-4-2 for missed field goals). If a kick from behind the line is touched by the receiving team behind the line, such touching does not make the kicking team eligible to catch or recover the kick beyond the line.

Item 3: Touchback. If a player of the kicking team illegally catches or recovers a scrimmage kick, other than a field goal attempt from beyond the 20-yard line, and carries

the ball across the goal line, or touches the goal line with any part of his body while in possession of the ball, the ball is dead, and the result of the play is a touchback. For a missed field goal from beyond the 20-yard line, see 11-5-2.

Receivers Catch or Recover

Article 3 If the receivers catch or recover any kick, they may advance. For fair catch exception, see 7-2-3. For exception for a ball that has crossed the goal line, see Section 4.

Simultaneous Catch or Recovery

Article 4 When a legal kick is simultaneously caught or recovered anywhere by two eligible opposing players, or if the ball is lying on the field of play with no player attempting to recover it, it is awarded to the receivers. See 8-2-1-i.

Section 4 Ball Crosses Goal Line, Touches Goal Posts, Out of Bounds, Dead in Field of Play

Ball Crosses Receivers' Goal Line

Article 1 If a scrimmage kick crosses the receiver's goal line from the impetus of the kick, the following shall apply:

(a) If the ball has not been touched by a player of the receiving team beyond the line of scrimmage, it is dead immediately, and the result of the play is a touchback, when: (1) it touches the ground on or behind the receiver's goal line, (2) it touches a player of the kicking team who is touching the ground on or behind the receiver's goal line, or (3) it touches a player of the kicking team who has touched the ground on or behind the receiver's goal line and has not re-established himself in the field of play. See Rule 11 for options for missed field goals beyond the 20-yard line.

(b) If the receivers catch the ball in the end zone, or recover it in the end zone after touching it in the field of play, they may advance.

(c) If the kickers catch or recover the ball in the end zone after the receivers first touch the ball in the field of play, it is a touchdown for the kickers.

(d) If there is a spot of first touching by the kickers outside the receivers' 20-yard line, the receiving team has the option to take possession of the ball at the spot of the first touching.

(e) If the scrimmage kick is a punt, and the ball goes out of bounds in the field of play after being touched by a receiver in the end zone or in the field of play, it is the receiving team's ball at the out-of-bounds spot.

Kick Touches Receivers' Goal Posts

Article 2 If a missed field goal or try, or a punt, has touched the receiver's goal post, uprights, or crossbar, the ball is dead in the receiver's end zone, and all customary rules pertaining to punts, missed field goals, and try's apply.

Kick Touches Kickers' Goal Posts

Article 3 If a scrimmage kick touches the kickers' goal post, uprights or crossbar, the ball is dead, and it is a safety. See 11-5-1.

Ball Out of Bounds or Not Recovered in Field of Play

Article 4 If a scrimmage kick goes out of bounds between the goal lines or is lying in the field of play with no player attempting to recover it, it is the receiver's ball at the dead-ball spot, unless the special rules for missed field goals in Rule 11-5-2 apply.

Section 5 Spots of Enforcement

Spots of Enforcement

Article 1 If there is a foul from the time of the snap until a legal scrimmage kick ends, enforcement is from the previous spot. This includes a foul during a run prior to a legal kick

(14-1-13-A.C. 1), and running into or roughing the kicker (12-2-6). If the offensive team commits a foul in its own end zone, it is a safety.

Exception 1: Unless the kick is a missed field-goal attempt, if there is a foul by the kicking team, the receiving team will have the option of taking the penalty at the previous spot and replaying the down, or adding the penalty yardage on to the dead-ball spot.

Clarification 1: The dead-ball spot for kicks that result in a touchback is the 20-yard line.

Clarification 2: If there is an illegal touch inside the five-yard line, the receiving team also has the option of accepting a touchback.

Exception 2: Fair catch interference, interference with the opportunity to make a catch, an invalid fair catch signal, or a personal foul (blocking) after a fair catch signal are enforced from the spot of the foul.

Exception 3: If the receiving team commits a foul after the ball has been kicked and has gone beyond the line of scrimmage, and the receivers possess and thereafter keep the ball throughout the remainder of the down, the penalty for their infraction will be ruled as a foul after possession (post-possession) and shall be assessed from whichever of the following is least advantageous to them:

- (a) The spot where possession is gained;
- (b) The spot where the ball becomes dead; or
- (c) The spot of the foul.

Exception 4: If the receiving team commits a foul after the ball has been kicked and has gone beyond the line of scrimmage, and there is a first touch by the kicking team, if the receiving team subsequently loses possession, the ball reverts to the receiving team, and its penalty shall be assessed from whichever is least advantageous to them:

- (a) The spot where possession was gained by the receiving team; or
- (b) The spot of the foul.

Clarification: The spot of the first touch is not used.

Rule 7 Opportunity to Catch a Kick, Fair Catch

Section 1 Opportunity to Catch a Kick

Interference

Article 1 During a scrimmage kick that crosses the line of scrimmage, or during a free kick, members of the kicking team are prohibited from interfering with any receiver making an attempt to catch the airborne kick, or from obstructing or hindering his path to the airborne kick, and regardless of whether any signal was given.

Item 1: Contact with Receiver. It is interference if a player of the kicking team contacts the receiver, or causes a passive player of either team to contact the receiver, before or simultaneous to his touching the ball.

Item 2: Right of Way. A receiver who is moving toward a kicked ball that is in flight has the right of way. If opponents obstruct his path to the ball, or cause a passive player of either team to obstruct his path, it is interference, even if there is no contact, or if he catches the ball in spite of the interference, and regardless of whether any signal was given.

Penalties:

(a) For interference with the opportunity to make a catch when a prior signal has not been made: Loss of 15 yards from the spot of the foul, and the offended team is entitled to put the ball in play by a snap from scrimmage. See 4-8-2-g.

(b) For interfering with a fair catch after a signal: Loss of 15 yards from the spot of the foul. A fair catch is awarded even if the ball is not caught. See Section 2, Article 4.

Section 2 Fair Catch

Definition

Article 1 A Fair Catch is an unhindered catch of an airborne scrimmage kick that has crossed the line of scrimmage, or of an airborne free kick, by a player of the receiving team who has given a valid fair catch signal.

Fair Catch Signal

Article 2

Item 1: Valid Fair Catch Signal. A fair catch signal is valid if it is made while the kick is in flight by a player who fully extends one arm above his helmet and waves it from side to side. A receiver is permitted to legally raise his hand(s) to his helmet to shield his eyes from the sun, but is not permitted to raise them above his helmet except to signal for a fair catch.

Item 2: Invalid Fair Catch Signal. If a player raises his hand(s) above his shoulder(s) in any other manner, it is an invalid fair catch signal. If there is an invalid fair catch signal, the ball is dead when caught or recovered by any player of the receiving team, but it is not a fair catch. (The ball is not dead if it touches an opponent before or after it strikes the ground. See Article 3(b)).

Clarification: A fair catch signal given behind the line of scrimmage on a scrimmage kick is ignored and is neither valid nor invalid.

Penalty: For an invalid fair catch signal: Loss of five yards from the spot of the signal.

Item 3: Muff. After a valid fair catch signal, the opportunity to catch a kick does not end if the ball is muffed. The player who signaled for a fair catch must have a reasonable opportunity to catch the muffed ball before it hits the ground without interference by members of the kicking team, and regardless of whether the ball strikes another player or an official.

Item 4: Intentional Muff. An intentional muff forward prior to a catch in order to gain ground is an illegal bat (see 12-1-8).

Item 5: Illegal Block. Until the ball touches a teammate or an opponent, a player who makes a valid or invalid fair catch signal is prohibited from blocking or initiating contact with a player of the kicking team.

Penalty: For an illegal block after a fair catch signal: Loss of 15 yards from the spot of the foul.

Restrictions

Article 3

(a) If a player of the receiving team makes a valid fair catch signal, and the ball is not touched by a player of the kicking team, the following apply:

(1) If he catches the ball, it is dead immediately, and it is a fair catch. If he muffs the ball, but catches it before it touches the ground, it is also a fair catch. After a fair catch, the ball is next put in play by the receiving team at the dead-ball spot (or at the succeeding spot after enforcement of any applicable penalties). See Article 4.

(2) If he recovers the ball after it strikes the ground, it is dead immediately, but it is not a fair catch.

(3) If the ball is caught or recovered by a teammate who did not make a valid fair catch signal, the ball is dead immediately, but it is not a fair catch. The ball will next be put in play by a snap by the receiving team at the dead-ball spot (or at the succeeding spot after enforcement of any applicable penalties).

(b) If the ball touches a player of the kicking team, before or after it strikes the ground, any player of the receiving team may catch or recover it and advance. If a player of the receiving team who has given a valid fair catch signal catches the ball before it hits the ground and elects not to advance the ball, it is a fair catch.

(c) After a receiver has made a fair catch, an opponent is prohibited from blocking or tackling him, or causing a passive player of either team to contact him. Incidental contact is not a foul.

Penalty: For illegal contact with a player who has made a fair catch: Loss of 15 yards from the dead-ball spot and disqualification if flagrant (snap or free kick).

Putting Ball in Play After Fair Catch

Article 4 After a fair catch is made, or is awarded as the result of fair catch interference, the receiving team has the option of putting the ball in play by either:

(a) a fair-catch kick (drop kick or placekick without a tee) from the spot of the catch (or the succeeding spot after enforcement of any applicable penalties) (3-9-1 and 11-5-3), or

(b) a snap from the spot of the catch (or the succeeding spot after enforcement of any applicable penalties).

Clarification: A receiver may make or be awarded a fair catch in his end zone. If there is fair catch interference or illegal contact with the receiver after he has made a fair

catch, the 15-yard penalty is enforced from the receiver's 20-yard line, and the option for a fair catch kick is awarded.

Extension of a Period

Article 5 If time expires during a play in which a player has signaled for a fair catch, the following shall apply:

- (a) If the player makes a fair catch, the receiving team may elect to extend the period with a fair-catch kick, but does not have the option to extend the period by a snap from scrimmage.
- (b) If the kicking team interferes with a receiver who has signaled for a fair catch, the receiving team will be awarded a 15-yard penalty and the option to extend the period by attempting a fair-catch kick or by a snap from scrimmage.

Rule 8 Ball in Play, Dead Ball, and Scrimmage

Section 1 Ball in Play

Article 1:

Live Ball.

After the ball has been declared ready for play, it becomes a live ball when it is legally snapped or legally kicked (a free kick or fair catch kick). The ball remains dead if it is snapped or kicked before it is made ready for play.

Section 2 Dead Ball

Article 1:

Dead Ball Declared.

An official shall declare the ball dead and the down ended:

- (a) when a runner is contacted by a defensive player and touches the ground with any part of his body other than his hands or feet. The ball is dead the instant the runner touches the ground. A runner touching the ground with his hands or feet while in the grasp of an opponent may continue to advance; or
- (b) when a runner is held or otherwise restrained so that his forward progress ends; or
- (c) when a quarterback immediately drops to his knee (or simulates dropping to his knee) behind the line of scrimmage; or
- (d) when a runner declares himself down by sliding feet first on the ground. The ball is dead the instant the runner touches the ground with anything other than his hands or his feet; or

Clarification: Defenders are required to treat a sliding runner as they would a runner who is down by contact.

- (1) A defender must pull up when a runner begins a feet-first slide. This does not mean that all contact by a defender is illegal. If a defender has already committed himself, and the contact is unavoidable, it is not a foul unless the defender commits some other act, such as helmet-to-helmet contact or by driving his forearm or shoulder into the head or neck area of the runner.
- (2) A runner who desires to take advantage of this protection is responsible for starting his slide before contact by a defensive player is imminent; if he does not, and waits until the last moment to begin his slide, he puts himself in jeopardy of being contacted.
- (e) when a runner is out of bounds, or declares himself down by falling to the ground, or kneeling, and making no effort to advance; or

- (f) when an opponent takes a ball that is in the possession of a runner who is on the ground; or

Clarification: An opponent may take or grab a ball (hand to hand) in possession of a runner who is on his feet or is airborne.

- (g) when a forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete (see 9-1-4); or
- (h) when any legal or illegal kick touches the receivers' goal posts or crossbar, unless it scores a field goal (see 9-4-2); or
- (i) when a loose ball comes to rest anywhere in the field of play, and no player attempts to recover it; the official covering the play should pause momentarily before signaling that the ball is dead. Any legal (or illegal) kick is awarded to the receivers, and any other ball is awarded to the team last in possession. When awarded to a team behind a goal line, the ball is placed on the 1-yard line.
- (j) when any legal or illegal kick is caught or recovered by the kickers, except a scrimmage kick that is kicked from behind the line and is recovered behind the line (not a Try kick). See 6-3-2-Item3 for exception; or
- (k) when the defense gains possession during a Try, or it is obvious a Try-kick will not score; or
- (l) when a touchdown, touchback, safety, field goal, or Try has been made; or
- (m) when any receiver catches or recovers the ball after a fair catch signal (valid or invalid) has been made, provided the ball has not been touched by an opponent, before or after it strikes the ground; or
- (n) when an official sounds his whistle while the ball is still in play, the ball becomes dead immediately;
 - (i) If the ball is in player possession, the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where it has been declared dead or to replay the down.
 - (ii) If the ball is a loose ball resulting from a fumble, backward pass, or illegal forward pass, the team last in possession may elect to put the ball in play at the spot where possession was lost or to replay the down.
 - (iii) If the ball is a loose ball resulting from a legal forward pass, a free kick, a fair-catch kick, or a scrimmage kick, the ball is returned to the previous spot, and the down is replayed.
 - (iv) If there is a foul by either team during any of the above, penalty enforcement is the same as for fouls during a run, forward pass, kick, fumble, and backward pass.
- (o) when a fumble is recovered or caught by a teammate of the fumbling player, and the fumble occurs on a play that is subject to the "two minute" or "fourth down" fumble provisions. See 9-7-5 and 9-7-6; or
- (p) when the ball is out of bounds; or
- (q) If a loose ball in play strikes a video board, guide wire, sky cam, or any other object, the ball will be dead immediately, and the down will be replayed at the previous spot.

Clarification 1: If there is not an on-field ruling that the ball struck an object, the Replay Official is empowered to initiate a booth review, even if the event occurs prior to the two-minute warning. If, prior to the two-minute warning, no booth review is initiated by the Replay Official, a coach's challenge is permitted under the established rules for such a challenge.

Clarification 2: In the event the down is replayed, the game clock will be reset to the time remaining when the snap occurred. All penalties will be disregarded, except for personal fouls or Unsportsmanlike Conduct fouls, which will be administered prior to the replaying of the down.

(r) when a runner's helmet comes completely off.

Clarification: The game clock will not stop when this occurs, and the play clock will be reset to 40 seconds. Penalty enforcement following the play is as ordinary for fouls during runs or kicks.

Article 3:

Ball Touches Official

The ball is not dead because it touches an official who is inbounds, or because of a signal by an official other than a whistle.

Section 3 New Series of Downs

Article 1:

New Series for Team A

A new series of four scrimmage downs is awarded to Team A when the following conditions exist:

- (a) During a given series, the ball is declared dead in possession of Team A while at or beyond the line to gain; or
- (b) Enforcement of a foul by Team B results in the placement of the ball at or beyond the line to gain, or if the enforcement of a foul awards an automatic first down to Team A; or
- (c) If there is a change of possession during the down, and Team A has possession at the end of the down; or
- (d) The kicking team recovers a scrimmage kick anywhere in the field of play after it first has been touched beyond the line of scrimmage by the receivers. See 9-3-2-Item 1; or
- (e) The kicking team legally recovers a free kick.

Article 2:

New Series for Team B

A new series of four scrimmage downs is awarded to Team B when the following conditions exist:

- (a) Team A fails to advance the ball to the line to gain during a series of downs, or
- (b) There is a change of possession during the down, and Team B has possession at the end of the down; or

- (c) When the ball is declared dead in possession of the receiving team after a free kick, scrimmage kick, or fair-catch kick.

Article 3:

Forward Part of Ball

The forward part of the ball in its position when it is declared dead in the field of play shall be the determining point in measuring any distance gained or lost. The ball shall be rotated so that its long axis is parallel to the sidelines before measuring, while maintaining the forward most point.

Clarification: When an airborne player of either team completes a catch or interception inbounds after an opponent has driven him backward, the ball is declared dead, and forward progress is awarded at the spot where the player established firm grip and control of the ball while in the air.

Section 4 Action at or Before the Snap

Article 1:

Ball Ready for Play

After the neutral zone has been established (ball is made or declared ready for play), an offensive player may not make a false start, a defensive player may not encroach (initiate contact with a member of the offensive team) or commit a neutral zone infraction, and no player of either team may be offside when the ball is put in play.

Article 2:

False Start

It is a False Start if the ball has been placed ready for play, and, prior to the snap, an offensive player who has assumed a set position charges or moves in such a way as to simulate the start of a play, or if an offensive player who is in motion makes a sudden movement toward the line of scrimmage. Any quick abrupt movement by a single offensive player, or by several offensive players in unison, which simulates the start of the snap, is a false start.

Exceptions:

- (a) This does not apply to an offensive player under the center who turns his head or shoulders, unless the movement is an obvious attempt to draw an opponent offside.

Clarification: See 4-6-5-d, page 28, for actions by a defensive player who attempts to cause an offensive player to commit a false start.

Item 1: Interior Lineman. It is a False Start if an interior lineman (tackle to tackle) takes or simulates a three-point stance, and then changes his position or moves the hand that is on the ground.

Item 2: Change of Stance. An interior lineman who is in a two-point stance is permitted to re-set in a three-point stance or change his position, provided that he re-sets prior to the snap.

Item 3: Eligible Receiver. If an eligible receiver who is on the line changes his stance, or moves to another position on the line or in the backfield, he must reset prior to the snap.

If an eligible receiver who is in the backfield changes his stance, or moves to another position in the backfield that is closer to the line of scrimmage or to a position on the line, he must reset prior to the snap. (For a backfield player who is moving parallel to or away from the line of scrimmage, see Article 7.)

Item 4: Player Under Center. It is legal for a player who has taken a position under or behind the center to go in motion, whether he has placed his hands under center, on his knees, or on the body of the center. However, it is a false start if the action is quick and abrupt, or if the player fails to come to a complete stop prior to the ball being snapped.

Item 5: Shotgun Formation. A player who is in position to receive the snap in shotgun formation is permitted to shift his feet prior to the snap, but any quick and abrupt movement that draws a reaction from the defense is a False Start.

Item 6: Attempt to Draw Offside. Any obvious attempt by the quarterback or other player in position to receive the snap to draw an opponent offside is a False Start.

Penalty: For a False Start: Loss of five yards from the line of scrimmage. The foul is enforced prior to the snap.

Clarification: The official shall blow his whistle immediately. The penalty for a False Start shall be enforced regardless of whether the snap is made.

Article 3:

Encroachment

It is Encroachment if a defensive player enters the neutral zone and contacts an offensive player or the ball prior to the snap, or if he interferes with the ball during the snap. The play is dead immediately.

Penalty: For Encroachment: Loss of five yards from the line of scrimmage. The foul is enforced prior to the snap.

Article 4:

Neutral Zone Infraction: It is a Neutral Zone Infraction when:

- (a) a defender moves beyond the neutral zone prior to the snap and is parallel to or beyond an offensive lineman, with an unabated path to the quarterback or kicker, even though no contact is made by a blocker; officials are to blow their whistles immediately; or
- (b) a defender enters the neutral zone prior to the snap, causing the offensive player(s) in close proximity (including a quarterback who is under center) to react (move) immediately to protect himself (themselves) against impending contact; officials are to blow their whistles immediately. If there is no immediate reaction by the offensive player(s) in close proximity, and the defensive player returns to a legal position prior to the snap without contacting an opponent, there is no foul. A flexed or split receiver is considered to be in close proximity if he is lined up on the side of the ball on which the violation occurs; other offensive players are considered to be in close proximity if they are within two and one half positions of the defender

who enters the neutral zone. If the defender is directly over the center, a quarterback under center, the center, and the guards and tackles on both sides of the center are considered to be within close proximity; if the defender is in a gap, the two offensive players on either side of the gap are considered to be within close proximity (including a quarterback under center, if applicable); or

- (c) a player, after he has received a warning, enters into the neutral zone. It is a foul, even if he returns to a legal position prior to the snap without contacting an opponent or causing a reaction (movement) by an offensive player in close proximity.

Clarification: During the last two minutes of a half, after the ball has been spotted for the succeeding down at the line of scrimmage and the offense is legally set, if the ball is snapped before all members of the defensive team have taken their proper position on the line of scrimmage, play shall be stopped immediately, and the defensive team penalized five yards for a neutral zone infraction.

Penalty: For a Neutral Zone Infraction: Loss of five yards from the line of scrimmage. The foul is enforced prior to the snap.

Article 5:

Offside

A player is offside when any part of his body is in or beyond the neutral zone when the ball is put in play.

Penalty: For offside: Loss of five yards.

Article 6:

Complete Stop

All offensive players are required to come to a complete stop and be in a set position simultaneously for at least one second prior to the snap.

Article 7:

Illegal Motion

When the ball is snapped, one player who is lined up in the backfield may be in motion, provided that he is moving parallel to or away from the line of scrimmage. No player is permitted to be moving toward the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. All other players must be stationary in their positions.

Penalty: For a player illegally in motion at the snap: Loss of five yards.

Article 8:

Shifts

The offensive team is permitted to shift and have players in motion multiple times before the snap. However, after the last shift, all players must come to a complete stop and be in a set position simultaneously for at least one second.

If any eligible backfield player goes in motion (one at a time) after the last shift and comes to a complete stop, there is no requirement for a full second pause before a second player can legally go in motion. However, if the first player has not come to a complete stop when

the second player goes in motion, it is another shift and requires another simultaneous stop for at least one second by all players.

Clarification: The offensive team must present a legal formation both before and after a shift.

Penalty: For an illegal shift: Loss of five yards.

Section 5 Position of Players at the Snap

Article 1:

Offensive Team

The offensive team must be in compliance with the following at the snap:

- (a) It must have seven or more players on its line (3-18); and
- (b) All players who are not on the line, other than the receiver of the snap under center, must be at least one yard behind it.
- (c) No player may be out of bounds.

Clarification: Offensive linemen may lock legs.

Penalty: For illegal formation by the offense: Loss of five yards.

Article 2:

Defensive Team

During a punt, a field-goal attempt, or a Try Kick, a Team B player, who is within one yard of the line of scrimmage at the snap, must have his entire body outside the snapper's shoulder pads.

Clarification: This restriction does not apply if a team does not present an apparent punt, field goal, or Try Kick formation, or if, after the offensive team has assumed a set position, there is a shift, or a player goes in motion.

Penalty: For illegal formation by the defense: Loss of five yards from the previous spot.

Section 6 Putting the Ball in Play from Scrimmage

Article 1:

Ball in Play

The offensive team must put the ball in play with a snap at the spot where the previous down ended, unless the enforcement of a penalty moves the ball to another spot or the down ended outside the inbounds lines. If a fair catch kick is chosen after a fair catch, 7-2-4 and 11-4-3 apply.

Article 2:

Snap at Inbounds Spot

The ball is next put in play (snap) at the inbounds spot by the team entitled to possession (8-1-1 and 2 and 8-4-1) when:

(a) a loose ball is out of bounds between the goal lines;

Exception: The ball is next put in play at the previous spot if a forward pass is incomplete.

(b) a runner is out of bounds between the goal lines;

(c) the ball is dead in a side zone;

(d) the ball is placed in the side zone as the result of a penalty enforcement; or

(e) a fair catch is made or awarded in a side zone.

Article 3:

Restrictions for Snapper

The snap (3-31) may be made by any offensive player who is on the line of scrimmage but must conform to the following provisions:

(a) The snap must start with the ball on the ground, with its long axis horizontal and at right angles to the line.

(b) It is not necessary that the snap be between the snapper's legs, but it must be one quick and continuous motion of the hand or hands of the snapper. The ball must leave or be taken from his hands during this motion.

(c) The snapper may not snap the ball after it is ready for play until all of the officials have had a reasonable time to assume their normal stances. If this occurs, the ball remains dead, and no penalty is assessed unless it is a repeated act after a warning (delay of game).

Penalty: For illegally snapping the ball: Loss of five yards from the line of scrimmage.

Article 4:

Legal Snap

A snap is a backward pass. The snap must be received by a player who is not on his line at the snap, unless the ball first strikes the ground. If the ball first strikes the ground, or is muffed by an eligible backfield receiver, it can be recovered and advanced by any player.

Penalty: For snapping the ball to an ineligible snap receiver: Loss of five yards from the line of scrimmage. The whistle shall be blown immediately.

Rule 9 Forward Pass, Backward Pass and Fumble

Section 1 Forward Pass

Article 1

Definition

It is a forward pass if:

- (a) the ball initially moves forward (to a point nearer the opponent's goal line) after leaving the passer's hand(s); or
- (b) the ball first strikes the ground, a player, an official, or anything else at a point that is nearer the opponent's goal line than the point at which the ball leaves the passer's hand(s).

Clarification: A ball that is intentionally fumbled and goes forward is a forward pass. A ball that is intentionally muffed, and goes forward or backward, is a batted ball (12-1-8). The direction taken by a fumbled or muffed ball does not affect the application of the rules specific to such acts, unless it is ruled that they are intentional.

When a player is in control of the ball and attempting to pass it forward, any intentional forward movement of his hand starts a forward pass.

(a) If the passer is attempting to throw a forward pass, but contact by an opponent materially affects him, causing the ball to go backward, it is a forward pass, regardless of where the ball strikes the ground, a player, an official, or anything else.

(b) If, after an intentional forward movement of his hand, the passer loses possession of the ball as he is attempting to tuck it back toward his body or after he has tucked the ball into his body, it is a fumble.

(c) If the passer loses possession of the ball while attempting to recock his arm, it is a fumble.

Article 2

Legal Forward Pass

The offensive team may make one forward pass from behind the line during each down. If the ball, whether in player possession or loose, crosses the line of scrimmage, a forward pass is not permissible, regardless of whether the ball returns behind the line of scrimmage before the pass is thrown.

Item 1: Illegal Passes. Any other forward pass by either team is illegal and is a foul by the passing team, including the following:

(a) A forward pass thrown when the passer is beyond the line of scrimmage.

Note: It is a forward pass from beyond the line of scrimmage if the passer's entire body and the ball are beyond the line of scrimmage when the ball is released, whether the passer is airborne or touching the ground. The penalty for a forward pass thrown from beyond the line is enforced from the spot where the ball is released.

(b) A second forward pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

(c) A forward pass thrown after the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage and has returned behind it.

(d) A forward pass thrown after there has been a change of possession.

Item 2: Intercepted Illegal Pass. If an illegal pass is caught or intercepted, the ball may be advanced and the penalty declined.

Penalties:

(a) **For a forward pass from beyond the line: Loss of down and five yards from the spot of the pass. See 14-8-2. See A.C. 3 below.**

(b) **For a second forward pass from behind the line, or for a forward pass that was thrown after the ball returned behind the line: Loss of five yards.**

(c) For a forward pass that is thrown by Team B, or for a forward pass that is thrown by Team A after a change of possession: Loss of five yards from the spot of the pass.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

(1) Eligibility, pass interference, and intentional grounding rules apply when a forward pass is thrown from behind the line, regardless of whether the pass is an illegal forward pass. Eligibility, pass interference, and intentional grounding rules do not apply if a forward pass is thrown (a) from beyond the line, (b) on a Free Kick play, (c) on a Fair Catch kick play, or (d) after a change of possession.

(2) Roughing the passer rules apply on all passes (legal or illegal) thrown from behind the line of scrimmage (12-2-13). If a pass is thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage, unnecessary roughness may apply for action against the passer.

(3) When a distance penalty in Penalty (a) leaves the ball in advance of the necessary line to gain, it is first-and-10 for the offensive team.

(4) See 3-2-3 for the definition of team possession during a forward pass (a loose ball), or for when possession ends.

P.S. 9.1 Second-and-10 on A40. A forward pass is batted back by a defensive player. The ball goes back in the air to the quarterback behind his line. He throws it again to his end who catches it on the B40 and goes for a score. **Ruling:** No score. Second-and-15 on A35.

P.S. 9.2 Second-and-18 on A4. A second forward pass from behind A's goal line is caught by end A1 at the A8-yard line where he is tackled. **Ruling:** Safety. Safety kick A20.

P.S. 9.3 Second-and-10 on A40. A second forward pass from behind the line is intercepted by the defensive team at midfield. A defensive player returns it for a touchdown. **Ruling:** Touchdown. Illegal passes may be caught or intercepted.

P.S. 9.4 A punt is caught on the receiving team's 20-yard line. The player who caught the ball attempts to throw a backward pass, but the ball goes forward and hits the ground. The kicking team falls on it. **Ruling:** Illegal forward pass. The ball is dead when it hits the ground. Penalize from the spot of the pass. B's ball first-and-10 on B15 (9-1-1-Pen. a).

P.S. 9.5 A forward pass is intercepted by a defensive player in his end zone. While in the end zone, he attempts to pass backward. The pass goes forward, hits the ground on the 1-yard line and is recovered by the first passing team. **Ruling:** Safety. Forward pass not from scrimmage in the end zone.

P.S. 9.6 Third-and-10 on B35. A second forward pass is thrown from behind the line to flanker A1. B1 interferes with A1 on the B20, but A1 catches it anyway and is downed on the B20. **Ruling:** Double foul. Illegal pass by the offensive team and interference by the defensive team. Interference rules apply on the second forward pass from behind the line. (14-3-1). A's ball third-and-10 on B35 (replay).

P.S. 9.7 Third-and-15 on A30. During a forward pass from beyond the line on the A40, A1 clips on the A40. The pass is incomplete. **Ruling:** Choice for defensive team. Loss of down and five from the spot of the pass or loss of 15 from the spot of the pass (unless offensive player fouls behind that spot— spot of foul). A's ball fourth-and-10 on A35 or third-and-20 on A25.

P.S. 9.8 Third-and-15 on A30. During a forward pass from beyond the line on the A40, defensive player tackles A8 by the facemask on the A40. **Ruling:** Double foul (14-3-1). Replay at the previous spot. A's ball third-and-15 on A30.

Article 3

Completed or Intercepted Pass

A player who makes a catch may advance the ball. A forward pass is complete (by the offense) or intercepted (by the defense) if a player, who is inbounds:

(a) secures control of the ball in his hands or arms prior to the ball touching the ground; and

(b) touches the ground inbounds with both feet or with any part of his body other than his hands; and

(c) maintains control of the ball long enough, after (a) and (b) have been fulfilled, to enable him to perform any act common to the game (i.e. maintaining control long enough to pitch it, pass it, advance with it, or avoid or ward off an opponent, etc.).

Clarification (1): It is not necessary that he commit such an act, provided that he maintains control of the ball long enough to do so.

Clarification (2): If a player has control of the ball, a slight movement of the ball will not be considered a loss of possession. He must lose control of the ball in order to rule that there has been a loss of possession.

If the player loses the ball while simultaneously touching both feet or any part of his body other than his hands to the ground, or if there is any doubt that the acts were simultaneous, it is not a catch.

Item 1: Player Going to the Ground. If a player goes to the ground in the act of catching a pass (with or without contact by an opponent), he must maintain control of the ball throughout the process of contacting the ground, whether in the field of play or the end zone. If he loses control of the ball, and the ball touches the ground before he regains control, the pass is incomplete. If he regains control prior to the ball touching the ground, the pass is complete.

Item 2: Sideline Catches. If a player goes to the ground out-of-bounds (with or without contact by an opponent) in the process of making a catch at the sideline, he must maintain complete and continuous control of the ball throughout the process of contacting the ground, or the pass is incomplete.

Item 3: End Zone Catches. If a player catches the ball while in the end zone, both feet must be completely on the ground before losing possession, or the pass is incomplete.

Clarification: In the field of play, if a catch of a forward pass has been completed, after which contact by a defender causes the ball to become loose before the runner is down by contact, it is a fumble, and the ball remains alive. In the end zone, the same action is a touchdown, since the receiver completed the catch beyond the goal line prior to the loss of possession, and the ball is dead when the catch is completed

Item 4: Ball Touches Ground. If the ball touches the ground after the player secures control of it, it is a catch, provided that the player continues to maintain control.

Item 5: Simultaneous Catch. If a pass is caught simultaneously by two eligible opponents, and both players retain it, the ball belongs to the passers. It is not a simultaneous catch if a player gains control first and an opponent subsequently gains joint control. If the ball is muffed after simultaneous touching by two such players, all the players of the passing team become eligible to catch the loose ball.

Item 6: Carried Out of Bounds. If a player, who is in possession of the ball, is held up and carried out of bounds by an opponent before both feet or any part of his body other than his hands touches the ground inbounds, it is a completed or intercepted pass.

Article 4

Incomplete Pass

Any forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete and the ball is dead immediately if the pass strikes the ground or goes out of bounds. An incomplete pass is a loss of down and the ball returns to the previous spot.

Clarification: If there is any question by the covering official(s) if a pass is complete, intercepted, or incomplete, it is to be ruled incomplete.

Article 5

Eligible Receivers

The following players are eligible to catch a forward pass that is thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

- (a) Defensive players.
- (b) Offensive players who are on either end of the line, provided they either have the numbers of eligible players (1-49 and 80-89) or have legally reported to play a position on the end of the line. See 5-1-2.
- (c) Offensive players who are legally at least one yard behind the line at the snap, provided they either have the numbers of eligible players (1-49 and 80-89) or have legally reported to play a position in the backfield.
- (d) All other offensive players after the ball has been touched by any defensive player or any eligible offensive player.

Article 6

Ineligible Receivers

All offensive players other than those identified in Article 5 above are ineligible to catch a legal or illegal forward pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage, including:

- (a) Players who are not on either end of their line or at least one yard behind it when the ball is snapped.
- (b) Offensive players wearing numbers 50-79, unless they have reported a change in their eligibility status to the Referee and have assumed a position on their line or in their backfield as required by Article 5;
- (c) Players who fail to notify the Referee of being eligible when required;
- (d) An eligible receiver who has been out of bounds prior to or during a pass, even if he has re-established himself inbounds with both feet or with any part of his body other than his hands.

Exception: If an eligible receiver is forced out of bounds by a foul by a defender, including illegal contact, defensive holding, or defensive pass interference, he will become eligible to legally touch the pass (without prior touching by another eligible receiver or defender) as soon as he re-establishes himself inbounds with both feet or with any part of his body other than his hands. See Article 8, Note 3.

(e) A player who takes his stance behind center as a T-formation quarterback is not an eligible receiver unless, before the ball is snapped, he legally moves to a position at least one yard behind the line of scrimmage or on the end of the line, and is stationary in that position for at least one second before the snap.

Clarification: If he leaves his position behind the center and does not receive the snap, it is a false start unless he has been stationary for at least one second.

Article 7

Legal Touching

A forward pass (legal or illegal) thrown from behind the line may be touched by any eligible player. A pass in flight may be tipped, batted, or deflected in any direction by any eligible player at any time, including such a pass in the end zone. See 12-1-8

Article 8

Illegal Touching of a Forward Pass

It is a foul for illegal touching if a forward pass (legal or illegal), thrown from behind the line of scrimmage:

- (a) is first touched intentionally or is caught by an ineligible offensive player; or
- (b) first touches or is caught by an eligible receiver who has gone out of bounds, either of his own volition or by being legally forced out of bounds, and has re-established himself inbounds.

Penalty: Loss of five yards.

Clarification 1: If a forward pass (legal or illegal) is caught by an ineligible offensive player, the ball remains alive.

Clarification 2: The bat of a pass in flight by any player does not end a pass, nor does it change the impetus if the bat sends it in touch.

Clarification 3: If a player touches the ball after having been out of bounds, but prior to re-establishing himself inbounds with both feet or any part of his body other than his hands, the pass is incomplete, and there is no penalty for illegal touching.

P.S. 9.9 Third-and-10 on B40. A forward pass from behind the line goes off ineligible offensive guard A1's shoulder and flanker back A2 catches it in the end zone. **Ruling:** Touchdown.

P.S. 9.10 While in midair, a receiver firmly takes hold of a pass, but loses possession of the ball when his shoulder lands on the ground with or without being contacted by an opponent. **Ruling:** Incomplete pass. Receiver must hold onto the ball when he alights on the ground in order to complete the reception.

P.S. 9.11 Third-and-10 on B40. On a legal forward pass, eligible end A1 voluntarily goes or is legally blocked out of bounds on the B36. He returns to the field of play, catches the pass, and scores. **Ruling:** No score. The player became an ineligible receiver by going out of bounds. A's ball third-and-15 on B45.

P.S. 9.12 Third-and-10 on B40. On a legal forward pass, eligible end A1 steps out of bounds on the B20. He returns to the field of play and catches a pass after a defensive player touched it. He scores. **Ruling:** Touchdown. Legal play as all ineligible receivers become eligible after the defense touches the ball.

P.S. 9.13 Third-and-10 on B40. Eligible end A1 touches a legal forward pass on the B35 and the ball is then touched by ineligible receiver A2 on B35. A defensive player intercepts. He runs it back to the B45 where he fumbles and passing Team A recovers. **Ruling:** Legal touch. A's ball first-and-10 on B45.

P.S. 9.14 Second-and-five on B20. A forward pass from behind the line barely touches the crossbar. Eligible end A1 catches the ball in the end zone. **Ruling:** No score. The ball is dead upon touching the crossbar (or goal posts). A's ball third-and-five on B20.

P.S. 9.15 Second-and-10 on B30. A legal forward pass is caught by flanker A1 near the sideline. His second step touches the sideline. **Ruling:** Incomplete pass. Both feet have to land inbounds. A's ball third-and-10 on B30.

P.S. 9.16 Second-and-10 on B30. A legal forward pass is intercepted by B1. As he lands with the ball in his possession, he straddles the sideline. **Ruling:** Incomplete pass. Both feet have to touch inbounds. A's ball third-and-10 on B30.

P.S. 9.17 Second-and-10 on B30. A legal forward pass is intercepted by B1 who jumped in from out of bounds to intercept pass. Both feet touch inbounds after interception. **Ruling:** Incomplete pass. Both feet have to be inbounds prior to interception. A's ball third-and-10 on B30. See 9-1-7-A.C. 5.

P.S. 9.18 Second-and-10 on B30. Eligible A1 jumps in air (behind or beyond line) to receive a forward pass and then passes backward to ineligible A2 before he lands. **Ruling:** Legal catch.

P.S. 9.19 Second-and-20 on A40. Quarterback A1 receives a hand-to-hand snap from center and hands off to back A2 who runs to his right and throws a legal forward pass from behind the line to Quarterback A1. Quarterback A1 catches the pass on the A38 and runs to the 50. **Ruling:** A's ball second-and-25 on A35 or A's ball third-and-10 on 50. T-formation quarterback is ineligible to catch a pass unless, at the snap, he had legally established himself in the backfield.

P.S. 9.20 Second-and-10 on A40. A legal forward pass touches ineligible guard A1 behind the line. The ball is then intercepted by a defensive player who returns it to the A20. **Ruling:** Pass not incomplete when A1 touched by ball. B's ball first-and-10 on A20. No foul on A1 as he did not intentionally touch the pass.

P.S. 9.21 Second-and-10 on A40. A legal forward pass is intentionally touched by ineligible guard A1 behind the line. The ball is then intercepted by the defensive team which returns it to the A30, fumbles, and the ball is recovered by the passing team at the A28. **Ruling:** Five-yard penalty for touching ineligible receiver behind the line. A's ball second-and-15 on A35.

P.S. 9.22 Second-and-10 on A40. A legal forward pass is intentionally touched by ineligible guard A1 behind the line and is then caught by eligible back A2 who runs to the 50. **Ruling:** A's ball second-and-15 on A35.

P.S. 9.23 -Fourth-and-two on B4. A legal forward pass touches originally ineligible receiver A1 in the end zone and falls incomplete. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B4. There is no foul for illegal touching of a forward pass unless A1 intentionally touched the pass. There could be a foul on A1 for being illegally downfield on a forward pass if he fails to meet the requirements of Art. 9-2-2.

P.S. 9.24 Fourth-and-two on B4 A legal forward pass accidentally touches originally ineligible receiver A1 on the B3 and falls incomplete. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B4. There is no foul for illegal touching of a forward pass because A1 accidentally touched the pass. Also, A1 is not illegally downfield on a forward pass because he is not more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage. See Art. 9-2-2.

P.S. 9.25 Second-and-15 on A8. A legal forward pass is batted back by a defensive player and the ball lands in the end zone. A defensive player falls on it in the end zone. **Ruling:** Incomplete pass. A's ball third-and-15 on A8.

P.S. 9.26 First-and-10 on A30 A legal forward pass is touched simultaneously by two opposing eligible players, A1 and B1. The pass goes in the air where ineligible A2 catches it on the A40 and runs to midfield. **Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on 50.

Section 2 Intentional Grounding

Article 1

Definition

It is a foul for intentional grounding if a passer, facing an imminent loss of yardage because of pressure from the defense, throws a forward pass without a realistic chance of completion. A realistic chance of completion is defined as a pass that lands in the direction and the vicinity of an originally eligible receiver.

Item 1: Passer or Ball Outside Tackle Position. Intentional grounding will not be called when a passer, who is outside, or has been outside, the tackle position throws a forward pass that lands at or beyond the line of scrimmage, even if no offensive player(s) have a realistic chance to catch the ball (including when the ball lands out of bounds over the sideline or endline). If a loose ball leaves the area bordered by the tackles, this area no longer exists; if the ball is recovered, all intentional grounding rules apply as if the passer is outside this area.

Item 2: Physical Contact. Intentional grounding should not be called if:

- (a) the passer initiates his passing motion toward an eligible receiver and then is significantly affected by physical contact from a defensive player that causes the pass to land in an area that is not in the direction and vicinity of an eligible receiver; or
- (b) the passer is out of the pocket and his passing motion is significantly affected by physical contact from a defensive player that causes the ball to not reach the line of scrimmage.

Item 3: Stopping Clock. A player under center is permitted to stop the game clock legally to save time if, immediately upon receiving the snap, he begins a continuous throwing motion and throws the ball directly into the ground.

Item 4: Delayed Spike. A passer, after delaying his passing action for strategic purposes, is prohibited from throwing the ball to the ground in front of him, even though he is under no pressure from defensive rusher(s).

Penalty:

For intentional grounding:

- (a) loss of down and 10 yards from the previous spot; or
- (b) loss of down at the spot of the foul; or
- (c) if the passer is in his end zone when the ball is thrown, it is a safety. (See 4-7-1 for actions to conserve time inside one minute of either half).

P.S. 9.27 Second-and-10 on A30. Center A1 blocks his man and drives him to the A32 where he loses contact. He then moves laterally to his right before the ball is thrown and completed to eligible end A2 who is downed on the A45. **Ruling:** Ineligible man moved laterally beyond the line after losing contact. Loss of 5 yards. A's ball second-and-15 on A25 (9-2-1).

P.S. 9.28 Second-and-10 on A30. Ineligible tackle A1 charges, driving lineman B1 back from his line. The pass is completed on the A45. **Ruling:** Not ineligible player downfield. A's ball first-and-10 on A45 (9-2-1).

P.S. 9.29 Second-and-10 on A30. On a swing pass from behind the line, a defensive man blocks eligible end A1 on the A32 while the ball is in the air. The pass is incomplete behind the line. **Ruling:** If the pass is catchable, it is defensive pass interference regardless of whether the pass crosses the line. A's ball first-and-10 on A32.

Section 3 Ineligible Player Downfield

Article 1

Legal and Illegal Acts

On a scrimmage play during which a legal forward pass is thrown, an ineligible offensive player, including a T-formation quarterback, is not permitted to move more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage before the pass has been thrown.

Item 1: Legally Downfield. An ineligible player is not illegally downfield if, after initiating contact with an opponent within one yard of the line of scrimmage during his initial charge:

- (a) he moves more than one yard beyond the line while legally blocking or being blocked by an opponent; or
- (b) after breaking legal contact with an opponent more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage, he remains stationary until a forward pass is thrown; or
- (c) after losing legal contact with an opponent more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage, he is forced behind the line of scrimmage by an opponent, at which time he is again subject to normal blocking restrictions for an ineligible offensive player.

Clarification 1: If an offensive player moves beyond the line while legally blocking or being blocked by an opponent, an eligible offensive player may catch a pass between them and the line of scrimmage.

Item 2: Illegally Downfield. An ineligible offensive player is illegally downfield if:

- (a) he moves more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage without contacting an opponent; or
- (b) after losing contact with an opponent within one yard of the line of scrimmage, he advances more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage; or
- (c) after losing contact with an opponent more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage, he continues to move in any direction.

Penalty: For ineligible offensive player downfield: Loss of five yards from the previous spot.

Article 2:

After Pass Is Thrown

After the ball leaves the passer's hand, ineligible pass receivers can advance more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage, or beyond the position reached by their initial charge, provided that they do not block or contact a defensive player, who is more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage, until the ball is touched by a player of either team. Such prior blocking and/or contact is pass interference if it occurs in the vicinity of where the ball is thrown.

P.S. 9.30 Second-and-10 on A30. Center A1 blocks his man and drives him to the A32 where he loses contact. He then moves laterally to his right before the ball is thrown and completed to eligible end A2 who is downed on the A45.

Ruling: Ineligible man moved laterally beyond the line after losing contact. Loss of 5 yards. A's ball second-and-15 on A25 (9-3-1).

P.S. 9.31 Second-and-10 on A30. Ineligible offensive tackle A1 charges, driving lineman B1 back from his line. The pass is completed on the A45.

Ruling: Not ineligible player downfield. A's ball first-and-10 on A45 (9-3-1).

Section 4 Legal and Illegal Contact With Eligible Receivers

Article 1

Legal Contact Within Five Yards.

Within five yards of the line of scrimmage, a defensive player may touch an eligible receiver in front of him. The defender is allowed to maintain continuous and unbroken contact within the five-yard zone, so long as the receiver has not moved beyond a point that is even with the defender.

Article 2**Illegal Contact Within Five Yards.**

Within the five-yard zone, if the player who receives the snap remains in the pocket with the ball, a defender may not make original contact in the back of a receiver, nor may he maintain contact after the receiver has moved beyond a point that is even with the defender.

Illegal Contact Beyond Five-Yard Zone

Article 3**Illegal Contact Beyond Five-Yard Zone.**

Beyond the five-yard zone, if the player who receives the snap remains in the pocket with the ball, a defender may use his hands or arms only to defend or protect himself against impending contact caused by a receiver. If the receiver attempts to evade the defender, the defender cannot initiate contact that redirects, restricts, or impedes the receiver in any way.

Incidental Contact Beyond Five-Yard Zone

Article 4**Incidental Contact Beyond Five-Yard Zone**

Beyond the five-yard zone, incidental contact may exist between receiver and defender as long as it does not materially affect or significantly impede the receiver, creating a distinct advantage.

Article 5**Illegal Cut Block**

It is an illegal cut block if:

- (a) an eligible receiver who takes a position more than two yards outside of his own tackle (a flexed receiver) is blocked below the waist; or
- (b) an eligible receiver who is lined up on or behind the line of scrimmage and is within two yards of his tackle is blocked below the waist after he crosses the line of scrimmage.

Clarification: An eligible receiver, whether lined up on or behind the line of scrimmage, who is within two yards of his tackle may be blocked below the waist at or behind the line of scrimmage.

Article 6**Defensive Holding**

It is defensive holding if a player grasps an eligible offensive player (or his jersey) with his hands, or extends an arm or arms to cut off or encircle him. See 12-1-6.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATION

- (1) Any offensive player who pretends to possess the ball, and/or one to whom a teammate pretends to give the ball, may be tackled providing he is crossing his scrimmage line between the offensive tackles of a normal tight offensive line.**

Article 7**End of Restrictions**

If the quarterback or the receiver of the snap demonstrates no further intention to pass the ball (i.e., hands off or pitches the ball to another back, throws a forward or backward pass, loses possession of the ball by a muff that touches the ground or a fumble, or if he is tackled, the restrictions on the defensive team prohibiting illegal contact, an illegal cut block, or defensive holding against an offensive receiver will end. If the quarterback leaves the pocket area with the ball in his possession, the restrictions on illegal contact and an illegal cut block both end, but the restriction on defensive holding remains in effect.

If a team presents an apparent punting formation, defensive acts that normally constitute illegal contact (chuck beyond five yards, etc.) are permitted, provided that the acts do not constitute defensive holding.

Penalty: For illegal contact or holding by the defense: Loss of five yards and automatic first down.

Penalty: For illegal cut block: Loss of 15 yards and automatic first down.

Section 5 Pass Interference

Article 1

Definition

It is pass interference by either team when any act by a player more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage significantly hinders the progress of an eligible receiver's opportunity to catch the ball. Pass interference can only occur when a forward pass is thrown from behind the line of scrimmage, regardless of whether the pass is legal or illegal, or whether it crosses the line.

Defensive pass interference rules apply from the time the ball is thrown until the ball is touched. See Article 2 for prohibited acts while the ball is in the air.

Offensive pass interference rules apply from the time the ball is snapped until the ball is touched. See Article 2 for prohibited acts while the ball is in the air and Article 4 for prohibited acts prior to the pass.

Article 2

Prohibited Acts by both teams while the ball is in the air.

Acts that are pass interference include but are not limited to:

- (a) Contact by a player who is not playing the ball that restricts the opponent's opportunity to make the catch.
- (b) Playing through the back of an opponent in an attempt to make a play on the ball.
- (c) Grabbing an opponent's arm(s) in such a manner that restricts his opportunity to catch a pass.
- (d) Extending an arm across the body of an opponent, thus restricting his ability to catch a pass, and regardless of whether the player committing such act is playing the ball.
- (e) Cutting off the path of an opponent by making contact with him, without playing the ball.
- (f) Hooking an opponent in an attempt to get to the ball in such a manner that it causes the opponent's body to turn prior to the ball arriving.
- (g) Initiating contact with an opponent by shoving or pushing off, thus creating a separation in an attempt to catch a pass.

Clarification: If there is any question whether player contact is incidental, the ruling should be no interference.

Article 3

Permissible Acts by both teams while the ball is in the air.

Acts that are permissible by a player include but are not limited to:

- (a) Incidental contact by an opponent's hands, arms, or body when both players are competing for the ball, or neither player is looking for the ball. If there is any question whether contact is incidental, the ruling shall be no interference.

- (b) Inadvertent tangling of feet when both players are playing the ball or neither player is playing the ball.
- (c) Contact that would normally be considered pass interference, but the pass is clearly uncatchable by the involved players, except as specified in 9-3-2 and 9-5-4 pertaining to blocking downfield by the offense.
- (d) Laying a hand on an opponent that does not restrict him in an attempt to make a play on the ball.
- (e) Contact by a player who has gained position on an opponent in an attempt to catch the ball.

Clarification 1: When the ball is in the air, eligible offensive and defensive receivers have the same right to the path of the ball and are subject to the same restrictions.

Clarification 2: Acts that do not occur more than one yard beyond the line of scrimmage are not pass interference, but could be defensive holding (see 12-1-6).

Clarification 3: Whenever a team presents an apparent punting formation, defensive acts that normally constitute pass interference are permitted against the end man on the line of scrimmage, or against an eligible receiver behind the line of scrimmage who is aligned or in motion more than one yard outside the end man on the line, provided that the acts do not constitute illegal holding. Defensive holding, such as tackling a receiver, still can be called and result in a five-yard penalty from the previous spot, if accepted. Offensive pass interference rules still apply.

Article 4

Other Prohibited acts by the offense.

Blocking downfield by an offensive player prior to a pass being thrown is offensive pass interference.

Clarification: It is also pass interference by the offense to block a defender beyond the line while the pass is in the air, if the block occurs in the vicinity of the player to whom the pass is thrown.

Penalty: Pass interference by the defense: First down for the offensive team at the spot of the foul. If the interference is also a personal foul (12-2), the 15-yard penalty for such a foul is also enforced, either from the spot of the foul (for interference), or from the end of the run if the foul for pass interference is declined. If the interference is behind the defensive goal line, it is first down for the offensive team on the defense's one-yard line, or, if the previous spot was inside the two-yard line, halfway between the previous spot and the goal line.

Penalty: Pass interference by the offense: Loss of 10 yards from the previous spot.

P.S. 9.32 Second-and-10 on A30. On a swing pass from behind the line, a defensive man blocks eligible end A1 on the A32 while the ball is in the air. The pass is incomplete behind the line.

Ruling: Defensive pass interference. It is defensive pass interference regardless of whether the pass crosses the line once the ball is thrown. A's ball first-and-10 on A32.

P.S. 9.33 Second-and-10 on A30. Eligible tight end A1 goes across the line at the snap and blocks defensive player B1 on the A35 before eligible flanker A2 catches the ball on the A34. Flanker A2 goes to the A45.

Ruling: Offensive pass interference. Can't block beyond the line prior to the ball being touched. A's ball second-and-20 on A20.

P.S. 9.34 Second-and-10 on A30. Eligible offensive player A1 touches the ball on the A45 and the ball goes off his hands. Defensive player B1 then blocks eligible A2 and prevents him from catching the ball on the 50.

Ruling: Legal block. The ball was touched. No pass interference. A's ball third-and-10 on A30.

P.S. 9.35 Second-and-10 on A30. On a quick pass over the center, defensive player B1 touches the ball on the A35 and it goes high in the air. Defensive player B2 is about to catch the ball when offensive end A1 pushes B2 out of the way and catches the ball and goes to the A45.

Ruling: Legal play as the ball was touched by the defense. Interference rules ended when defensive player touched the pass. A's ball first-and-10 on A45.

P.S. 9.36 Second-and-10 on A30. Eligible offensive player A1 and B1 both make a bona fide attempt to catch a pass on the A45. There is contact between them and the pass falls incomplete on the A45.

Ruling: Incomplete pass. Legal play as it was a simultaneous and bona fide attempt by opposing players. A's ball third-and-10 on A30.

P.S. 9.37 Second-and-10 on A30. Tight end A2 blocks B1 on the A35 as the quarterback is looking for an open receiver. A2 then runs to the 50. The quarterback then throws a pass which A2 catches as no one is near him.

Ruling: Offensive pass interference. A's ball second-and-20 on A20.

P.S. 9.38 Second-and-10 on A30. Defensive player B1, beyond the line, has his back to the ball during a forward pass. He makes no attempt to catch it but waves his arms in close proximity to an eligible opponent on the A45, but there is no contact with receiver.

Ruling: No foul. Legal action by defender.

P.S. 9.39 Fourth-and-1 on B4. Offensive end A1 pushes a defensive player out of the way in the end zone to catch a legal pass.

Ruling: Loss of 10 yards from previous spot. A's ball fourth-and-11 on B14.

P.S. 9.40 Second-and-10 on B30. A defensive player pushes eligible offensive player A1 out of the way in the end zone and catches a pass. He returns it to the 50.

Ruling: Defensive pass interference in the defensive end zone. A's ball first-and-goal on B1.

P.S. 9.41 Fourth-and-10 on B15. On a fake field goal attempt place-kick holder A1 stands up and throws a pass to eligible end A2 who pushes defensive player B1 out of the way in the end zone to catch the pass there.

Ruling: Offensive pass interference. A's ball fourth-and-20 on B25.

P.S. 9.42 Second-and-10 on A30. A defensive player clips eligible offensive player A1 on the A45 as he is about to catch a pass. The pass falls incomplete on the 50.

Ruling: Interference is also a personal foul and penalize for both. A's ball first-and-10 on B40.

P.S. 9.43 Second-and-10 on A30. During a pass, defensive player B1 grabs the face mask of offensive eligible player A1 on the A35. The ball is thrown to the 50 where defensive B2 interferes with eligible A2. The pass falls incomplete.

Ruling: Additional yardage would have been tacked on if the personal foul (face mask) was the pass interference at the 50 or if the pass had been completed. A's ball first-and-10 on 50.

Section 6 Enforcement of Fouls

Article 1

Enforcement Spot.

If there is a foul by either team from the time of the snap until a forward pass thrown from behind the line ends, the penalty is enforced from the previous spot.

Exceptions:

- (a) Pass interference by the defense is enforced from the spot of the foul.
- (b) If there is a personal foul or unsportsmanlike foul by the defense prior to completion of a forward pass thrown from behind the line, enforcement is pursuant to 8-6-2 below.
- (c) If there is a personal foul or unsportsmanlike foul by the offense prior to interception of a forward pass thrown from behind the line, enforcement is pursuant to 8-6-3 below.
- (d) It is a safety when the offensive team commits a foul behind its own goal line.

Article 2

Personal Foul or Unsportsmanlike Foul by Defense Prior to Completion

When the defense commits a personal foul or unsportsmanlike foul prior to a completion of a legal forward pass thrown from behind the line, the foul will be enforced from the previous spot or the dead-ball spot, whichever is more advantageous to the offense.

Exception: If the passing team is fouled and loses possession after a completion, enforcement is from the previous spot, and the ball will be retained by the passing team after enforcement of the personal foul.

Article 3

Personal Foul or Unsportsmanlike Foul by Offense Prior to Change of Possession

When the offense commits a personal foul or unsportsmanlike foul prior to an interception, or the recovery by the defense of a backward pass or fumble, a 15-yard penalty will be enforced from the dead-ball spot.

Exception: If the intercepting or recovering team loses possession after the interception or recovery, enforcement is from the spot where the interception or recovery occurred, and the ball will be retained by the intercepting or recovering team after the enforcement for the personal foul.

Clarification: When the dead-ball spot is normally a touchback, enforcement is from the 20-yard line.

P.S. 8.44 Third-and-10 on A30. During a run prior to an incomplete pass, offensive player A1 holds a defensive player on the A25.

Ruling: Choice for defense. Fourth-and-10 on A30 or third-and-20 on A20 (from previous spot).

P.S. 9.45 Third-and-10 on A30. During a run prior to an intended pass by quarterback A1, defensive player B1 holds flanker A2 on the A45. Quarterback A1 doesn't throw the ball and is downed on the A20.

Ruling: Enforce from the previous spot. A's ball first-and-10 on A35.

P.S. 9.46 Third-and-10 on A40. Defensive player B1 roughs the passer prior to a pass completion to eligible end A1 on the B45. A1 runs to the B40 where he is downed.

Ruling: Personal foul prior to completion of a legal forward pass. Fifteen-yard penalty enforced from the spot where the ball is dead. A's ball first-and-10 on B25.

P.S. 9.47 Third-and-10 on A40. A defensive player roughs the passer as he throws a short swing pass to back A1 who is downed on the A35. The foul is prior to the completion of the pass.

Ruling: Enforce from the previous spot as the usual penalty on a pass. A's ball first-and-10 on B45.

P.S. 9.48 Third-and-10 on A40. Offensive guard A1 clips defensive player B1 as he tries to reach the passer. B2 intercepts the pass and returns it to the A30.

Ruling: Enforce from the spot where the ball is dead. Personal foul prior to interception. B's ball first-and-10 on A15.

P.S. 9.49 Third-and-10 on A40. Defensive player B1 roughs the passer prior to a completed pass to end A1 on the 50. A1 runs to the B40 where he is tackled, fumbles and the defensive team recovers on the B35.

Ruling: Personal foul prior to completion. Enforce from the previous spot and the ball reverts to the offended team. A's ball first-and-10 on the B45.

P.S. 9.50 Third-and-10 on A30. B1 intercepts a forward pass at B30, runs to the B35, fumbles and Team A recovers. Prior to the pass, A3 crackbacks on A26.

Ruling: B's ball first-and-10 on B45.

P.S. 9.51 Third-and-10 on A40. Defensive player B1 roughs the passer prior to a completion to eligible end A1 on the B40. A1 goes for a score.

Ruling: Touchdown. Loss of 15 on the kickoff. Kick off on A45. See 14-1-14.

P.S. 9.52 Second-and-10 on A30. During a forward pass the ball goes off eligible end A1's fingers and flanker A2 catches it on the B40. The defensive team was offside.

Ruling: A's ball first-and-10 on B40.

P.S. 9.53 Second-and-10 on A30. A forward pass is caught by ineligible tackle on A28. B1 was offside.

Ruling: Penalties offset. Second-and-10 on A30.

P.S. 9.54 Second-and-10 on A30. A forward pass is caught by ineligible A2 beyond the line. Prior to or during the pass, defensive player B1 strikes A1.

Ruling: Disqualify B1. A's ball first-and-10 on A45. See 14-3-1-Exc. 1

Section 7 Backward Pass and Fumble

Article 1

Backward Pass.

A runner may throw a backward pass at any time (3-22-4). Players of either team may advance after catching a backward pass, or recovering a backward pass after it touches the ground.

Exception: See actions to conserve time (4-7-1).

Clarification: A direct snap from center to a player in the backfield, a muffed hand-to-hand snap, or a snap that is untouched by a player who is in position to receive a hand-to-hand snap are backward passes, and the ball remains alive.

P.S. 9.55 Fourth-and-10 on A40. A high snap from center glances off the kicker's hands as he muffs the ball on the A28. The ball rolls to the A25. A defensive player picks it up and goes for a score.

Ruling: Touchdown.

P.S. 9.56 A's ball fourth-and-10 on B20. Direct snap from center on an attempted field goal glances off placekick holder's hands at the B27. Field goal kicker recovers the ball at B30 and runs for a touchdown.

Ruling: Legal touchdown.

Article 2

Backward Pass Out of Bounds.

If a backward pass goes out of bounds between the goal lines, the ball is dead (8-6-2-a), and it is next put in play at the inbounds spot. Rule 11 governs if a backward pass is declared dead behind the goal line.

Article 3

Fumble.

A fumble is any act, other than a pass or kick, which results in a loss of player possession.

Exception: If a runner intentionally fumbles forward, it is a forward pass (3-22-2).

Item 1: Recovery and Advance. Any player of either team may recover or catch a fumble and advance, either before or after the ball strikes the ground.

Exceptions:

(a) Fourth-down fumble. See 9-7-5 below.

(b) Fumble after two-minute warning. See 9-7-6 below.

Item 2: Legal Recovery. For a legal recovery of a fumble, see Rule 3, Section 2, Article 7 for fumble out of bounds and 11-5-1-Exc. 2 for a fumble in the end zone following intercepting momentum.

Item 3: Out of Bounds. When a fumble goes out of bounds between the goal lines, the following shall apply:

- (a) If a fumble goes backward and out of bounds, the ball is next put in play at the inbounds spot by the team that was last in possession;
- (b) If a fumble goes forward and out of bounds, the ball is next put in play at the spot of the fumble by the team that was last in possession;
- (c) If a ball is fumbled in a team's own end zone and goes forward into the field of play and out of bounds, it will result in a safety, if that team provided the impetus that put the ball into the end zone (See Rule 11, Section 5, Article 1 for exception for intercepting momentum). If the impetus was provided by the opponent, the play will result in a touchback;
- (d) Notwithstanding any of the above, when there has not been a change of possession during the down, and the spot of the ball is not at or beyond the line to gain after fourth down, the ball is awarded to Team B at the spot that the ball is declared dead.

Item 4: Out of Bounds in End Zone. When a fumble goes out of bounds in the end zone, the following shall apply:

- (a) If a ball is fumbled in the field of play, and goes forward into the opponent's end zone and over the end line or sideline, a touchback is awarded to the defensive team; or
- (b) If a ball is fumbled in a team's own end zone or in the field of play and goes out of bounds in the end zone, it is a safety, if that team provided the impetus that

sent the ball into the end zone (See 11-4-1 for exception for intercepting momentum). If the impetus was provided by the opponent, it is a touchback.

Article 4

Handing Ball Forward

No player may hand the ball forward except to an eligible receiver who is behind the line of scrimmage.

- (a) Loss of player possession by unsuccessful execution of attempted handing is a fumble charged to the player that last had possession.
- (b) A muffed handoff (legal or illegal) is a fumble, and the ball remains alive.

Penalty: For handing the ball forward beyond the line of scrimmage or not from scrimmage: Five yards and loss of down from the spot of the foul.

Penalty: For handing the ball forward to an ineligible receiver behind the line of scrimmage: Loss of five yards.

Article 5

Fourth Down Fumble.

If a fourth-down fumble occurs during a play from scrimmage:

- (a) The ball may be advanced by any member of the defensive team.
- (b) The player who fumbled is the only Team A player permitted to recover and advance the ball.
- (c) If the recovery or catch is by a teammate of the player who fumbled, the ball is dead, and the spot of the next snap is the spot of the fumble, or the spot of the recovery if the spot of the recovery is behind the spot of the fumble.

Clarification 1: After a change of possession has occurred, the restrictions in (b) and (c) are no longer in effect for the remainder of the down.

Clarification 2: The restrictions in (b) and (c) are applicable during the Try throughout the game.

Article 6

Fumble After Two-Minute Warning.

If a fumble by either team occurs after the two-minute warning:

- (a) The ball may be advanced by any opponent.
- (b) The player who fumbled is the only player of his team who is permitted to recover and advance the ball.
- (c) If the recovery or catch is by a teammate of the player who fumbled, the ball is dead, and the spot of the next snap is the spot of the fumble, or the spot of the recovery if the spot of the recovery is behind the spot of the fumble.

P.S. 9.57 Second-and-10 on B14. On last play of game Team A is behind by 4 points. Quarterback A1 falls back to pass, fumbles, and ball eventually winds up in B's end zone. A2 falls on it.

Ruling: No score. Game over.

P.S. 9.58 Fourth-and-four on B9. Offensive player A1 fumbles (forward unintentionally) on the B9. A1 recovers and goes to the B4.

Ruling: Legal advance as the fumbling player recovered. A's ball first-and-goal on B4.

P.S. 9.59 Fourth-and-four on B9. Offensive player A1 fumbles on the B9 (forward unintentionally). His teammate A2 recovers on the B7 and goes to the B4.

Ruling: Player other than the fumbling player recovered. The spot of the snap is the spot of the fumble (B9). B's ball first-and-10 on B9.

P.S. 9.60 Fourth-and-four on B9. Offensive player A1 fumbles on the B9 and A2 recovers on the B12 and goes to the B4.

Ruling: Other player than the fumbler recovered and spot of next snap is the spot of recovery as it is behind the spot of the fumble. B's ball first-and-10 on B12.

P.S. 9.61 Fourth-and-four on B9. Offensive player A1 fumbles on the B9. Defensive player B1 touches the ball and then offensive player A2 recovers on the B7.

Ruling: Ball is returned to spot of fumble (B9). B's ball first-and-10 on B9.

P.S. 9.62 Fourth-and-four on B9. A1 fumbles on the B9 and the ball rolls out of bounds on the B4 without any player touching it.

Ruling: The ball is next put in play at the spot of the fumble. B's ball first-and-10 on B9.

Enforcement Spot During a Backward Pass or Fumble

Article 7

Enforcement Spot During a Backward Pass or Fumble.

When a foul occurs during a backward pass or fumble, the basic spot of enforcement is the spot of the backward pass or fumble.

Exceptions:

(a) Behind the Line. When the spot of the backward pass or fumble is behind the line (including in A's end zone), if either team fouls, the spot of enforcement is the previous spot, even if B's foul is in A's end zone. If Team A fouls in its own end zone during a backward pass or fumble, the enforcement of the penalty results in a safety.

(b) Beyond the Line. When the spot of the backward pass or fumble is beyond the line, and the spot of an offensive foul is behind the spot of the backward pass or fumble:

(i) If the foul occurs beyond the line of scrimmage, the spot of enforcement is the spot of the foul; or

(ii) If the foul occurs behind the line of scrimmage, the spot of enforcement is the previous spot; or

(iii) If the spot of the foul is in A's end zone, enforcement of the foul results in a safety.

(c) For enforcement when the offense commits a personal foul or unsportsmanlike foul prior to the recovery by the defense of a backward pass or fumble, see Section 6, Article 3 above.

P.S. 9.63 First-and-10 on A40. Runner A1 advances to the 50 where he passes backward. During the backward pass A2 holds on the A45. The ball goes out of bounds on the A48.

Ruling: Enforcement is from the spot of the foul as it is behind the basic spot (14-1-5-d). A's ball first-and-15 on A35.

P.S. 9.64 Fourth-and-15 on A8. A punt is blocked and the ball is in the end zone when defensive player B1 pushes A1 out of the way to allow his teammate B2 to recover the ball in the end zone.

Ruling: The spot of enforcement is the previous spot as the foul by the defense occurred behind this line. A's ball first-and-10 on A13.

P.S. 9.65 Second-and-10 on B30. Quarterback A1 fumbles on the B32. A defensive player bats the loose ball in flight to the B40 where A1 recovers.

Ruling: The enforcement spot is the previous spot as the foul is behind the line. Illegal bat (12-1-8). A's ball first-and-10 on B20.

P.S. 9.66 Second-and-10 on B30. Quarterback A1 passes backward and a defensive player bats the pass in flight. The ball goes to the B40 where A1 recovers.

Ruling: Legal bat (12-1-8-c.). A's ball third-and-20 on B40.

P.S. 9.67 Second-and-10 on B30. A backward pass or fumble hits the ground on the B35 and a defensive player bats the ball to the B40 where he recovers.

Ruling: Illegal bat of a loose ball. Enforcement is from the previous spot as it is behind the line. A's ball first-and-10 on B20.

P.S. 9.68 B1 intercepts a forward pass in his end zone and advances to his 2-yard line where he fumbles. B1 recovers. During the fumble B2 fouls:

a) in his end zone.

Ruling: Safety. Enforcement is from the spot of the foul as it is not from scrimmage. See 11-5-1 and 14-1-11-b.

b) on his 5-yard line.

Ruling: B's ball first-and-10 on B1. Enforcement is from the spot of the fumble.

P.S. 9.69 Third-and-15 on B30. B1 intercepts a pass in the end zone and runs it out to the B20 where he throws a backward pass which hits the ground on the B15. A1 recovers on the ground and scores.

Ruling: Legal recovery and advance by A1. Touchdown A (8-7-1).

P.S. 9.70 A backward pass or fumble by offensive Team A on its 4-yard line comes to rest on the 2-yard line. Offensive player A1 blocks B1 into the ball and causes it to cross the goal line.

a) A2 recovers in the end zone.

Ruling: Safety if A2 is downed in the end zone. May advance if he can (3-15-3, Note).

b) B2 recovers in the end zone.

Ruling: Touchdown.

P.S. 9.71 Second-and-10 on B30. A ball is handed forward by quarterback to eligible receiver A2 who is behind his line. Receiver A2 muffs ball and defensive player B recovers on the B35 and goes to the 50.

Ruling: Legal advance. It is not a forward pass (3-13-1-b.), and it is treated as a fumble. B's ball first-and-10 on 50.

P.S. 9.72 Second-and-10 on B30. A ball is handed backward (no daylight) to ineligible receiver A1 on the B35. A1 muffs the ball and B1 recovers and goes to the 50.

Ruling: Legal recovery. A ball which is handed backward from one player to another (no daylight) and is dropped, shall be treated as a fumble. Either team may recover and advance. B's ball first-and-10 on 50.

Rule 10 Free Kicks

Section 1 Procedures for a Free Kick

Free Kick

Article 1 A free kick is a kickoff or safety kick that puts the ball in play to start a free kick down. It may be made from any point on the kicking (offensive) team's restraining line and between the inbounds lines.

(a) A kickoff puts the ball in play at the start of each half, after a try, and after a successful field goal. A dropkick or placekick may be used for a kickoff.

Clarification: During a placekick on a kickoff, the kicking team may use a manufactured tee that is one inch in height and approved by the league. Once the ball has been placed on the kicking tee, the kicking tee cannot be moved. If the ball falls off the tee, or the tee is moved, the covering officials must stop play and restart the timing process without penalty to the kicking team. If the ball falls off the tee a second time during the same free kick down, the kicking team then must either use a player to hold the ball or must kick it off the ground. The ball may be placed on the ground leaning against the tee, provided the tee is in its normal upright position.

(b) A safety kick puts the ball in play after a safety. A dropkick, placekick, or punt may be used for a safety kick. A tee cannot be used for a safety kick.

Penalty: For illegal kick on a free kick down: Loss of five yards.

Restraining Lines

Article 2 The restraining lines for a free kick shall be as follows, unless they are adjusted because of a distance penalty:

(a) The restraining line for the kicking team shall be its 30-yard line for a kickoff and its 20-yard line for a safety kick.

(b) The restraining line for the receiving team shall be the yard line 10 yards in advance of the kicking team's restraining line.

Free Kick Formation

Article 3 When the ball is kicked on a free kick down:

(a) All kicking team (Team A) players must be inbounds and behind the ball when it is kicked, except:

(1) the holder of a placekick (3-24) may be beyond the line, and

(2) the kicker may be beyond the line, provided that his kicking foot is not beyond the line;

(b) At least four players of the kicking team must be on each side of the kicker. At least three players must be lined up outside each inbounds line, one of whom must be outside the yard line numbering.

Clarification: A holder for a free kick counts as one of the required four players, regardless of where he is positioned.

(c) All receiving team (Team B) players must be inbounds and behind their restraining line until the ball is kicked.

Penalty: For a player being beyond the restraining line when the ball is kicked (offside): Loss of five yards.

Penalty: For a player being out of bounds when the ball is kicked: Loss of five yards.

(d) After the ball is kicked, no more than two receiving team players may intentionally form a wedge in an attempt to block for the runner. An illegal wedge is defined as three or more players lined-up shoulder-to-shoulder within two yards of each other.

Clarification: This does not apply when the kicking team lines-up in an obvious onside kick formation.

Penalty: For players intentionally forming an illegal wedge: Loss of 15 yards.

Catch or Recovery of a Free Kick

Article 4 The following applies to the catch or recovery of a free kick:

- (a) If a player of the receiving team catches or recovers the ball, he may advance.
- (b) If the ball is declared dead while in the simultaneous possession of two opposing players, the ball is awarded to the receiving team.
- (c) A player of the kicking team may legally touch, catch, or recover the ball if:
 - (1) it first touches a receiving team player; or
 - (2) it reaches or crosses the receiving team's restraining line.
- (d) The ball is dead if it is caught or recovered by a player of the kicking team. If the catch or recovery is legal, the ball belongs to the kicking team at the dead-ball spot.
- (e) If the ball comes to rest inbounds after reaching the receiving team's restraining line and no player attempts to possess it, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team at the dead-ball spot.

Clarification: For illegal catch or recovery, see Section 2, Article 4

Free Kick Crosses Goal Line

Article 5 It is a touchback if a free kick:

- (a) goes out of bounds behind the receiving team's goal line;
- (b) strikes the receiving team's goal post, uprights, or cross bar; or
- (c) is downed in the end zone by the receiving team.

Clarification: A free kick untouched by the receivers in the field of play that goes into the receivers' end zone remains alive and in play.

End of Free Kick

Article 6 A free kick ends when either team possesses the ball, or when the ball is dead, if that precedes possession. A running play begins when the receiving team establishes possession of the ball.

Section 2 Other Free Kick Fouls

Blocking

Article 1

Item 1: Kicking Team. After the ball touches a receiving team player, or has reached the receiver's restraining line, a kicking team player may legally block an opponent, and he may use his hands and arms to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball.

Prior to the ball touching a receiving team player or reaching the receiving team's restraining line, he may not block or use his hands or arms against an opponent between the restraining lines, except to push or pull aside a receiver who is actively attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield.

Regardless of the location of the ball, he may legally block an opponent at or beyond the receiving team's restraining line.

Item 2: Receiving Team. After the ball is kicked, receiving team players can legally block (see Rule 12, Section 1), and they may use their hands/arms legally to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball.

Penalty: For illegal blocking or use of hands by either team: Loss of 10 yards. See 12-2-14 for penalty for a low block.

Running into Free Kicker

Article 2 A player of the receiving team is not permitted to run into the kicker before he recovers his balance. See also 12-2-8-(f) for personal fouls against the kicker.

Penalty: For running into the kicker: Loss of five yards.

Free Kick Out of Bounds

Article 3 The kicking team may not kick the ball out of bounds or be the last to touch the ball before it goes out of bounds between the goal lines. If the receiving team is the last to touch the ball before it goes out of bounds, the receiving team puts the ball in play at the inbounds spot (See Section 3 below for special rules for onside kicks).

Penalty: For a free kick out of bounds: The receiving team may elect to take possession of the ball 30 yards from the spot of the kick or at the out-of-bounds spot.

P.S. 10.1 From the A30, the kicking team kicks the ball out of bounds. The kickers were offside. **Ruling:** Multiple foul. The receivers can choose one penalty. They can (1) decline the penalty for offside and take the ball at the B40 (one penalty enforcement option for kick out of bounds); (2) decline the penalty for the kick out of bounds and have the kickers rekick from the A25 after enforcement of the offside penalty; or (3) decline the penalty for kick out of bounds and have the five-yard penalty for offside enforced from the dead ball (out of bounds) spot.

Free Kick Illegally Touched

Article 4

Item 1: A player of the kicking team may not touch, catch, or recover the ball before it has reached the receiving team's restraining line, unless it has first been touched by a receiving team player.

Penalty: For illegal touching of a free kick by the kicking team: Loss of five yards, or the receiving team takes possession of the ball at the spot of the illegal touch.

P.S. 10.2 From the A30, the kickers kick a short free kick. It is illegally touched by the kickers at the A37 and recovered by the receivers at the A39. **Ruling:** The receivers can take possession at the A37, have the kickers rekick with a five yard penalty, or have the five yard penalty added to the dead ball spot, resulting in first and ten for receivers at the A34. The spot of illegal touching by the kickers is never a spot from which a penalty may be enforced unless it also happens to be the dead ball spot.

Item 2: If a kicking team player goes out of bounds during the kick, he may not touch or recover the ball beyond the receiving team's restraining line, unless it has first been touched

by a receiving team player. If a kicking team player touches the ball before re-establishing himself legally inbounds, it is a free kick out of bounds.

Penalty: For illegal touching of a free kick by the kicking team: Loss of five yards, enforced from the previous spot (rekick) or the dead ball spot.

Short Free Kick

Article 5 If the ball has not been touched by either team after the kick and rolls dead in the field of play before reaching the receiving team's restraining line, it is a foul

Penalty: For a short free kick: Loss of five yards.

Enforcement from Previous Spot

Section 3 Enforcement of Fouls

Article 1 If there is an accepted foul during a free kick, the normal enforcement is from the previous spot, and the free kick is made again, unless a foul by the kicking team occurs prior to the end of the kick. In such cases, the receiving team will have the option of enforcing the penalty at the previous spot and replaying the down or adding the penalty yardage to the dead-ball spot.

Exceptions:

- (a) A personal foul (blocking) after a fair catch signal is enforced from the spot of the foul.
- (b) A foul for fair catch interference is enforced from the spot of the foul.
- (c) A foul for an invalid fair catch signal is enforced from the spot of the signal.
- (d) For a free kick out of bounds, see Section 2, Article 3.
- (e) For a free kick illegally touched, see Section 2, Article 4.
- (f) Double fouls are enforced according to the normal rules. See Rule 14.
- (g) The dead ball spot for free kicks that result in a touchback is the 20-yard line.

Rule 11 Scoring

Section 1 Value of Scores

Article 1

Winning Team

The team that scores the greater number of points during the entire game is the winner.

Clarification: If a team forfeits a game, the opponent will be declared the winner by a score of 2-0, but the points will not be added to the winning team's record for purposes of offensive production or tie-breakers.

Article 2

Types of Scoring Plays

Points are scored as follows:

- (a) Touchdown: 6 points
- (b) Field Goal: 3 points
- (c) Safety: 2 points
- (d) Successful Try after touchdown: 1 (Field Goal or Safety) or 2 points (Touchdown)

Section 2 Touchdown

Article 1

Touchdown Plays

A touchdown is scored when:

- (a) the ball is on, above, or behind the plane of the opponent's goal line and is in possession of a runner who has advanced from the field of play; or
- (b) a ball in possession of an airborne runner is on, above, or behind the plane of the goal line, and some part of the ball passed over or inside the pylon; or
- (c) a ball in player possession touches the pylon, provided that after contact by an opponent no part of the player's body, except his hands or feet, struck the ground before the ball touched the pylon; or
- (d) Any player who is legally inbounds catches or recovers a loose ball (3-2-3) on or behind the opponent's goal line; or
- (e) The Referee awards a touchdown to a team that has been denied one by a palpably unfair act.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

- (1) The ball is automatically dead at the instant of legal possession of a player and is on, above, or behind the opponents' goal line.
- (2) If the player attempting to catch a pass, the ball is not dead, and a touchdown is not scored, until the receiver completed the catch. See Rule 3-2-7.

P.S. 11.1 -Third-and-goal on B2. Runner A1 goes to the goal line with the ball over the plane of the goal line. He is tackled and fumbles and the defensive team recovers in the end zone. **Ruling:** Touchdown. The ball is automatically dead at the instant of legal player possession on the opponent's goal line.

P.S. 11.2 -Second-and-10 on B18. Runner A1 takes handoff and runs down the sideline toward the goal line with the ball in his outside arm. He crosses the goal line plane standing with the ball to the outside of the pylon. **Ruling:** Touchdown. Part of the ball crossing over or inside the pylon only applies to an airborne runner who lands out of bounds.

Section 3 Try

Article 1

General Rules

After a touchdown, the scoring team is awarded a Try in an attempt to score one or two additional points during one scrimmage down.

The Try begins when the Referee sounds his whistle for play to start. The spot of snap shall be:

- (a) anywhere between the inbounds lines, and
- (b) two yards from the defensive team's goal line.

Clarification 1: All general rules for fourth-down fumbles apply to the Try (See 9-7-5).

Clarification 2: The Game Clock will not run during the Try.

Clarification 3: If the ball has been declared ready for play by the Referee, and the offensive team wants to change the location of the ball, they can do so by calling a timeout.

Clarification 4: See 8-5-2 for restriction applicable to Team B formation at snap.

Clarification 5: See Rule 16 for exception when a touchdown is scored in an overtime period.

Article 2

Results of Try

During a Try, the following shall apply:

- (a) If a kick results in a field goal by the offense, one point is awarded. An artificial or manufactured tee shall not be permitted to assist in the execution of a Try-kick. (The conditions of 11-4-1 must be met.) The ball is dead as soon as it becomes evident that the kick has failed.
- (b) If a Try results in a touchdown by the offense, two points are awarded. If a touchdown is not scored, the Try is over at the end of the play.
- (c) If the defense gains possession, the ball is dead immediately. The defensive team cannot score during a Try.
- (d) If there is no kick and the Try results in what would ordinarily be a safety by the defense, one point is awarded to the offensive team.
- (e) If any play results in a touchback, the Try is unsuccessful, and there shall be no replay.

P.S. 11.3 An attempted Try-kick is blocked. A1 recovers behind the line and advances across the goal line or recovers in defensive's end zone. **Ruling:** No score in either case. The ball is dead as soon as its failure as a kick to score a Try is evident.

P.S. 11.4 During a Try, placekick holder A1 fumbles. B1 kicks, bats, or muffs the loose ball (new impetus) on his 2 and it goes out of bounds behind the goal line. **Ruling:** Ordinarily a safety (11-5-1). Award one point.

Article 3

Fouls Committed During Try

Item 1: Fouls Before the Signal. If there is a foul by either team after a touchdown and before the ready-for-play signal, it is enforced on the next kickoff.

P.S. 11.5 A1 clips after runner A2 had scored a touchdown. **Ruling:** Penalty is enforced from the succeeding spot which is the spot of the next kickoff. Spot of ball for Try is the B2. Penalty is not enforced on Try.

Item 2: Fouls Before the Snap. If there is a foul by the offense which causes a play to be whistled dead prior to the snap, it shall be treated the same as if it had occurred prior to a scrimmage play. The whistle shall be blown immediately. (See 8-4-1). If a foul by the defense prevents the attempt of a Try, the offensive team has the option to have the distance penalty assessed on the next Try or on the ensuing kickoff.

Item 3: Fouls by Team A. The following applies if there is a foul by Team A:

- (a) If there is a foul by the offense during a successful Try, after the penalty the Try shall be repeated, unless the penalty for the foul results in a loss of down.
- (b) If a penalty for a foul results in a loss of down, the Try is unsuccessful, and there shall be no replay.

Item 4: Fouls by Team B. The following applies if there is a foul by Team B:

- (a) If the foul results in a safety, the offensive team is awarded one point.
- (b) If the attempt Try is unsuccessful, the offensive team may accept or decline the distance penalty before the down is replayed.
- (c) If the attempted Try is successful, all fouls committed by the defense will result in the distance penalty being assessed on the ensuing kickoff, unless the offensive team chooses to attempt a retry after enforcement of the penalty. See P.S. 14.27

Clarification: If the foul is for defensive pass interference, and it is declined, no distance penalty is enforced on the kickoff.

Item 5: Fouls by Both Teams. If there are fouls by both teams during a Try, the Try must be replayed (14-3-1). Normal enforcement rules for double fouls apply.

Item 6: Fouls After a Try. If there is a foul by either team after a Try, it is enforced on the succeeding kickoff. If there are fouls by both teams, normal enforcement rules apply.

P.S. 11.6 During a Try, runner A1 is downed on B's 2 in a side zone. During the run, B1 commits a personal foul. **Ruling:** Replay from the previous spot or from the spot after enforcement.

P.S. 11.7 During a Try which is unsuccessful, B1 is offside. **Ruling:** Replay at previous spot or one yard line.

P.S. 11.8 During a Try which is successful, B1 is offside. **Ruling:** Try good and loss of yardage on kickoff against B, or retry from B1-yard line.

Article 4

Kickoff After Try

After a Try, the team on defense during the Try shall receive the kickoff (10-1-1-a).

Section 4 Field Goal

Article 1

Successful Field Goal

A field goal is scored when all of the following conditions are met:

- (a) The kick must be a placekick or dropkick made by the offense from behind the line of scrimmage or from the spot of a fair catch (fair catch kick). If a fair catch is made or awarded outside the inbounds line, the spot of the kick is the nearest inbounds line.
- (b) After the ball is kicked, it must not touch the ground or any player of the offensive team before it passes through the goal.
- (c) The entire ball must pass through the vertical plane of the goal, which is the area above the crossbar and between the uprights or, if above the uprights, between their outside edges. If the ball passes through the goal, and returns through the goal without striking the ground or some object or person beyond the goal, the attempt is unsuccessful.

Clarification 1: See 8-5-2 for restriction applicable to Team B formation at the snap.

Article 2

Missed Field Goals

If there is a missed field-goal attempt, and the ball has not been touched by the receivers beyond the line in the field of play, the following shall apply:

- (a) If the spot of the kick was inside the receiver's 20-yard line, it is the receivers' ball at the 20-yard line.
- (b) If the spot of the kick was from the receiver's 20-yard line or beyond the receiver's 20-yard line, it is the receivers' ball at the spot of the kick.

Clarification: These options apply only if the ball has been beyond the line.

Exception 1: If there is a missed field-goal attempt and the ball is touched by the receivers beyond the line of scrimmage in the field of play, all general rules for a kick from scrimmage will apply, and the special rules pertaining to field goals in (a) and (b) are not applicable. If a foul occurs during the missed field-goal attempt, Rule 6-5-1 governs.

Exception 2: If a field-goal attempt from anywhere on the field is blocked, and the ball has not been beyond the line, general rules for scrimmage kicks apply, and the special rules pertaining to field goals in (a) and (b) are not applicable.

Exception 3: If the ball has gone beyond the line and returns behind the line untouched by Team B beyond the line, and either team recovers and attempts to advance the ball, all special rules for missed field goals in (a) and (b) are no longer applicable, and general rules for scrimmage kicks apply. If either team recovers and does not attempt to advance the ball, Team B has the option to take the ball at the dead-ball spot or the spot of the kick.

Clarification: If the ball has not been touched by the receivers beyond the line in the field of play and goes out of bounds in the field of play after being touched by a receiver in the end zone, it is the receiving team's option to take the ball at the spot of the kick or the receiving team's 20-yard line.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

- (1) **If the receivers do not touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage in the field of play or in the end zone, and the ball bounces back into the field of play after it touches the ground on or behind the receiver's goal line, it is the receiver's ball at the spot of the kick. If the attempt was from inside the 20-yard line, it is a touchback. The ball is dead as soon as it touches the ground in the end zone.**
- (2) **If the ball goes out of bounds after it is first touched by the receivers beyond the line of scrimmage in the field of play, it is the receiver's ball at the out-of-bounds spot.**
- (3) **If the receivers first touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage in the field of play or in the end zone, and the kickers recover, the ball belongs to the kickers at the spot of recovery. If the recovery is in the end zone, it is a touchdown.**
- (4) **If the receivers first touch the ball beyond the line of scrimmage in the field of play, and without any new impetus the ball rolls into the end zone where it is declared dead in the possession of the receivers, it is a touchback.**

P.S. 11.9 Fourth-and-10 on B35. On a field goal attempt, the ball is kicked from the B42 and is wide and goes over the end line. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B42. The defensive team takes possession at the spot of the kick.

P.S. 11.10 Fourth-and-10 on B35. A field-goal attempt is kicked from the B42, and is missed and:

- a) the ball rolls dead on the B10. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B42.
- b) B1 touches and downs the ball on the B10. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B10.
- c) B1 fair-catches the ball on the B10. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B10.

P.S. 11.11 Fourth-and-10 on B35. On a field goal attempt B1 catches the ball on the B10 and:

- a) returns the ball to the B24. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B24. If the receiving team runs a missed field goal, it continues as any other play.
- b) returns the ball to the 50. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on 50.

P.S. 11.12 Fourth-and-10 on B30. A field goal attempt is kicked from the B37 and is partially blocked behind the line and the ball rolls out of bounds on the B5:

- a) without touching any receiver beyond the line of scrimmage. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on the B37.
- b) after touching a receiver beyond the line of scrimmage. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on the B5 (the spot of out of bounds).

P.S. 11.13 Fourth-and-10 on B21. A missed field goal is kicked from the B28 and hits in the end zone and bounces back into the field of play to the B3 where:

- a) no receiver touches the ball. **Ruling:** Ball dead. B's ball first-and-10 on the B28.
- b) receiver B1 falls on the ball at the B3. **Ruling:** Ball dead. B's ball first-and-10 on the B28.
- c) B1 picks up the ball on the B3 and runs to the B10. **Ruling:** Ball dead. B's ball first-and-10 on the B28.
- d) B1 picks up the ball, runs to the B10, is tackled and fumbles. A1 recovers and is downed on the B8. **Ruling:** Ball dead. B's ball first-and-10 on the B28.

P.S. 11.14 Fourth-and-10 on B35. On a missed field goal attempt B1 touches the ball on the B4 and the ball then rolls into the end zone (or over the end line) where it is declared dead in possession of team B. **Ruling:** Touchback. B's ball first-and-10 on B20.

P.S. 11.15 Fourth-and-two on B10. A field goal is good. B1 punched A2 on the scrimmage line. **Ruling:** Option for team A. Score for field goal or A's ball first-and-goal on B5. See 14-6. Disqualify B1. If a score taken, it is 15-yard penalty against B on kickoff (14-1-14).

Article 3

Fair Catch Kick

The rules for a field-goal attempt from scrimmage apply to a field-goal attempt following a Fair Catch (a Fair-Catch Kick).

Exceptions:

- (a) The fair-catch kick line for the kicking team is the yard line through the most forward point from which the ball is kicked.
- (b) The fair-catch kick line for the receiving team is the yard line 10 yards in advance of the kicking team's fair-catch kick line.

CLARIFICATION: A fair-catch kick is not a free kick. The kicking team cannot get the ball unless it had been first touched or possessed by the receivers.

P.S. 11.16 On a fair catch kick from the B45, kicker A1 falls on the ball on the B33 without any receiver touching the ball. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on the B45 (the previous spot). The clock is started when the ball is kicked.

P.S. 11.17 On a fair catch kick from the B45, the ball goes out of bounds on the B10:

- a) without touching any player. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on the B45. The clock starts when the ball is kicked.
- b) after touching any kicking team player. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on the B45. The clock starts when the ball is kicked.

Article 4

No Tee

An artificial or manufactured tee shall not be permitted to assist in the execution of a field goal.

Article 5

Ball Next in Play

After a field goal, the team scored upon will receive the kickoff. See 10-1-1.

Section 5 Safety

Article 1

Safety

It is a Safety:

- (a) If the offense commits a foul in its own end zone; or
- (b) When an impetus by a team sends the ball behind its own goal line and the ball is dead in the end zone in its possession or the ball is out of bounds behind the goal line.

Exception:

It is not a Safety:

- (1) If a forward pass from behind the line of scrimmage is incomplete in the end zone.
- (2) If a defensive player, in the field of play, intercepts a pass or catches or recovers a fumble, backward pass, scrimmage kick, free kick or fair catch kick, and his original momentum carries him into his end zone where the ball is declared dead in his team's possession. The ball belongs to the defensive team at the spot where the ball was intercepted, caught, or recovered.

- (3) If a player of the team which intercepts, catches, or recovers the ball commits a foul in the end zone, it is a safety.
- (4) If a player who intercepts, catches, or recovers the ball throws a completed illegal forward pass from the end zone, the ball remains alive. If his opponent intercepts the illegal pass thrown from the end zone, the ball remains alive. If he scores, it is a touchdown.
- (5) If a player of the team which intercepts, catches, or recovers the ball commits a foul in the field of play and the ball becomes dead in the end zone, the basic spot is the spot of the change of possession.
- (6) If spot where possession changed is inside the one-yard line, the ball is to be spotted at one-yard line.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS:

The impetus is always attributed to the offense, unless the defense creates a new force that sends the ball behind its own goal line by a muff a ball which is at rest or nearly at rest, illegal batting ball, or illegally kicking a ball (3-15-3).

P.S. 11.18 Second-and-10 on A6. Quarterback A1 throws a backward pass which is batted by B1. The ball goes out of bounds behind the goal line. **Ruling:** Safety. Legal bat and no change of impetus.

P.S. 11.19 B1 muffs a punt on his 5-yard line. In attempting to recover he forces the ball (new impetus) into his end zone. See 3-15-3.

- a) where he recovers and is downed there. **Ruling:** Safety.
- b) where he recovers and advances. **Ruling:** Legal advance.
- c) where kicking team player recovers. **Ruling:** Touchdown.

P.S. 11.20 B1 catches a punt on the B4. He fumbles the ball on the B4 and A1 bats the loose ball. The ball rolls over the end line. **Ruling:** Touchback. See 11-6-1 and 12-1-8.

P.S. 11.21 B1 fumbles after catching a punt on the B5 and it crosses his goal line. A1 recovers while he is touching the sideline. **Ruling:** Safety. If it had been a muff (no new impetus or change of possession) and the same situation, it would be a touchback (11-6-1).

P.S. 11.22 Second-and-10 on B20. B1 intercepts a legal forward pass on the B2. His momentum carries him into the end zone where he is downed. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B2.

P.S. 11.23 Second-and-10 on B20. Intercepts a legal forward pass on the B4 and his momentum carries him into the end zone. He then runs it out to the B35. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B35.

P.S. 11.24 Second-and-10 on B20. B1 intercepts a pass on the B6 and his momentum carries him into the end zone where he is tackled, fumbles and A1 recovers there. **Ruling:** Touchdown A; kickoff on A30.

P.S. 11.25 Second-and-10 on B20. Intercepts a legal forward pass on the B4 and his momentum carries him into the end zone where he is downed.

- a) B2 clipped in the end zone. **Ruling:** Safety.
- b) B2 clipped on the B2. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B1.

P.S. 11.26 Second-and-15 on A4. Runner A1 fumbles a handoff on his 5-yard line. The ball rolls into the end zone where A1 bats or kicks the ball across the end line to prevent a recovery by the defense. **Ruling:** Safety, whether the penalty is enforced from the spot of the foul or is declined.

P.S. 11.27 B1 recovers a free kick in his end zone. While advancing, he fumbles while still in the end zone. The fumble is on the ground on the B2 where B3 deliberately kicks it.

Ruling: Safety. The spot of enforcement is from the spot of the fumble.

P.S. 11.28 B1 catches a kickoff and makes a forward pass from behind his goal line.

Ruling: Safety. Team A may intercept and advance.

P.S. 11.29 Second-and-15 on A2. Runner A1 is downed two yards behind his goal line.

a) A2 holds anywhere in the field. **Ruling:** Safety (14-1-11).

b) B1 holds at A1. **Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on A6 (12-1-6-Pen. and 14-1-12-Exc. 7).

P.S. 11.30 Second-and-16 on A4. Quarterback A1 drops back to pass and throws a legal forward pass complete to end A2 who runs for a touchdown. Prior to the completion tackle A3 holds in the end zone. **Ruling:** No touchdown. Safety.

Article 2

Ball in Play After Safety

After a safety, the team scored upon must next put the ball in play by a free kick (punt, dropkick or placekick) from its 20-yard line. An artificial or manufactured tee cannot be used. See 10-1-2 and 610-1-3.

Exception: For extension of either half, see (4-8-2-c).

Section 6 Touchback

Clarification: A touchback, while not a score, is included in this rule because, like scoring plays, it is a case of a ball dead in touch (3-14-2).

Article 1

Definition

It is a touchback if the ball is dead on or behind the goal line a team is defending, provided that the impetus comes from an opponent, and that it is not a touchdown or an incomplete pass.

Article 2

Touchback Situations

When a team provides the impetus (3-15-3) that sends a loose ball behind its opponent's goal line, it is a touchback:

- (a) If the ball is dead in the opponent's possession in its end zone; or
- (b) If the ball is out of bounds behind the goal line (see 9-7-3-Item 4-a); or
- (c) If a scrimmage kick has not been touched by a player of the receiving team beyond the line of scrimmage, and the ball (i) touches the ground on or behind the receiver's goal line, (ii) touches a player of the kicking team who is touching the ground on or behind the receiver's goal line, or (iii) touches a player of the kicking team who has touched the ground on or behind the receiver's goal line and has not re-established himself in the field of play (see 11-4-2-b for exception for a missed field goal from beyond the 20-yard line); or
- (d) If any legal or illegal kick touches the receiver's goal posts, crossbar, or uprights, other than one which scores a field goal; or

- (e) If the kickers interfere with the opportunity to catch an airborne kick or with a fair catch behind the receiver's goal line (7-1-1 and 7-2-4 Clarification); or
- (f) If a player of the kicking team illegally catches or recovers a scrimmage kick in the field of play, and carries the ball across the goal line, or touches the goal line with any part of his body while in possession of the ball. For exception for a missed field goal from beyond the 20-yard line, see 11-4-2-b.

Clarification:

1. **If the impetus is a scrimmage kick and there has been a spot of first touching by the kickers beyond the receiver's 20-yard line, the receivers shall have the option of taking possession of the ball at the spot of first touching.**
2. **The impetus is not from a kick if a muff, bat, juggle, or illegal kick of any kicked ball (by a player of either team) creates a new momentum which sends it on, above, or behind the goal line. See 3-15-3-Clarification.**

P.S. 11.31 Quarterback A1 throws a legal pass which is intercepted in the end zone by B1. B1 tries to run it out and is downed in the end zone. **Ruling:** Touchback. B's ball first-and-10 on B20.

P.S. 11.32 A punt is caught in end zone by B1 who tries to run it out. He is tackled, fumbles and kicking team player A1 recovers in end zone. **Ruling:** Touchdown for A1.

P.S. 11.33 Fourth-and-10 on B35. A1 is touching the goal line with his foot when he downs the punted ball on the 1 yard line in the field of play. **Ruling:** Touchback.

Article 3

Ball Next in Play

After a touchback, the team that has been awarded a touchback next snaps the ball at its 20-yard line from any point on or between the inbounds lines.

Rule 12 Player Conduct

Section 1 Blocking, Use of Hands, Arms, and Body

Legal and Illegal Block

Article 1 A player of either team may block (obstruct or impede) an opponent at any time, provided that the act is not:

- (a) pass interference
- (b) illegal contact
- (c) fair catch interference
- (d) clipping against a non-runner
- (e) an illegal chop block
- (f) an illegal crackback block
- (g) an illegal low block during a free kick, scrimmage kick, or after a change of possession
- (h) unnecessary roughness
- (i) roughing the passer
- (j) an illegal cut block
- (k) roughing the kicker
- (l) offensive or defensive holding
- (m) illegal use of hands
- (n) tripping
- (o) illegal peel back block
- (p) illegal blindside block

P.S. 12.1 B1 blocks A1 which allows B2 to recover a loose ball.

Ruling: Legal block. Cannot use hands unless it is a personal attempt to recover, but may block (12-1-5).

Use of Hands by Offensive Player

Article 2 An offensive player cannot obstruct or impede an opponent by grasping him with his hands or encircling any part of a defender's body with his arms, except in the following situations:

- (a) If he is a runner. A runner may ward off opponents with his hands and arms. He also may lay his hand on a teammate or push him into an opponent, but he may not grasp or hold on to a teammate; or
- (b) During a loose ball that has touched the ground. An offensive player may use his hands/arms legally to block or otherwise push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball. See specific fumble, pass, or kick rules and especially 6-2-1; or
- (c) During a kick. A kicking team player may use his hands/arms to ward off or to push or pull aside a receiver who is legally or illegally attempting to obstruct his attempt to proceed downfield; or
- (d) During a legal block.

Penalty: For illegal use of hands, arms, or body by the offense: Loss of 10 yards.

Legal Block by Offensive Player

Article 3 An offensive player is permitted to block an opponent by contacting him with his head, shoulders, hands, and/or outer surface of the forearm, or with any other part of his body.

A blocker may use his arms, or open or closed hands, to contact an opponent on or outside the opponent's frame (the body of an opponent below the neck that is presented to the

blocker). If a blocker's arms or hands are outside an opponent's frame, it is a foul if the blocker materially restricts him. The blocker immediately must work to bring his hands inside the opponent's frame, and as the play develops, the blocker is permitted to work for and maintain his position against an opponent, provided that he does not illegally clip or illegally push from behind.

Illegal Blocks by Offensive Player

Article 4 An offensive blocker cannot:

(a) thrust his hands forward above the frame of an opponent to contact him on the neck, face, or head (Clarification: Contact in close-line play that is not prolonged and sustained is not a foul, unless the opponent's head is pinned back by direct and forcible contact);

(b) charge or fall into the back of an opponent above the waist, or use his hands or arms to push an opponent from behind in a manner that affects his movement, except in close-line play (the guideline for officials to use for illegal use of hands in the back above the waist is: if either hand is on the back, it is a foul. If both hands are on the opponent's side, it is not a foul);

Clarification: The prohibition applies to a player of the kicking team while the ball is in flight during a scrimmage kick.

(c) use his hands or arms to materially restrict an opponent or alter the defender's path or angle of pursuit. Material restrictions include but are not limited to:

- (i) grabbing or tackling an opponent;
- (ii) hooking, jerking, twisting, or turning him; or
- (iii) pulling him to the ground.

Penalty: For holding, illegal use of hands, arms, or body by the offense: Loss of 10 yards.

Blocking Clarifications:

1. When a defensive player is held by an offensive player during the following situations, offensive holding will not be called:

- (a) if the runner is being tackled simultaneously by another defensive player;
- (b) if the runner simultaneously goes out of bounds;
- (c) if a fair catch is made simultaneously;
- (d) if the action clearly occurs after a forward pass has been thrown to a receiver beyond the line of scrimmage;
- (e) if the action occurs away from the point of attack and not within close-line play;
- (f) if a free kick results in a touchback;
- (g) if a scrimmage kick simultaneously becomes a touchback;
- (h) if the action is part of a double-team block in close-line play.

Exception: Holding will be called if the opponent is pulled to the ground by one or both of the blockers.

(i) if, during a defensive charge, a defensive player uses a "rip" technique that puts an offensive player in a position that would normally be holding.

Exception: Holding will be called if the defender's feet are taken away from him by the offensive player's action.

2. If a blocker falls on or pushes down a defender whose momentum is carrying him to the ground, offensive holding will not be called unless the blocker prevents the defender from rising from the ground.

3. If the official has not seen the entire action that sends a defender to the ground, offensive holding will not be called.

Other Prohibited Acts

Article 5 No offensive player may:

- (a) lift a runner to his feet or pull him in any direction at any time; or;
- (b) use interlocking interference, by grasping a teammate or by using his hands or arms to encircle the body of a teammate; or
- (c) trip an opponent; or
- (d) push or throw his body against a teammate to aid him in an attempt to obstruct an opponent or to recover a loose ball.

Penalty: For assisting the runner, interlocking interference, tripping, illegal use of hands, arms, or body by the offense: Loss of 10 yards.

P.S. 12.2 Second and goal on B2. Runner A1 gets to the line of scrimmage and is stopped but A2, who is behind him, pushes him from behind and shoves him over the goal line.

Ruling: Touchdown.

Defensive Holding

Article 6

A defensive player may not:

(a) tackle or hold any opponent other than a runner. Otherwise, he may use his hands, arms, or body only to defend or protect himself against an obstructing opponent in an attempt to reach a runner. After a loose ball has touched the ground, a defensive player may legally block or otherwise use his hands or arms to push or pull an opponent out of the way in a personal attempt to recover the ball;

(b) On a punt, field-goal attempt, or Try-kick attempt, a defensive player (B1) may not grab and pull an offensive player out of the way which allows another defensive player(s) (B2) to shoot the gap (pull and shoot) in an attempt to block the kick, unless the defensive player (B1) is advancing towards the kicker;

Clarification: A foul for a pull and shoot shall be called only if B2 actually shoots the gap.

Illegal hands to the face

(c) Thrust his hands forward above the frame of an opponent to contact him on the neck, face or head (Clarification: Contact in close line play that is not prolonged and sustained is not a foul, unless the opponent's head is pinned back by direct and forcible contact.

Illegal contact

(d) illegally contact an eligible pass receiver beyond the line of scrimmage.

Illegal Contact Within Five Yards of Line

Within the five-yard zone, a defender may not make original contact in the back of a receiver, nor may he use his hands or arms to hang on to or encircle a receiver. The defender cannot extend an arm(s) to cut off or hook a receiver causing contact that impedes and restricts the receiver as the play develops, nor may he maintain contact after the receiver has moved beyond a point that is even with the defender.

Illegal Contact Beyond Five-Yard Zone

Beyond the five-yard zone, if the player who receives the snap remains in the pocket with the ball, a defender may use his hands or arms only to defend or protect himself against impending contact caused by a receiver. If the receiver attempts to evade the defender, the defender cannot chuck him, or extend an arm(s) to cut off or hook him, causing contact that re-directs, restricts, or impedes the receiver in any way.

Incidental Contact Beyond Five-Yard Zone

Beyond the five-yard zone, incidental contact may exist between receiver and defender as long as it does not materially affect or significantly impede the receiver, creating a distinct advantage.

Illegal cut

(e) illegally cut an eligible pass receiver. An eligible pass receiver who takes a position more than two yards outside of his own tackle (flexed receiver) may not be blocked below the waist, unless the receiver of the snap hands off, is tackled, pitches the ball to a back, or leaves the pocket area.

Clarification 1: Once the receiver of the snap hands off, is tackled, throws a forward or backward pass, loses possession of the ball by a fumble or a muff that touches the ground, or leaves the pocket area (see 3-24), the restrictions on the defensive team relative to offensive receivers (illegal contact, illegal cut block) will end, provided the ball is not in the air.

Clarification 2: Whenever a team presents an apparent punting formation, defensive action that would normally constitute illegal contact (chuck beyond five yards) will no longer be considered a foul.

Clarification 3: The unnecessary use of hands by the defense, except as provided in Article 6, is illegal and is commonly used in lieu of a legal block (See 12-2-2).

Clarification 4: Any offensive player who pretends to possess the ball, and/or one to whom a teammate pretends to give the ball, may be tackled provided he is crossing his scrimmage line between the offensive tackles of a normal tight offensive line.

Penalty: For illegal contact or holding by the defense: Loss of five yards and automatic first down.

Penalty: For illegal cut block by the defense: Loss of 15 yards and automatic first down. (Personal Foul)

P.S. 12.3 Second-and-10 on B40. B1 holds end A1 on the line of scrimmage. Quarterback A2 can't throw the ball and is tackled at the 50. **Ruling:** Enforcement is from the previous spot. A's ball first-and-10 on B35.

P.S. 12.4 Second-and-10 on A40. Eligible end A1 goes downfield to the B45 and is contacted (chucked) by B1 as A1 attempts to evade him. The pass falls incomplete. **Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on A45. Illegal contact. Eligible receiver A1 is not considered an obstructing player as he was more than five yards beyond line of scrimmage.

P.S. 12.5 Second-and-10 on A40. Eligible receiver A1 is chucked by B1 at the scrimmage line. B1 then chucks back A2 on the A44 prior to the pass. The pass then falls incomplete. **Ruling:** Legal use of hands as A1 and A2 were not the same player.

P.S. 12.6 Second-and-10 on A30. Eligible pass receiver A1 takes a position three yards outside his own tackle and is blocked below the waist at line of scrimmage. The pass falls incomplete. **Ruling:** Illegal cut as eligible receiver was more than two yards outside of his tackle. Fifteen-yard penalty. A's ball first-and-10 on A45.

P.S. 12.7 Second-and-10 on A30. Eligible pass receiver A1 lines up one yard outside of his own tackle and is blocked below the waist at the line of scrimmage. Pass falls incomplete. **Ruling:** Legal block as receiver was lined up within two yards of the tackle. A's ball third-and-10 on A30.

P.S. 12.8 During a pass behind the line (forward or backward), B1 uses his hands on potential receiver A1 who is behind A's line. B1 is not using his hands to ward off A1, to push or pull A1 out of the way in order to get to the runner (passer), or to push or pull him out of the way in an actual attempt to catch or recover a loose ball.

Ruling: Holding by the defense. Loss of five yards & first down for A (14-8-5).

Article 7 No defensive player may trip an opponent.

Penalty: For tripping by defense: Loss of 10 yards.

Illegal Bat

Article 8 A player may not bat or punch:

- (a) a loose ball (in field of play) toward opponent's goal line;
- (b) a loose ball that has touched the ground in any direction if it is in either end zone;
- (c) a backward pass in flight may not be batted forward by an offensive player.

Exception: A forward pass in flight may be tipped, batted, or deflected in any direction by any eligible player at any time.

Clarification: If a forward pass that is controlled by a player prior to completing the catch is thrown forward, it is an illegal bat. If it is caught by a teammate or intercepted by an opponent, the ball remains alive. If it is not caught, the ball is dead when it hits the ground.

Penalty: For illegal batting or punching the ball: Loss of 10 yards. For enforcement, treat as a foul during a backward pass or fumble (see 9-7-7).

Illegally Kicking Ball

Article 9 No player may deliberately kick any loose ball or ball in player's possession.

Penalty: For illegally kicking the ball: Loss of 10 yards. For enforcement, treat as a foul during a backward pass or fumble (see 9-7-7).

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

(1) If a loose ball is touched by any part of a player's leg (including knee), it is not considered kicking and is treated merely as touching.

(2) If the penalty for an illegal bat or kick is declined, the procedure is the same as though the ball had been merely muffed. However, if the act (impetus) sends the ball in touch, 3-15-3 applies.

(3) The penalty for Article 8 and 9 does not preclude a penalty for a palpably unfair act, when a deliberate kick or illegal bat actually prevents an opponent from recovering. See Palpably Unfair Act 12-3-3.

(4) The ball is not dead when an illegal kick is recovered.

P.S. 12.9 Second-and-15 on A2. Quarterback A1 fumbles a snap in the end zone. While the ball is loose on the ground there, A1 deliberately kicks it. The ball is last touched by B1 before going out of bounds on A's 2-yard line. **Ruling:** Safety. See 9-7-3-Item 3-c; 11-5-1.

Section 2 Personal Fouls

Striking, Kicking, or Kneeing Opponent

Article 1 All players are prohibited from:

- (a) striking with the fists;
- (b) kicking or kneeling; or
- (c) striking, swinging, or clubbing to the head, neck, or face with the heel, back, or side of the hand, wrist, arm, elbow, or clasped hands. See 12-2-3.
- (d) grabbing the inside collar of the back of the shoulder pads or jersey, or the inside collar of the side of the shoulder pads or jersey, and immediately pulling down the runner. This does not apply to a runner who is in the tackle box or to a quarterback who is in the pocket.

Clarification: A player does not have to pull the runner completely to the ground in order for the act to be illegal. If his knees are buckled by the action, it is a foul, even if the runner is not pulled completely to the ground.

Penalty: Loss of 15 yards. If any of the above acts is judged by the official(s) to be flagrant, the offender may be disqualified as long as the entire action is observed by the official(s).

Head Slap

Article 2 A defensive player shall not contact an opponent above the shoulders with the palm of his hands except to ward him off on the line. The exception applies only if it is not a repeated act against the same opponent during any one contact.

Legal Contact

Article 3 A defensive player may use the palm of his hands on an opponent's head, neck, or face only to ward off or push him in an actual attempt to get at a loose ball.

No Striking

Article 4 A player in blocking shall not strike an opponent below the shoulders with his forearm or elbows by turning the trunk of his body at the waist, pivoting or in any other way that is clearly unnecessary.

Penalty: For illegal use of the palm of the hands or for striking an opponent below the shoulders with the forearm or elbow: Loss of 15 yards.

Clarification: Any impermissible use of elbows, forearms, or knees shall be penalized under the unnecessary roughness rule; flagrantly unnecessary roughness shall be penalized under the same rule and the player disqualified.

P.S. 12.10 -Second-and-10 on A30. B1, on his initial charge, head slaps an offensive -tackle on the helmet once with his open hand trying to get at runner A1. A1 is downed on the A35. **Ruling:** Illegal. A's ball first-and-10 on the 50.

P.S. 12.11 -Second-and-10 on A30. B1, on his initial charge, head slaps an offensive -tackle on his helmet repeatedly with his open hand in trying to get at a runner. The runner is downed on the A35. **Ruling:** Illegal. Loss of 15 yards. A's ball first-and-10 on the 50.

Grasping Facemask

Article 5 No player shall twist, turn, or pull the facemask of an opponent in any direction.

Penalty: Loss of 15 yards. Personal Foul. The player may be disqualified if the action is judged by the official(s) to be of a flagrant nature.

P.S. 12.12 -Third-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 runs to the A33, where he is tackled by B1, who incidentally grasps A1's face mask on the tackle, but it is not a twist, turn, or pull.

Ruling: A's ball, fourth-and-seven, on A33. No foul.

Running Into Kicker

Article 6 No defensive player may run into or rough a kicker who kicks from behind his line unless such contact:

- (a) is incidental to and after he has touched the kick in flight;
- (b) is caused by the kicker's own motions;
- (c) occurs during a quick kick;
- (d) occurs during a kick or after a run behind the line;
- (e) occurs after the kicker recovers a loose ball on the ground; or
- (f) is caused because a defender is blocked into the kicker.

Running, Roughing Kicker

Penalty: For running into the kicker: Loss of five yards from the previous spot, no automatic first down. (This is not a personal foul). For roughing the kicker or holder, loss of 15 yards from the previous spot. (This is a personal foul, and also disqualification if flagrant).

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

(1) Avoiding the kicker is a primary responsibility of defensive players if they do not touch the kick.

(2) Contact with the kicker by a single defensive player who has not touched the kick may be considered running into the kicker.

(3) Any unnecessary roughness committed by defensive players is roughing the kicker. Severity of contact and potential for injury are to be considered.

(4) When two defensive players are making a bona fide attempt to block a kick from scrimmage (punt, drop kick, and/or placekick) and one of them runs into the kicker after the kick has left the kicker's foot at the same instant the second player blocks the kick, the foul for running into the kicker shall not be enforced, unless in the judgment of the Referee, the player running into the kicker was clearly the direct cause of the kick being blocked.

(5) If in the judgment of the Referee any of the above action is unnecessary roughness, the penalty for roughing the kicker shall be enforced from the previous spot as a foul during a kick.

P.S. 12.13 Kicker A1 in punt formation muffs a snap. He recovers on the ground and then kicks. A1 is run into, blocked, or tackled by B1 who had started his action when A1 first recovered. **Ruling:** Legal action by B1.

P.S. 12.14 A1 receives a snap. He starts to run but after a few strides, he kicks from behind his line. As A1 kicks, he is tackled or run into. **Ruling:** The kicker is to be protected, but the Referee should use his or her judgment when ordinary line play carries an opponent into such a kicker or at any time when it is not obvious that a kick is to be made (quick kick).

P.S. 12.15 Fourth-and-12 on B30. On a field-goal attempt which is not good, B1 runs into the kicker without touching the ball. **Ruling:** A's ball fourth-and-7 on B25. Running into the kicker. If the field goal had been good, no penalty would be enforced on the succeeding kickoff, since it was not a -personal foul.

No Piling On

Article 7 No player shall fall upon any prostrate player (other than the runner) or upon a runner after the ball is dead.

Penalty: Loss of 15 yards.

Clarification: An official should prevent piling on a prostrate or helpless runner before the ball is dead. When opponents in close proximity to such a runner are about to pile on, and further advance is improbable, the official covering should sound his or her whistle for a dead ball, in order to prevent further play and roughness. See 8-2-1-b.

P.S. 12.16 The holder of a Try-kick is roughed or piled on and the act is not incidental to blocking the kick. **Ruling:** Unnecessary roughness. Such a player is obviously out of play unless the kick is blocked, and even then until he arises and participates in play. See 14-1-14 and 14-6-Exc. 6.

Clarification: There is no foul for running into the holder of a try kick or field goal as there is for running into a kicker. Only roughing the holder of a free kick can be called.

Unnecessary Roughness

Article 8 There shall be no unnecessary roughness. This shall include, but will not be limited to:

Striking

- (a) striking an opponent anywhere with the foot or any part of the leg with a whipping motion;
- (b) contacting a runner out of bounds.

Clarification: Defensive players must make an effort to avoid contact. Players on defense are responsible for knowing when a runner has crossed the boundary line, except in doubtful cases where he might step on a boundary line and continue parallel with it.

- (c) a member of the receiving team cannot go out of bounds and contact a kicking team player out of bounds. If this occurs on a kick from scrimmage, post-possession rules would apply if appropriate (6-5-1);
- (d) running or diving into, or throwing the body against or on a ball carrier who falls or slips to the ground untouched and makes no attempt to advance, before or after the ball is dead;
- (e) unnecessarily running, diving into, cutting, or throwing the body against or on a player who is out of the play or should not have reasonably anticipated such contact by an opponent, before or after the ball is dead; or throwing the runner to the ground after the ball is dead;

Impermissible Use of Helmet and Facemask

- (f) a kicker/punter, who is standing still or fading backwards after the ball has been kicked, is out of the play and must not be unnecessarily contacted by the receiving team through the end of the play or until he assumes a distinctly defensive position.
- (g) If a player uses any part of his helmet (including the top/crown and forehead/"hairline" parts) or facemask to butt, spear, or ram an opponent violently or unnecessarily.
- (h) any player who grabs a helmet opening of an opponent and forcibly twists, turns or pulls his head.

(i) illegal contact with the helmet against the knee of the snapper during an attempt for a field goal or try kick.

(j) if a player illegally launches into a defenseless opponent. It is an illegal launch if a player (1) leaves both feet prior to contact to spring forward and upward into his opponent, and (2) uses any part of his helmet (including the top/crown and forehead/"hairline" parts) to initiate forcible contact against any part of his opponent's body.

Clarification: this does not apply to contact against a runner unless the runner is still considered to be a defenseless player, as defined in Rule 12, Section 2, Article 9.

Penalty: For unnecessary roughness: Loss of 15 yards. The player may be disqualified if the action is judged by the official(s) to be flagrant.

Clarification: If in doubt about a roughness call or potentially dangerous tactics, the covering official(s) should always call unnecessary roughness.

P.S. 12.17 Third-and-20 on A30. Runner A1 runs to the A33, where he is tackled by B1, who hooks his fingers under the front of the runner's helmet, but not his facemask, and forcibly twists his head. **Ruling:** 15 yards for unnecessary roughness. It is an automatic first down. A's ball first-and-10 on A48.

Article 9 It is a foul if a player initiates unnecessary contact against a player who is in a defenseless posture.

(a) Players in a defenseless posture are:

- (1) A player in the act of or just after throwing a pass;
- (2) A receiver attempting to catch a pass; or who has completed a catch and has not had time to protect himself or has not clearly become a runner. If the receiver/runner is capable of avoiding or warding off the impending contact of an opponent, he is no longer a defenseless player;
- (3) A runner already in the grasp of a tackler and whose forward progress has been stopped;
- (4) A kickoff or punt returner attempting to field a kick in the air;
- (5) A player on the ground at the end of a play;
- (6) A kicker/punter during the kick or during the return;
- (7) A quarterback at any time after a change of possession, and
- (8) A player who receives a "blindside" block when the blocker is moving toward his own end line and approaches the opponent from behind or from the side.

(b) Prohibited contact against a player who is in a defenseless posture is:

- (1) Forcibly hitting the defenseless player's head or neck area with the helmet, facemask, forearm, or shoulder, regardless of whether the defensive player also uses his arms to tackle the defenseless player by encircling or grasping him; and
- (2) Lowering the head and making forcible contact with the top/crown or forehead/"hairline" parts of the helmet against any part of the defenseless player's body.

Clarification: The provisions of (2) do not prohibit incidental contact by the mask or helmet in the course of a conventional tackle on an opponent.

Clipping

Article 10 There shall be no clipping against a non-runner. This does not apply to offensive blocking in close-line play where it is legal to clip above the knee(s), but it is illegal to clip at or below the knee(s).

Penalty: For clipping: Loss of 15 yards.

Close Line Play

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

(1) Close-line play is that which occurs in an area extending laterally to the position originally occupied by the offensive tackles and longitudinally three yards on either side of each line of scrimmage.

Close-Line Play—Roll-up Block

(2) In close-line play, if an offensive player's block (legal or illegal) is followed by the blocker rolling up on the back of the leg(s) of the defender, the action is illegal and is considered unnecessary roughness.

Exception: An offensive lineman may not clip a defender who, at the snap, is aligned on the line of scrimmage opposite another offensive lineman who is more than one position away when the defender is responding to the flow of the ball away from the blocker.

Example: Tackle cannot clip nose tackle on sweep away.

(3) Doubtful cases involving a side block or the opponent turning his back as the block is being made are to be judged according to whether the opponent was able to see or ward off the blocker.

(4) The use of hands from behind above the waist on a non-runner is illegal use of hands (see 12-1-3).

(5) The use of hands on the back is not a foul when it is by:

- a) one of the kickers in warding off a receiver, while going downfield under a kick, or
- b) any player in an actual personal legal attempt to recover a loose ball.

(6) It is not considered clipping if:

- a) a blocker is moving in the same direction as an opponent, and has initial contact on the side of the opponent and then continues to contact with the opponent below his waist from behind with any part of his body, or
- b) in any case if an official has not observed the blocker's initial contact.

P.S. 12.18 Second-and-10 on B30. B1 is hit from behind, below the waist, at the B25 by A2 throwing his body across the back of B1's legs. Runner A1 is downed on B15. **Ruling:** Clipping. A's ball second-and-20 on B40.

P.S. 12.19 Second-and-10 on B30. A2 pushes B1 from behind above the waist at the B25. Runner A1 is down on B15. **Ruling:** Illegal block above the waist, A's ball second-and-15 on B35.

Crackback (Illegal)

Article 11 At the snap, an offensive player who is aligned in a position more than two yards laterally outside an offensive tackle, or a player who is in a backfield position at the snap and then moves to a position more than two yards laterally outside a tackle, may not clip an opponent anywhere, nor may he contact an opponent below the waist if the blocker is moving toward the position where the ball was snapped from, and the contact occurs within an area five yards on either side of the line of scrimmage.

Clarification 1: A player aligned more than two yards laterally outside a tackle at the snap is designated as being flexed.

Clarification 2: If runner (passer) scrambles on the play, significantly changing the original direction (broken play), the crackback block is legal.

Penalty: Illegal crackback block: Loss of 15 yards.

P.S. 12.20 Second-and-10 on A40. Flanker A1 sets up five yards outside of offensive tackle A2. At snap A1 comes back and crackback blocks B1. Contact is made at the A38 behind the offensive tackle's original position. Runner goes to 50. **Ruling:** A's ball second-and-25 on A25. Illegal crackback block. Penalize from previous spot.

Illegal Peel Back Block

Article 12 When a player who is aligned in the tackle box at the snap moves to a position outside the box, he cannot initiate contact on the side and below the waist on an opponent if:

- a) the blocker is moving toward his own end line; and
- b) he approaches the opponent from behind or from the side.

Clarification: If the near shoulder of the blocker contacts the front of his opponent's body, the "peel back" block is legal.

Penalty: For illegal "peel back" block: Loss of 15 yards.

Roughing the Passer

Article 13 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:

Pass Leaving Passer's Hand; One Step Rule

(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.

Unnecessary Acts Against Passer

(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.

Hits to Passer's Head and Use of Helmet and Facemask

(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 forcibly in the head or neck area (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 or neck area 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 making forcible contact with the top/crown or forehead/"hairline" parts 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.

Clubbing Passer's Arm

(4) A defensive player is prohibited from clubbing the arm of a passer during a pass or just after a pass has been thrown; however, a defensive player may grasp, pull, or otherwise make normal contact with a passer's arm in attempting to tackle him;

Hitting Passer's Knees

(5) 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;

Clarification 1: A defender cannot initiate a roll or lunge and forcibly hit the passer in the knee area or below, even if he is being contacted by another player.

Clarification 2: It is not a foul if the defender swipes, wraps or grabs a passer in the knee area or below in an attempt to tackle him.

Grasp and Control

(6) 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;

Passer Out of the Play

(7) 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 lateral 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. However, at any time after the change of possession, it is a foul if (a) an opponent forcibly hits the quarterback's head or neck area with his helmet, facemask, forearm, or shoulder, or (b) if an opponent lowers his head and makes forcible contact with the top/crown or forehead/"hairline" parts of his helmet against any part of the quarterback's body. This provision (b) does not prohibit incidental contact by the mask or the helmet in the course of a conventional block.

Passer Out of the Pocket

(8) 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, and the protection against a low hit

provided for in (5) 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: For Roughing the Passer: Loss of 15 yards; disqualification if flagrant.

Clarification 1: If in doubt about a roughness call or potentially dangerous tactic on the quarterback, the Referee should always call roughing the passer.

Clarification 2: See 9-6-2 for personal fouls prior to completion or interception.

P.S. 12.21 Passer A1 is run into or tackled by B1 after a pass. B1 had started his action prior to pass. **Ruling:** A legal action, unless the official rules that B1 had a reasonable chance to avoid or minimize the contact and made no attempt to do so.

Blocking Below Waist on Kicks and Change of Possession

Article 15

Blocks below the waist are prohibited in the following situations:

- (a) By players of either team after a change of possession; or
- (b) By players of the kicking team after a Free Kick, Safety Kick, Fair-Catch Kick, Punt, Field-Goal Attempt, or Try Kick; or
- (c) By players of the receiving team during a down in which there is a Free Kick, Safety Kick, Fair-Catch Kick, Punt, Field-Goal Attempt, or Try Kick.

Exception: Immediately at the snap, players on the receiving team who are on the line of scrimmage and lined up on or inside the normal tight end position are permitted to block low during a Punt, Field-Goal Attempt or Try Kick.

Clarification: Illegal contact with the helmet against the knee of the snapper during a Field-Goal Attempt or a Try Kick is unnecessary roughness (see 12-2-8-i).

Penalty: For illegal blocking below the waist: Loss of 15 yards.

P.S. 12.22 Third-and-6 on B26. B1 intercepts a forward pass in the end zone and runs it out to the B31. During B1's run, A2 blocks B3 low from the side at B28, so that A4 could tackle B1 at the B31. **Ruling:** Illegal block. B's ball first-and-10 on B46.

Use of Helmet as a Weapon

Article 16 A player may not use a helmet (that is no longer worn by anyone) as a weapon to strike, swing at, or throw at an opponent.

Penalty: Loss of 15 yards and automatic disqualification.

Article 17 A chop block is a foul by the offense in which one offensive player (designated as A1 for purposes of this rule) blocks a defensive player in the area of the thigh or lower while another offensive player (A2) occupies that same defensive player in one of the circumstances described in sub-sections (1) through (10) below.

Chop Block on Pass (Engagement)

(1) On a forward pass play, A1 chops a defensive player while the defensive player is physically engaged above the waist by the blocking attempt of A2.

Chop Block on Pass (After Engagement)

(2) On a forward pass play in which A2 physically engages a defensive player above the waist with a blocking attempt, A1 chops the defensive player after the contact by A2 has been broken and while A2 is still confronting the defensive player.

Chop Block on Pass (With “Lure”)

(3) On a forward pass play, A1 chops a defensive player while A2 confronts the -defensive player in a pass-blocking posture but is not physically engaged with the -defensive player (a “lure”).

Reverse Chop Block on Pass

(4) On a forward pass play, A1 blocks a defensive player in the area of the thigh or lower, and A2, simultaneously or immediately after the block by A1, engages the defensive player high.

Clarification: Each of the above circumstances in subsections (1) through (4), which describes a chop-block foul on a forward-pass play, also applies on a play in which an offensive player indicates an apparent attempt to pass block but the play ultimately becomes a run.

Chop Block on Run (by a Back)

(5) On a running play, A1 is lined up in the backfield at the snap and subsequently chops a defensive player engaged above the waist by A2, and such block occurs on or behind the line of scrimmage in an area extending laterally to the positions originally occupied by the tight end on either side.

Chop Block on Run (by a Lineman)

(6) On a running play, A1, an offensive lineman, chops a defensive player after the defensive player has been engaged by A2 (high or low), and the initial alignment of A2 is more than one position away from A1. This rule applies only when the block occurs at a time when the flow of the play is clearly away from A1.

Chop Block on Kicks

(7) On a kicking play, A1 chops a defensive player while the defensive player is physically engaged above the waist by the blocking attempt of A2.

(8) On a kicking play in which A2 physically engages a defensive player above the waist with a blocking attempt, A1 chops the defensive player after the contact by A2 has been broken and while A2 is still confronting the defensive player.

(9) On a kicking play, A1 chops a defensive player while A2 confronts the defensive player in a kick-blocking posture but is not physically engaged with the defensive player (a “lure”).

(10) On a kicking play, A1 blocks a defensive player in the area of the thigh or lower, and A2, simultaneously or immediately after the block by A1, engages the defensive player high.

Clarification: Each of the above circumstances in subsections (7) through (10), which describes a chop-block foul on a kicking play, also applies on a play in which an offensive player indicates an -apparent attempt to kick protect, but the play ultimately becomes a run.

Penalty: For Chop Block: Loss of 15 yards.

Section 3 Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Article 1 There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct. This applies to any act which is contrary to the generally understood principles of sportsmanship. Such acts specifically include, among others:

(a) Throwing a punch, or a forearm, or kicking at an opponent even though no contact is made.

(b) The use of abusive, threatening, or insulting language or gestures to opponents, teammates, officials, or representatives of the League.

Taunting

(c) The use of baiting or taunting acts or words that engender ill will between teams.

(d) Individual players involved in prolonged or excessive celebrations. Players are prohibited from engaging in any celebrations while on the ground. A celebration shall be deemed excessive or prolonged if a player continues to celebrate after a warning from an official.

(e) Two-or-more players engage in prolonged, excessive, premeditated, or choreographed celebrations.

(f) Possession or use of foreign or extraneous object(s) that are not part of the uniform during the game on the field or the sideline, or using the ball as a prop.

Contact-Game Official

(g) Unnecessary physical contact with a game official.

Removal of Helmet

(h) Removal by a player of his helmet in the field of play to celebrate or during a confrontation with a game official or any other player.

Clarification 1: Under no condition is an official to allow a player to shove, push, or strike him in an offensive, disrespectful, or unsportsmanlike manner. Any such action must be reported to the Commissioner.

Penalty: For (a) through (h): Loss of 15 yards from succeeding spot or whatever spot the Referee, after consulting with the crew, deems equitable.

Clarification 2: Violations of (b) or (c) (above), which occur before or during the game may result in disqualification in addition to the yardage penalty. Any violations at the game site on the day of the game, including postgame, may result in discipline by the Commissioner. Any violation of (g) (above) may result in disqualification and also will include discipline by the Commissioner. An official must see the entire action for a player to be disqualified.

Clarification 3: Violations of (b) will be penalized if any of the acts are committed directly at an opponent. These acts include but are not limited to: sack dances; home run swing; incredible hulk; spiking the ball; spinning the ball; throwing or shoving the ball; pointing; pointing the ball; verbal taunting; military salute; standing over an opponent (prolonged and with provocation); or dancing.

Clarification 4: Violations of (c) will be penalized if any of the acts occur anywhere on the field. These acts include but are not limited to: throat slash; machine gun salute; sexually suggestive gestures, prolonged gyrations; or stomping on a team logo.

Clarification 5: Violations of (d) and (e) will be penalized if they occur anywhere on the field other than the end zone or bench area.

Clarification 6: If any foreign object(s) are deemed a safety hazard by the game officials, in addition to a yardage penalty, the player will be subject to ejection from the game, whether he uses the object or not.

Disconcerting

(i) The defensive use of acts or words designed to disconcert an offensive team at the snap. An official must blow his or her whistle immediately to stop play.

(j) Concealing a ball underneath the clothing or using any article of equipment to simulate a ball.

Lingering

(k) Using entering substitutes, legally returning players, substitutes on sidelines, or withdrawn players to confuse opponents. The clarification is also to be interpreted as covering any lingering by players leaving the field when being substituted for. See 5-2-2.

Hide Out

(l) An offensive player lines up or is in motion less than five yards from the sideline in front of his team's designated bench area. However, an offensive player can line up less than five yards from the sidelines on the same side as his team's player bench, as long as he is not in front of the designated bench area.

(m) Repeatedly abusing the substitution rule, with the game clock running, in attempts to conserve time. See 5-2-2.

(n) More than two successive 40/25 second penalties (after warning) during same down.

Leverage

(o) Jumping or standing on a teammate or opponent to ~~block or~~ attempt to block an opponent's kick.

(p) Placing a hand or hands on a teammate or opponent to gain additional height in attempting to block an opponent's kick.

(q) Being picked up by a teammate in attempting to block an opponent's kick.

Leaping

(r) Clearly running forward and leaping in an obvious attempt to block a field goal, or Try-kick and landing on players, unless the leaping player was originally lined up within one yard of the line of scrimmage when the ball was snapped.

Goal Tending

(s) Goal-tending by a defensive player leaping up to deflect a kick as it passes above the crossbar of a goalpost is prohibited. The Referee could award three points for a palpably unfair act (12-3-3).

(t) A punter, placekicker, or holder who simulates being roughed or run into by a defensive player.

(u) A member of the kicking team who goes out of bounds, whether forced out or voluntarily, and does not attempt to return inbounds in a reasonable amount of time.

Freezing the Kicker

(v) An attempt to call an excess or illegal time out to freeze a kicker prior to a field-goal attempt or a Try attempt, when:

(i) a team has already been charged a time out during the same dead ball -period; or

(ii) a team has exhausted the three charged team time outs that are permitted in a half.

If an attempt is made to call a time out in these situations, the officials shall not grant a time out, play will continue, and a penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be enforced. If a time out is inadvertently granted, the penalty shall also be enforced.

Clarification: The Referee (or another official) will notify the Head Coach (i) that two charged time outs by the same team in the same dead ball period are not permitted, and (ii) when he has exhausted his three charged team time outs in a half.

Penalty: For unsportsmanlike player conduct (l) through (v): Loss of 15 yards from:

- a) the succeeding spot if the ball is dead.
- b) the previous spot if the ball was in play.

If the infraction is flagrant, the player is also disqualified.

Fouls to Prevent Score

Article 2 The defense shall not commit successive or continued fouls to prevent a score.

Penalty: If the violation is repeated after a warning, the score involved is awarded to the offensive team.

Palpably Unfair Act (Player)

Article 3 A player or substitute shall not interfere with play by any act which is palpably unfair.

Penalty: Offender may be disqualified. The Referee, after consulting his or her crew, enforces any such distance penalty as they consider equitable and irrespective of any other specified code penalty. The Referee could award a score. See 15-1-6.

Rule 13 Instant Replay

Instant Replay

The League will employ a system of Replay Review to aid officiating for reviewable plays as defined below. Prior to the two-minute warning of each half, a Coaches' Challenge System will be in effect except for plays when the on-field ruling results in a score for either team. After the two-minute warning of each half, throughout any overtime period, and after all scoring plays, a Replay Review will be initiated only by a Replay Official from a Replay Booth comparable to the location of the coaches' booth or Press Box. The following procedures will be used:

Coaches' Challenge

In each game, a team will be permitted a maximum of two challenges that will initiate Replay reviews. Each challenge will require the use of a team timeout. If a challenge is upheld, the timeout will be restored to the challenging team. A challenge will only be restored if a team is successful on both of its challenges, in which case it shall be awarded a third challenge, but a fourth challenge will not be permitted under any circumstances. A team may challenge an on-field ruling up until the next legal snap or kick. If there is a foul that prevents the next snap, the team committing that foul will no longer be able to challenge the previous ruling. No challenges will be recognized from a team that has exhausted its timeouts. A team that is out of time outs or has used all of its available challenges may not attempt to initiate an additional challenge.

Penalty: For initiating a challenge when all of a team's time outs have been exhausted, when all of its available challenges have been used, or after a foul that prevents the next snap: Loss of 15 yards.

Replay Official's Request for Review

After the two-minute warning of each half, throughout any overtime period, and after all scoring plays any Replay Review will be initiated only by a Replay Official. There is no limit to the number of Replay Reviews that may be initiated by the Replay Official. He or she must initiate a review before the next legal snap or kick and cannot review any ruling against a team that commits a foul to prevent the next snap. His or her ability to initiate a review will be unrelated to the number of timeouts that either team has remaining, and no timeout will be charged for any review initiated by the Replay Official.

Reviews by Replay Official

All Replay Reviews will be conducted by the Replay Official in the Replay Booth. Prior to making his final decision he will consult with the Referee regarding the ruling on the field. A decision will be reversed only when the Replay Official has *indisputable visual evidence* available to him that warrants the change.

Time Limit

Each review will be a maximum of 90 seconds in length, timed from when the Referee on the field makes the announcement that the previous play is being reviewed.

Reviewable Plays

The Replay System will cover the following play situations only:

- (a) Plays governed by Sideline, Goal Line, End Zone, and End Line:
 1. Scoring Plays, including a runner breaking the plane of the goal line.
 2. Pass complete/incomplete/intercepted at sideline, goal line, end zone, and end line.
 3. Runner/receiver in or out of bounds.
 4. Recovery of loose ball in or out of bounds.

(b) Passing Plays:

1. Pass ruled complete/incomplete/intercepted in the field of play.
2. Touching of a forward pass by an ineligible receiver.
3. Touching of a forward pass by a defensive player.
4. Quarterback (Passer) forward pass or fumble.
5. Illegal forward pass beyond line of scrimmage.
6. Illegal forward pass after change of possession.
7. Forward or backward pass thrown from behind line of scrimmage.
8. A loose ball in play striking a video board, guide wire, sky cam or any other object.

(c) Other Reviewable Plays:

1. Runner ruled not down by defensive contact.
2. Runner ruled down by defensive contact when the recovery of a fumble by an opponent or a teammate occurs in the action that happens following the fumble.
3. Ruling of incomplete pass when the recovery of a passer's fumble by an opponent or a teammate occurs in the action following the fumble.
4. Ruling of a loose ball out of bounds when it is recovered in the field of play by an opponent or a teammate in the action after the ball hits the ground.

Clarification 1: If the ruling of down by contact or incomplete pass is changed, the ball belongs to the recovering player at the spot of the recovery of the fumble, and any advance is nullified.

Clarification 2: If the Replay Official does not have indisputable visual evidence as to which player recovered the loose ball, the ruling on the field will stand.

Clarification 3: This does not apply to complete/incomplete passes, or the ruling of forward progress.

5. Forward progress with respect to a first down.
6. Touching of a kick.
7. A field goal or Try attempt that crosses below or above the crossbar, inside or outside the uprights when it is lower than the top of the uprights, or touches anything.
8. Number of players on the field at the snap.
9. Illegal forward handoff.

Clarification: Non-reviewable plays include but are not limited to:

1. **Status of the clock**
2. **Proper down**
3. **Penalty administration**
4. **Runner ruled down by defensive contact (not involving fumbles)**
5. **Forward progress not relating to first down or goal line**
6. **Recovery of loose ball that does not involve a boundary line or the end zone**
7. **Field goal or Try attempts that cross above either upright without touching anything.**
8. **Inadvertent Whistle**

Rule 14 Penalty Enforcement

Section 1 Spot From Which Penalty in Foul is Enforced

Spots of Enforcement

Article 1 The general provisions of Rule 14 govern all spots of enforcement.

Clarification: The spot of enforcement for fouls or the distance penalty or both, when not specific, are subordinate to the specific rules governing a foul during a fumble, pass or kick. These in turn are both-subordinate to Rule 14.

P.S. 14.1 -Second-and-15 on A4. Quarterback A1 throws a legal pass which is incomplete. A2 held in end zone. **Ruling:** Safety or A's ball third-and-15 on A4.

Fouls Between Downs

Article 2 When a foul occurs between downs, enforcement is from the succeeding spot (14-5-A.C. 3).

Fouls by Non-Players

Article 3 Penalties for fouls committed by non-players shall be enforced as specifically provided under Rule 13.

Enforcement Spot Not Governed

Article 4 When the spot of enforcement is not governed by a general or specific rule, it is the spot of the foul.

Basic Spots of Enforcement

Article 5 The basic spots of enforcement (3-11-1) are:

- (a) The previous spot for a forward pass (9-6-1); a scrimmage kick (10-5-1); or a free kick (10-3-1).
- (b) The dead ball spot on a running play (14-1-12).
- (c) The spot of snap, backward pass, or fumble (8-7).
- (d) The spot of the foul (14-1-4 and 14-1-13).
- (e) The succeeding spot for dead ball fouls. When such a foul by the defense incurs a penalty that results in the offensive team being short of the previous spot, the ball will be advanced to the previous spot.

Clarification: If a foul is committed during a run, a fumble, or a backward pass, the penalty is assessed from the basic spot if the:

- i) Defense fouls in advance of the basic spot**
- ii) Defense fouls behind the basic spot**
- iii) Offense fouls in advance of the basic spot**

If the offense fouls behind the basic spot, enforcement is from the spot of the foul (3 and 1).

Exceptions:

- 1) All fouls committed by the offensive team behind the line of scrimmage shall be penalized from the previous spot. If the foul is in the end zone, it is a safety (14-1-11-b).
- 2) If a runner (3-27-1) is downed behind the line of scrimmage and the foul by an offensive player is beyond the line of scrimmage, enforcement shall be from the previous spot. If the runner is down in the end zone, it is a safety (11-5-1).

P.S. 14.2 -Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 is downed on the A35. B1 illegally uses his hands on the A45 during run. **Ruling:** The defensive foul is in advance of the basic spot (A35 where downed). Penalize from the basic spot (A35). A's ball first-and-10 on A40.

P.S. 14.3 -Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 is downed on the A35. A2 uses his hands illegally on the A45. **Ruling:** The offensive foul is in advance of the basic spot (A35 where downed). Penalize from the basic spot (A35). A's ball second-and-15 on A25.

P.S. 14.4 -Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 is downed on the A40. An offensive player illegally uses his hands on the A35. **Ruling:** The offensive foul is behind the basic spot (spot where downed). Penalize from the spot of the foul (A35). A's ball second-and-15 on A25.

P.S. 14.5 Second-and-10 on A30. Quarterback A1 is downed on the A40. A2 held on the A25. **Ruling:** Penalize 10 yards from the previous spot as the offensive foul was behind the line of scrimmage. A's ball second-and-20 on A20.

P.S. 14.6 Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 is downed on the A25. An offensive player held on the A32. **Ruling:** A's ball second-and-20 on the A20. The runner was downed behind the line of scrimmage. Enforcement is from the previous spot. Team B has option of refusing the penalty and taking the play which would then be A's ball third-and-15 on the A25 (14-6).

Fouls Out of Bounds

Article 6 When the spot of a player foul is out of bounds between the end lines, it is assumed to be at an inbounds line on a yard line (extended) through the spot where the foul was committed. If this spot is behind an end line, it is assumed to be in the end zone. See 8-6-2 and 14-1-11.

Dead Ball Fouls

Article 7 A dead ball foul is enforced from the succeeding spot, and the down counts.

- (a) If there is a dead ball personal foul by either team following the end of the second or fourth periods, the penalty yardage will be enforced on the second half kickoff, or the kickoff in overtime.

P.S. 14.7 -Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 goes out of bounds on the A35. A2 then clips B1 either on the A40 or A30. **Ruling:** Enforce from the succeeding spot (out of bounds) as a foul between downs. Dead ball foul. The down is counted A's ball third-and-20 on A20.

P.S. 14.8 Fourth-and-10 on A30. A punt goes to the B30 where kicking team player A1 illegally touches the ball and then falls on it there, after which:

a) A2 clips any place on the field. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B45.

b) B1 commits a personal foul any place on the field. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B15.

P.S. 14.9 Fourth-and-8 on B12. A legal forward pass is incomplete behind the goal line. After the incompleteness:

a) B1 knocks A1 to the ground. **Ruling:** Enforce from the succeeding spot (B12) as the pass was incomplete. B's ball first and-10 on B6.

b) A1 clips. **Ruling:** Enforce from the succeeding spot (B12). B's ball first-and-10 on B27.

Dead Ball Fouls

Article 8 Dead ball fouls by both teams are offset at the succeeding spot and the down counts. If either or both fouls are disqualifying fouls (see 14-1-9), the player(s) shall be disqualified.

P.S. 14.10 Fourth-and-5 on B14. A legal forward pass is incomplete behind the goal line, after which:

a) A1 clips B1 and B2 roughs A2. **Ruling:** Fouls are offset. They are dead ball fouls and the succeeding spot is B14. B's ball first-and-10 on B14.

b) A1 punches B1 and B1 punches A1. **Ruling:** Dead ball fouls. Offsetting fouls; in addition, A1 and B1 are disqualified. B's ball first-and-10 on B14.

P.S. 14.11 Second-and-10 on A30. A legal forward pass is incomplete, after which:

a) B1 clips A1 and A1 punches B1. **Ruling:** Disqualify A1. Penalties offset. The down counts as the foul occurred after the down had ended. A's ball third-and-10 on A30. See 14-1-8.

b) A1 clips B1 and B1 punches A1. **Ruling:** Disqualify B1. Penalties offset. A's ball third-and-10 on A30.

P.S. 14.12 Receiver B1 is offside on the kickoff. The kickoff is legally out of bounds on the B30 (last touching a receiving team player) after which:

a) A1 is penalized for roughness. **Ruling:** Re-kick. Double foul (14-3-2 and 14-1-9).

b) B1 is penalized for roughness. **Ruling:** Multiple foul. Choice for Team A. Re-kick from the A35 (offside penalty) or B's ball first-and-10 on B15. A dead ball foul is penalized from the succeeding spot (B30). If the kick is illegally out of bounds, it is a re-kick in either case (14-4).

Foul and Dead Ball Foul

Article 9 If there has been a foul by either team during a down and there is a dead ball foul by the other team in the action immediately after the end of the down, it is a double foul, and all rules for enforcement of double fouls apply (see 14-3-1).

Exception: If the scoring team commits a dead ball foul after a score, the score counts, and the penalty is enforced on the kickoff.

P.S. 14.13 Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 is out of bounds on the A40, after which A2 clips any place. Team B was offside. **Ruling:** A's ball second-and-25 on A15. Under the 5-and-15 rule, the penalty for the personal foul by Team A is enforced. See 14-3-1-Exc. 1.

Legal Acts After Dead Ball

Article 10 There is no penalty unless the contact was avoidable and it is deemed unnecessary roughness, if a player:

(a) uses his hands, arms, or body in a manner ordinarily illegal (other than striking) -during the dead ball period after a down ends, or

(b) completes a legal action (blocking or tackling) started during the down.

P.S. 14.14 -Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 goes out of bounds on the A35 after which:

a) A2 holds on the A30. **Ruling:** Ignore the foul as it was not a personal foul. A's ball third-and-5 on A35.

b) A2 clips on the A30. **Ruling:** A personal foul during a dead ball is penalized as stated in 14-1-7. A's ball third-and-20 on A20.

c) A2 strikes B1 on the A30. **Ruling:** Disqualify A2. Penalize from the succeeding spot as in 14-1-7. A's ball third-and-20 on A20.

Spot of Enforcement Behind Offensive Goal Line

Article 11 When a spot of enforcement is behind the offensive goal line, and the foul is:

(a) by the defense, a distance penalty is enforced from the goal line (unless a touchback, one during a backward pass, or fumble, or 12-1-4-Penalty Exception), or

(b) by the offense, it is a safety.

Clarification: During a loose ball there is always an offensive and defensive team, and enforcement is provided for in the specific section governing passes, fumbles, and kicks. See 3-2-3; 3-17; 3-35-1; and 14-1-5.

P.S. 14.15 B1 fumbles after catching a punt on his 1-yard line. The ball enters the end zone where B1 recovers. During a run in the end zone, he fumbles. A1 clips anywhere during the last fumble. B1 is downed in the end zone. **Ruling:** Enforce from the goal line. B's ball first-and-10 on B15.

P.S. 14.16 Second-and-15 on A4. Runner A1 is downed in the end zone. During the run A2 held on the A10. **Ruling:** Safety. Decline penalty.

P.S. 14.17 Second-and-goal on B2. Runner A1 fumbles into B's end zone. B1 recovers in his end zone (downed) or goes out of bounds from there. While B1 is a runner, B2 fouls in the end zone. **Ruling:** Safety.

Foul on Running Play With No Change of Possession

Article 12 When a foul occurs during a running play (3-27-2) and the run in which the foul occurs is not followed by a change of team possession during the down, the spot of enforcement is the spot where the ball is dead.

Exceptions:

1) When the spot of a foul by the offense is behind the spot where dead, enforcement is from the spot of the foul.

Offensive Foul Behind Goal

2) When the spot of a foul by the offense is behind the line of scrimmage, enforcement is from the previous spot unless in offensive's end zone. Then it is a safety (14-1-11-b).

3) When the spot of a foul by the offense is beyond the line of scrimmage and a runner (3-27-1) is downed behind the line, enforcement is from the previous spot unless he is downed in the end zone. Then it is a safety, the result of the play (11-5-1).

Illegal Forward Pass

4) The enforcement spot is the previous spot for a second forward pass from behind the line or a forward pass from behind the line after the ball has been beyond the line. A foul for an illegal forward pass made beyond the line is enforced from the spot of the pass, and the down counts. See 14-1-11-6.

5) If a defensive foul occurs on or beyond the line of scrimmage and the ball becomes dead behind the line, the penalty is enforced from the previous spot.

6) When the spot of enforcement for the defense is behind the offensive goal line, enforcement is from the goal line. See 14-1-11-a.

Defensive Foul Behind Line

7) When the spot of a foul by the defense is behind the line of scrimmage and the ball becomes dead behind the line, enforcement is from the spot of the foul or the spot where the ball is dead, whichever is more advantageous to the offense. If such foul incurs a penalty that results in the offended team being short of the line, the ball will be advanced to the previous spot and no additional yardage assessed.

P.S. 14.18 While B1 is returning a kickoff, B2 holds on the B30. B1 is downed on the B20. **Ruling:** The offensive foul is in advance of the dead ball; enforce from the dead ball spot (B20). First-and-10 on B10.

Foul Enforcement on Running Play With Possession Change

Article 13 When a defensive foul occurs during a running play (3-27-2) and the run in which the foul occurs is followed by a change of possession, the spot of enforcement is the spot of the foul and ball reverts to offensive team. See 14-1-12- Exc. 5.

Exceptions:

1) When the spot of a foul is in advance of the spot where the offensive player lost possession, the spot of enforcement is the spot where player possession was lost and the ball reverts to offensive team.

2) When the spot of a foul by the defense is at, behind, or beyond the line of scrimmage, and such foul incurs a penalty that results in the offensive team being short of the line, the ball will be advanced to the previous spot.

Clarification: When there are multiple fouls by the defense, enforcement should benefit the offense the most.

P.S. 14.19 Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 goes to the A40 where he fumbles and B1 recovers. During A1's run, B2 held on the line of scrimmage (A30). **Ruling:** Penalize from the spot of the foul on change of possession. A's ball first-and-10 on A35.

P.S. 14.20 Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 goes to the A40 where he fumbles and B1 recovers. During A1's run, B2 held on the A45. **Ruling:** Enforce from the spot where A1 lost possession as the foul was in advance of that spot. If Team A had been the only one to foul, Team B would refuse the penalty and keep the ball. A's ball first-and-10 on A45.

P.S. 14.21 Second-and-10 on A30. Quarterback A1 scrambles to A20, fumbles and B1 recovers. During A1's scramble, B2 holds at A22. **Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on A30. See 14-1-13-Exc. 2.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS**Forward Pass and Kick Enforcements**

(1) A foul during a run prior to a kick or forward pass from behind the line, is enforced as if it had occurred during a pass or kick which follows. See 8-6-1; 8-6-3; 9-5-1 and 14-1-5.

(2) If an offensive player fouls behind the defensive goal line during a running play in which the runner crosses that line, the penalty is enforced from the goal line. See 7-3-7.

(3) After a penalty for a foul during a running play, the general provisions of 14-8-1 relative to the number of the ensuing down, always apply.

(4) Any foul prior to possession by a runner is enforced as otherwise specified.

P.S. 14.22 Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 crosses the goal line. During A1's run:

a) A2 clips on the B20. **Ruling:** Enforce from the spot of the foul. A's ball first-and-10 on B35.

b) A2 clips in B's end zone before Runner A1 crosses the goal line. **Ruling:** Enforcement is from the goal line. A's ball first-and-10 on B15.

c) A2 clips on the B10 after Runner A1 crosses the goal line. **Ruling:** Touchdown. Kick off on A15.

Score and Personal Foul or Unsportsmanlike Conduct Foul by Opponent

Article 14 If a team scores and the opponent commits a personal or unsportsmanlike conduct foul or a palpably unfair act during the down, the penalty is enforced on the succeeding free kick unless the enforcement resulted in the score.

Clarification: If the personal foul, unsportsmanlike conduct foul, or a palpably unfair act by the opponent occurred on a successful field goal or Try kick, the penalty could be enforced from the previous spot and the offensive team would retain the ball, with no score.

P.S. 14.23 Second-and-10 on B30. A legal forward pass is caught by end A1 who then runs for a score. Prior to the pass B1 holds A2 on the line of scrimmage. **Ruling:** Touchdown. Kickoff on A30. No enforcement of penalty as it was not a personal foul.

P.S. 14.24 Second-and-15 on A2. Runner A1 is downed in the end zone. A2 clipped in the end zone during the run. **Ruling:** Safety. Free kick from A10. The personal foul is penalized from the succeeding spot (A20) as the foul did not result in a score.

P.S. 14.25 B1 clips during a kickoff. B1 muffs the kick on the B5 and forces it into his end zone (new impetus) where he recovers and is downed or the kick is out of bounds from the end zone. **Ruling:** Safety. B free kicks from its 10 as the penalty is also enforced for the clip from the succeeding spot (B20).

P.S. 14.26 Second-and-12 on A4. Runner A1 fumbles in his end zone, where B1 recovers. During A's run:

a) A2 holds anywhere. **Ruling:** Touchdown B. Kickoff at B30.

b) B2 holds anywhere. **Ruling:** Enforce from the goal line. A's ball first-and-10 on A5.

P.S. 14.27 During a successful Try-kick, B1:

a) is offside. **Ruling:** Point awarded. Enforce five-yard penalty against B on kickoff (See 11-3-3-Item 4-c) or retry at B1.

b) piles on holder of a placekick or runs into the kicker. **Ruling:** Point awarded. Enforce the penalty on the succeeding kickoff (11-3-3-Item 4-c) or retry at B1.

Half Distance Penalty

Section 2 Location of Foul

Article 1 If a distance penalty, enforced from a specific spot between the goal lines would place the ball more than half the distance to the offender's goal line, the penalty shall be half the distance from that spot to their goal line.

Clarification: This general rule supersedes any other general or specific rule other than for a palpably unfair act or the enforcement for intentional grounding, if appropriate.

P.S. 14.28 Second-and-20 on B24. A legal forward pass is caught by end A1 on the B12 and he runs to the B10. B1 roughed the passer. **Ruling:** Half the distance from the end of the run. A's ball first-and-goal on B5.

Location of Foul

Article 2

(a) If a foul occurs behind a goal line during a down, the penalty shall be enforced as provided for under the specific running play, pass or fumble rule involved.

(b) If a foul occurs between downs, enforcement is from the succeeding spot (14-5).

(c) If any enforcement leaves the ball behind a goal line, 11-3-5 and 11-3-6 govern. See 14-1-11 and Clarification.

Section 3 Fouls by Both Teams

Double Foul Without Change of Possession

Article 1 If there is a double foul (3-11-2-c) without a change of possession, the penalties are offset and the down is replayed at the previous spot. If it was a scrimmage down, the number of the next down and the necessary line is the same as for the down for which the new one is substituted.

Exceptions:**15 Yards Versus 5 Yards**

1) If one of the fouls incurs a 15-yard penalty and the other foul would result in a loss of 5 yards only, the major penalty yardage is to be assessed from the previous spot.

Clarification 1: If a score occurs on a play that would normally involve a 5 vs. 15 yard enforcement, enforce the major penalty from the previous spot. See 4-8-2-c-Exc.2 for dead ball fouls at the end of a half.

Clarification 2: For the 5-and-15 rule to apply, the five yard penalty must not include a loss of down.

2) If one of the fouls is a dead ball foul for delay of game for spiking the ball and the opponent's foul is a live ball foul, the team that committed the delay of game foul, in addition to Article 1 and Exception 1, will have the option to decline the foul committed by its opponent and be assessed the penalty for delay from the dead ball spot.

3) Any disqualified player is removed immediately. See 14-1-8.

Double Foul Disqualification

4) If both fouls involve disqualification, the down is replayed at the previous spot. If both fouls are dead ball fouls or are treated as such (14-1-8), the fouls are disregarded and the ball is next put in play at the succeeding spot. See Exception 1 in either case.

Illegal Touching and Foul

5) If the foul by the kickers is illegal touching of a scrimmage kick, the down is not replayed at the previous spot. The touching is disregarded if a distance penalty for a foul by the receivers is enforced. If not enforced, the receivers next put the ball in play at any spot of illegal touching or at any other spot where they are entitled to possession at the end of the down. However, a post possession foul cannot be declined in order to force B's possession at any spot of illegal touching (6-5-1-Exc. 3).

Clarification: Any foul by either team after a kick ends is enforced as ordinary. See 6-5-1.

P.S. 14.29 Second-and-20 on A30. Runner A1 goes to the A35. During the run A2 holds B1 who punches A2. **Ruling:** Disqualify B1. Penalties offset. A's ball second-and-20 on A30.

P.S. 14.30 Third-and-eight on B10. A2 is offside and B1 slugs on the B6 during the play. Runner A1 scored on the play. **Ruling:** Disqualify B1. A's ball first-and-goal on B5. 5-and-15 rule.

P.S. 14.31 Second-and-10 on A30. B1 is offside. Runner A1 goes to B30. During A's run A2 clips at the 50. **Ruling:** A's ball second-and-25 on A15. 5-and-15 rule.

P.S. 14.32 Second-and-10 on A30. After the ball is dead anywhere, A1 and B2 strike each other with their fists. Runner A1 was downed on the A35. **Ruling:** Fouls are disregarded except for disqualifying both players. A's ball third-and-five on A35.

P.S. 14.33 Fourth-and-10 on B18. A forward pass falls incomplete in the end zone, after which A1 clips B2 who then strikes A1. **Ruling:** Disqualify B2. B's ball first-and-10 on B18.

P.S. 14.34 A kickoff is illegally out of bounds on the B30. After the ball is out of bounds:

- a) A1 clips and B2 blocks below the waist. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B40.

b) A1 clips and B1 punches A1. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B40. B1 disqualified. In (a) and (b), B takes possession on the B40 as a result of the penalty enforcement for the kick out of bounds, and the subsequent dead ball fouls are disregarded.

Double Foul With Change of Possession (Clean Hands)

Article 2 If there is a double foul (3-11-2-c) during a down in which there is a change of possession, the team gaining possession must keep the ball after enforcement for its foul, provided its foul occurred after the change of possession (clean hands).

Exceptions:

1) If the kickers foul during a kickoff, punt, safety kick, or field-goal attempt before possession changes, the receivers will have the option of replaying the down at the previous spot (offsetting fouls), or keeping the ball after enforcement for its fouls.

2) If the team gaining possession fouls and loses possession, the penalties offset and the down is replayed at the previous spot.

3) If a score would result from a foul by a team gaining possession, the down is replayed at the previous spot.

Clarification 1: For purposes of the clean hands rule, a post-possession foul is treated the same as a defensive foul after possession physically changes.

Clarification 2: The team gaining possession can have the down replayed (offsetting fouls) only on a kicking play (Exception 1) or if a score (e.g. safety) would result from a foul that it commits (Exception 3). In other instances (e.g. fumble recovery or interception) it will keep possession of the ball after the enforcement for the penalty for its foul.

Double Foul Prior to Change of Possession (Not Clean Hands)

(4) If the team gaining possession fouls prior to the change of possession (not clean hands), the penalties offset and the down is replayed at the previous spot.

Double Foul After Change of Possession

Article 3 If a double foul occurs after a change in possession, the team in possession retains the ball at the spot where its foul occurred so long as that spot is not in advance of the dead ball spot. In that event, the ball is spotted at dead ball spot.

(a) If this spot is normally a touchback, the ball is placed on the 20-yard line, unless it occurs on a kickoff in which case the ball is placed on the 25-yard line.

(b) If normally a safety, place the ball on 1-yard line.

(c) This enforcement also applies if one of the fouls is a post-possession foul.

(d) If there is a subsequent change of possession (e.g., fumble recovery) after the double foul, and the foul by the team in possession is in advance of the spot of the fumble, the ball is put in play by the fumbling team at the spot of the fumble.

(e) If the foul by the team in possession is a dead ball foul, the ball is put in play at the dead ball spot.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

Double Foul Disregarded

(1) When enforcement for a double foul is disregarded, the number of the next down, if a scrimmage down, is the same as if no foul had occurred. See 14-3-2.

(2) Change of possession refers to the physical change of possession from one team to the other except for kicks from scrimmage (6-5-1), and free kick.

(3) If a team fouls before it gains possession on a double foul, it cannot score.

(4) Illegal touching of a scrimmage kick, while technically a foul, does not offset a foul committed by its opponent. It is not considered part of a double foul. See 14-3-1-Exc. 5.

P.S. 14.35 Second-and-10 on B40. B2 is offside and A1 completes a pass to eligible receiver A3 who is tackled at the B17. A3 then gets up and spikes the ball in the field of play.

Ruling: A's ball first-and-10 on B22 (decline B's foul and enforce A's from dead-ball spot).

P.S. 14.36 Second-and-10 on B40. Team A is offside. B1 intercepts a forward pass and runs it back to the A30. On the runback, B2 clips on the B45. **Ruling:** Team B keeps the ball as its foul was not prior to change of possession and foul enforced. B's ball first-and-10 on B30.

P.S. 14.37 On the kickoff to start the game, kicking team player A1 is offside. Receiver B1 catches the ball in the end zone and runs it back to the A20. On the runback B2 clips on the A26. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on A41 (14-3-2).

P.S. 14.38 Fourth-and-10 on A40. Kicking team player A1 is offside. A punt hits on the B20 where receiver B1 picks it up and runs to the 50. On B's runback, B2 clips on the B40. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B25 (14-3-2).

P.S. 14.39 Fourth-and-10 on A40. Kicking team player A1 is offside. A punt hits on the B20 where receiver B1 picks it up and runs for a touchdown. After B1 scores, B2 clips on the A10. **Ruling:** Touchdown B. Kickoff B15 (14-3-2).

P.S. 14.40 Second-and-five on B45. Team A is offside. B1 intercepts a pass on the B10 and runs it back to the B30 and is tackled and fumbles on the B30 where A1 recovers. On B1's run, B2 clipped on the B25. **Ruling:** A's ball second-and-5 on B45 (14-3-2).

P.S. 14.41 Second-and-10 on A30. Team A is offside. B1 intercepts and runs for a touchdown, then clips. **Ruling:** Touchdown B. Kickoff B15.

P.S. 14.42 Second-and-10 on B45. B1 intercepts a pass on the B10 and runs it back to the A30. On the runback, B2 clips on the A35 and A1 piles on runner B1 after he is tackled on the A30. **Ruling:** Team B retains ball at spot of its foul. B's ball first-and-10 on A35.

P.S. 14.43 B1 receives a kick at the B10, advances to the B40 and fumbles when he is tackled. A2 recovers. During B1's run, B2 clips at the B30, after which A1 trips B3. **Ruling:** Double foul following change of possession. B's ball at spot of its foul, first- and-10 on B30.

P.S. 14.44 B1 intercepts on the B10. During B1's run, B2 clips at the B30 and is downed at the B40. B1 is flagrantly roughed by A1 who piles on. **Ruling:** A1 disqualified. B's ball first-and-10 on B30.

P.S. 14.45 Second-and-10 on B45. B1 holds tight end A1 on the line of scrimmage. B2 intercepts the ball on the B10 and runs it back to the B30 where he is tackled, fumbles, and A2 recovers the ball. A2 runs to the B20. On A2's run, A3 holds on the B25. **Ruling:** Team A keeps the ball as it gained possession prior to its foul. A's ball first-and-10 on B35.

P.S. 14.46 B1 receives a kickoff in the end zone and clips there. The runner advances to the B25 and is piled on by A1. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B1. See 14-3-3-b.

P.S. 14.47 B1 legally bats a kickoff back into his own end zone, thereby creating a new impetus. After B3 picks up the ball in the end zone, B2 clips in the end zone and A1 piles on. **Ruling:** Both fouls occurred after B gained possession. Normally, if this spot was in the end zone, the succeeding spot would be the B20. In this case, B1 created the impetus which would have resulted in a safety if the fouls had not been committed. The ball is transferred to the one-yard line. B's ball first-and-10 on B1. See 14-3-3-b.

P.S. 14.48 Second-and-10 on B30. A1 is offside. B1 intercepts in the end zone and clips there. Runner B1 is downed on the B10. **Ruling:** Replay. A score cannot result from one of the fouls of a double foul. A's ball second-and-10 on B30. See 14-3-2.

Section 4 Choice of Penalties

Only One Penalty Enforced

If there is a multiple foul (3-11-2-b)

Exception 1: If one of the multiple fouls is a foul against a game official, then both fouls are enforced.

Exception 2: If the defensive team commits a personal foul that is also pass interference, then both fouls are enforced.

Disqualified Player Removed

Clarification: A disqualified player is always removed, regardless of any captain's choice. See 5-2-7.

P.S. 14.49 Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 goes to the A35. During the run, A2 clipped on the A30. Team A was offside. **Ruling:** A multiple foul and only one penalty can be enforced. Option for Team B. A's ball second-and-15 on A25 or A's ball second-and-25 on A15. If both -declined, it is third-and-five on A35.

P.S. 14.50 B1 makes an invalid fair catch signal at the B20. The ball goes over his head, lands at the B3-yard line and bounces into the end zone. Before the ball went into the end zone B1 blocks A4 at the B22. **Ruling:** Multiple fouls but only one can be enforced. Option for Team A. B's ball first-and-10 on B11 or B's ball first-and-10 on B15.

P.S. 14.51 B1 intercepts a pass in the end zone. He runs and is downed in the end zone. B2 holds in the end zone during B1's run. B3 clips after the ball is dead. **Ruling:** If the penalty for holding is declined, it is B on its 10 (touchback minus 10). If the penalty for holding is enforced (which it would be), it is a safety and B free kicks from its 10 (14-1-11-b).

P.S. 14.52 B1 fumbles after catching a punt on his 2-yard line. In attempting to recover in the end zone, he deliberately kicks the ball out of bounds behind the goal line.

a) B2 clips on his 4 during the fumble. **Ruling:** If A accepts the penalty for clipping, it is B's ball on its one-yard line. Otherwise, it is a safety. Safety kick from B10.

b) B2 clips on his 4 after the ball is out of bounds. **Ruling:** Safety. B free kicks from its 10 (14-1-11-b).

Section 5 Time of Foul

Time of Foul

If a foul occurs between downs (3-11-2-a), a distance penalty is enforced from the succeeding spot. See 14-1-7 to 10.

P.S. 14.53 Second-and-10 on A31. Quarterback A1 completes a pass to end A3 at the A45. Tackle A6 and back A2 chop blocked B5 at the A28. After the play, A6 grabbed the Referee to argue the call. **Ruling:** Both fouls enforced. A's ball second-and-33 on A8.

P.S. 14.54 Second-and-10 on A30. Runner A1 goes out of bounds on the A35, after which A2 clips on the A30. **Ruling:** The down counts and enforce from the succeeding spot (A35) (14-1-5-b and 14-1-7). A's ball third-and-20 on A20.

P.S. 14.55 Third-and-five on A30. Offensive team is offside and runner A1 fails to gain. A2 clips just before the ball is declared dead. **Ruling:** If team B declines both penalties, it is fourth-and-five on the A30. If the penalty for clipping is enforced, it is third-and-20 on A15.

P.S. 14.56 Fourth-and-10 on A40. Kicking team player A1 first touches and recovers a scrimmage kick on the B10:

a) after an illegal recovery by A1, A2 roughs an opponent. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B25.

b) after an illegal recovery by A1, B2 roughs an opponent. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B5.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

Dead Ball Foul

(1) When a foul occurs simultaneously with an out of bounds or after a loose ball first touches anything out of bounds, it is considered to be a dead ball foul.

Foul After Touchdown

(2) The succeeding spot for a foul after a touchdown and before a whistle for a Try is the next kickoff (3-11-1-Exc.).

Foul Between Downs

(3) The time between downs is the interval during all time outs (including intermissions) and from the time the ball is dead until it is next put in play (time in). See 3-36-1, 2.

Defensive Dead Ball Foul

(4) For a dead ball foul by the defensive team or by either team at the end of a play not from scrimmage, see 14-8-6 and 6.

Special Enforcement Between Downs

(5) See 5-2-8-A.C. 2 for a special enforcement between downs.

P.S. 14.57 Third-and-20 on B40. Runner A1 is out of bounds on the B15, after which A2 clips on the B20. **Ruling:** Team A had made its first down, and as it was a dead ball foul, enforce from the succeeding spot (14-1-7). A's ball first-and-10 on B30.

P.S. 14.58 Third-and-10 on B30. A forward pass is out of bounds on the B10 after which A1 clips on B15. **Ruling:** A's ball fourth-and-25 on B45.

P.S. 14.59 Team A has made a first down and its captain calls time out for the fourth time in the half without making a substitution for an injured player. **Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10. Deny request.

P.S. 14.60 Receiver B1 catches a punt on the B30 and goes out of bounds on the B40, after which B2 clips on the B35. **Ruling:** Dead ball foul (14-1-7). B's ball first-and-10 on B25. Also see 14-8-6.

P.S. 14.61 Second-and-15 on A30. Runner A1 steps out of bounds on A40, after which A2 clips on 50. **Ruling:** Enforce from the dead ball spot (A40)(14-1-7). A's ball third-and-20 on A25.

P.S. 14.62 Second-and-15 on A30. Runner A1 steps out of bounds on the 50, after which A2 clips on A40. **Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on A35 (14-1-7).

Section 6 Refusal of Penalties

Refusal of Penalties

Penalties for all fouls, unless otherwise expressly provided for, may be declined, in which case play proceeds as though no foul had been committed.

Clarification: The yardage distance for any penalty may be declined, even though the penalty is accepted.

P.S. 14.63 Second-and-10 on A30. A legal forward pass is completed to end A1 on the A45 where he is downed. B1 held flanker A2 on the A35 prior to the pass. **Ruling:** Declines holding penalty which would have been five yards from the previous spot and a first down. A's ball first-and-10 on A45.

Exceptions:**Disqualification Foul Removes Player**

- 1) A disqualified or suspended player is always removed, even when an accompanying distance penalty is declined, or when a penalty for another foul is chosen (multiple foul).
- 2) The penalty for certain illegal actions prior to or pertaining to a snap or to a free kick may not be declined, i.e., the ball remains dead.
 - a) 40/25-second violations (4-6-1 and 4-6-2).
 - b) Snap made before the official can assume their normal stance (8-6-3-c-2).

Distance Penalty Declined

- 3) When a 40/25-second foul occurs prior to the snap, the defensive team may -decline the distance penalty.
- 4) If fouls are committed by both teams during the same down (double foul), no penalty may be declined, except as provided for kickers when their only foul is illegal touching of a scrimmage kick. See 14-3-1-Exc. 5.
- 5) If the defensive team commits a foul during an unsuccessful Try, the offensive team may decline the distance penalty and the down is replayed from the previous spot.
P.S. 14.64 Second-and-10 on A30. On a legal forward pass B1 interferes with eligible A1 on the B40 where the ball falls incomplete. B2 strikes A2 on the line of scrimmage. **Ruling:** Disqualify B2 although the penalty for interference is taken. A's ball first-and-10 on B40.
P.S. 14.65 A1 illegally recovers a kick, unduly advances, and fumbles. B2 recovers and advances beyond the spot where the penalty for delay by A1 would place the ball. **Ruling:** B's ball at the spot of A's illegal recovery.

Section 7 On Incomplete Forward Pass**Illegal Forward Pass and Incomplete Forward Pass**

An illegal forward pass is a foul, but an incomplete forward pass is not classed as a foul and the penalties provided therefore may not be declined.

Exception: If a team commits a foul during the same play in which it makes an incomplete forward pass, the captain of the offended team may elect which of the penalties is to be enforced (14-4).

Clarification: If there is a dead ball foul by either team after an incompletion, enforcement is from the succeeding spot. See 14-5.

Section 8 Number of Down After Penalty**Number of Down After Penalty**

Article 1 After a distance penalty (no loss of down) for a foul by the offensive team prior to (between downs) or during a play from scrimmage which results in the ball being in its possession behind the necessary line, the number of the ensuing down is the same as that of the down before which or during which the foul occurred.

Combination Penalty

Article 2 A combination penalty involving both distance and loss of down is enforced for a forward pass made beyond the line (8-1-1-Pen. a) or for intentional grounding (8-2-1).

Clarification: After a loss of down penalty before fourth down, the number of the ensuing down is one greater than that of the previous down. If the penalty occurs on fourth down, the yardage is enforced and it is loss of ball to the defense.

Foul and Change of Possession

Article 3 When a foul occurs during a play from scrimmage, and the penalty is accepted, the necessary line remains the same if team possession changes during the down.

P.S. 14.66 Second-and-10 on A30. Team A is offside. A legal forward pass is intercepted by B1 on the 50. B1 runs to the A40, fumbles, and A2 recovers there. **Ruling:** A's ball second-and-15 on A25. (If Team B refused the penalty, it would have been A's ball first-and-10 on A40).

Advance of Necessary Line First-and-10

Article 4 After a distance penalty for a foul by the offensive team during a play from scrimmage which results in the ball being in advance of the necessary line, it is a first-and-10 for the offensive team.

Articles 4 and 6 also apply to a dead ball foul of the offensive team at the end of a play from scrimmage during which it has been constantly in possession.

P.S. 14.67 Second-and-4 on A30. Runner A1 goes to the B45. During the run, A2 clipped on the 50. **Ruling:** After the penalty, the ball is still in advance of the necessary line for the first down. A's ball first-and-10 on A35.

Defensive Foul First-and-10 for Offense

Article 5 After a penalty for a foul by the defense prior to (between downs) or during a play from scrimmage, the ensuing down is first-and-10 for the offense.

Defensive Foul and No First Down

Exceptions are:

- 1) offside;
- 2) encroachment;
- 3) neutral zone infraction;
- 4) delay of game;
- 5) illegal substitution;
- 6) excess time out;
- 7) running into kicker; and
- 8) more than 11 players on the field at the snap.

In the above eight exceptions the number of the down and the necessary line remain the same unless a distance penalty places the ball on or in advance of that line, in which case it is first-and-10 for A.

P.S. 14.68 Second-and-15 on A30. Runner A1 is downed on the A35. During the run B1 held on the line of scrimmage. **Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on A40.

P.S. 14.69 Third-and-goal on B4. The defensive team is offside and A1 gains one yard. **Ruling:** A's ball third-and-goal on the B2 (14-2-1).

Foul After Change of Possession

Article 6 After a distance penalty for a foul which occurs after team possession has changed during a down it is first-and-10 for the team in possession at the time of the foul or the dead ball foul.

P.S. 14.70 On a kickoff B1 runs to the B45 where he steps out of bounds, after which B2 clips on the 50. **Ruling:** B's ball first-and-10 on B30.

Enforcement and First-and-10

Article 7 After a loss of ball penalty, it is first-and-10 for the offended team after enforcement, unless the offended team free kicks following the fair catch interference.

Clarification: Loss of ball results only from illegal touching of kick (other than a free kick) or a fair catch interference. See 6-1-4 and 7-1-1.

P.S. 14.71 Second-and-10 on A30. B1 intercepts a legal forward pass on the A40. He fumbles and A1 recovers on the A25. A1 runs to the A45. During A1's run A2 clipped on the 50. **Ruling:** A's ball first-and-10 on A30 (change of possession).

Rule 15 Overtime/Sudden-Death Procedures

Section 1 Overtime/Sudden-Death Procedures

Overtime/Sudden-Death Procedures

Article 1 An overtime system will be used to determine the winner of all UFL games when the score is tied at the end of the regulation playing time. Under this system, both teams will have an opportunity to possess the football. If the team winning the coin-toss for the start of the overtime period scores on their initial opportunity to possess the football, the loser of the toss is entitled to an opportunity to possess the football to at least match or better the score of the team who won the overtime toss. The game is over if the loser of the toss fails during their opportunity to match or better the score of the winner of the toss. If the team receiving the kickoff muffs or fumbles the football, they are deemed to have had an opportunity to possess the football. If the score is still tied after each team has had an opportunity to possess the football, sudden-death procedures apply. During this sudden-death period, the team scoring first shall be the winner. The game will be ended with any score (including a safety) or when a score is awarded by the Referee for a palpably unfair act.

Article 2 At the end of regulation playing time, the Referee shall immediately toss a coin at the center of the field, in accordance with rules pertaining to a usual pregame toss (4-2-2). The visiting team captain is to again call the toss.

Article 3 Following a three-minute intermission after the end of regular game, play shall continue by 15-minute periods with a two-minute intermission between each such sudden-death period with no halftime intermission. At the beginning of the third sudden-death period, the captain who lost the coin toss prior to the first overtime period shall have the first choice of the three privileges in Rule 4, Section 2, Article 2, unless the team that won the coin toss deferred.

Exception: Preseason and regular season league games shall have a maximum of one fifteen (15) minute period with the rule for 2 time outs instead of 3 as in a regular game and include the general provisions for the fourth quarter of a regular game. Unused team timeouts from the second half do not carry over to the overtime period. All replay reviews will be initiated by the replay official. Coaches challenges will not be allowed.

Clarification: In preseason and regular season games, in which there is a maximum of one overtime period, the team that wins the coin toss will not have the choice of deferring its option; instead, its options will be to kick or receive or to choose a goal to defend.

At the end of each extra 15-minute period, starting with the end of the first one, teams must change goals in accordance with rule 4-2-3. Disqualified player(s) may not re-enter during overtime period(s).

Article 4 During any intermission or team time out a player may leave the field.

Overtime/Sudden-Death Timing

Article 5 If there is an excess time out during the first and second, third and fourth, etc., extra periods, the usual rules shall apply (4-5).

Article 6 Near the end of any period or during the last two (2) minutes of the second, fourth, etc., extra periods, the usual rules in regard to attempts to conserve time shall apply (4-7-1 and 5-2-1).

The rules for time outs shall be the same as in a regular game, including the last two (2) minutes of the second and fourth quarters.

Article 7 The clock operator shall time all extra fifteen (15) minute periods (4-3-1). The Back Judge shall time the three (3) and two (2) minute intermissions, and is to sound a whistle 30 seconds before the expiration of each intermission. The Referee shall sound his or her whistle for play to start, immediately upon the Back Judge's signal.

Article 8 Except as specifically provided for above, all other general and specific rules shall apply during any extra period.

Rule 16 Officials: Jurisdiction and Duties -- Non-Player Conduct -- Emergencies, Unfair Acts -- Guidelines for Captains

Section 1 Officials: Jurisdiction and Duties

Officials' Manual

Article 1 By League action, the officials' manual is an integral part of the Official rules, especially in regard to the specific duties, mechanics and procedures for each official during any play situations. For that reason, many such specific items are omitted in Sections 1 to 8 to avoid needless repetition, and only the primary duties of each official are stated. Some of the technical terms used hereafter are defined only in the manual.

Clarification: The terms “On Ball” or “Cover” imply that an official is nearest or in close proximity to a loose ball or runner and is in position to declare the ball dead when the down ends by rule. See 16-1-11-A.C. 1-3.

Game Officials

Article 2 The game Officials are: Referee, Umpire, Head Linesman, Line Judge, Field Judge, Side Judge, and Back Judge.

Clarification: In the absence of seven officials, the crew is to be rearranged, on the most feasible basis, according to the other members of crew.

Article 3 All officials are to wear uniforms prescribed by the League (including a black cap with visor and piping for all except the Referee, who will wear a white cap). All -officials will carry a whistle and a weighted bright gold flag.

Blow Whistle

Article 4 An official is to blow his or her whistle:

- (a) for any foul for which ball remains dead or is dead immediately;
- (b) to signal time out at end of a down, during which he or she has indicated a foul, by means of dropping his or her flag and provided no other official signaled time out at end of down;
- (c) to indicate dead ball when he or she is covering a runner. See 8-2-1.
- (d) at any other time, when he or she is nearest to ball, when a down ends. See 16-8-3.

Clarification: The flag is to be used to indicate a foul.

Crew Meeting

Article 5 Members of the crew are required to meet in their dressing quarters at least 2 hours and 15 minutes before game time.

Officials' Dressing Room

Clarification: By order of the Commissioner, from the time any official first enters the dressing room, and until all officials have left it at the end of the game, no person other than clubhouse attendants or those invited by the Referee shall be allowed to enter it. This prohibition includes coaches, players, owners, and other management personnel.

Officials' Responsibility and Crew Conference

Article 6 All officials are responsible for any decision involving the application of a rule, its interpretation or an enforcement. If an official errs in his or her interpretation of a rule,

the other officials must check him before play is resumed, otherwise they are equally responsible. In the event of a disagreement, the crew should draw aside for a conference.

Clarification: If because of injury, the officials' vote is tied, Referee's decision will be the deciding factor. Any dissenting opinion is to be reported to the supervisor.

Article 7 All officials have concurrent jurisdiction over any foul, and there is no fixed territorial division in this respect. When an official signals a foul, he or she must report it to the Referee, informing him or her of its nature, position of ball at time of foul, the offender (when known), the penalty and spot of enforcement.

Recording Fouls

Article 8 Each official is to record every foul they signal and the total number of officials signaling the same foul. During the game, these are to be recorded on game cards provided by league. They are to be preserved after each game in case they should be needed to revise an official's final game card.

League Game Reports

Article 9 At the end of the game the officials are to record their own fouls on game cards provided by the league, and are to check them with other officials, for duplications, before leaving the dressing room.

Clarification: Game cards are to be made out in accordance with the yearly bulletin issued for that purpose.

Crew Errors

Article 10 All members of a crew are equally responsible for any errors in Officiating Mechanics as prescribed by the Manual, and are required to call the attention of this fact to an official who had been remiss.

Clarification: This applies to such errors, in mechanics or applications of rules, as tend to increase the length of the game (elapsed time) and particularly so to those which result in undue loss of playing time (Crew Time). In the latter case, if the Referee has clearly failed to signal a Referee's time out as specified by rule, any official should do so. See 4-5-5 and 4-5-6.

Coin Toss

Article 11 Ten minutes before the opening kickoff, the entire crew is to appear on the field. Three minutes prior to the kickoff the Referee is to make the toss of the coin. He or she is to indicate which team is to receive and is to do the same when teams first appear on the field prior to the start of the second half. See 4-2-2.

Clarification: All officials are to record results of coin toss and options chosen.

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

(1) During any running play (includes runbacks), or a loose ball, the nearest official is to cover and remain with the ball or runner, unless outdistanced until end of down. In such case any nearer official is to cover. See 16-2-9-Clarification, for Referee entering a side zone and 16-3-4 for Umpire.

(2) When a ball is dead inbounds near a sideline, during time in, the official covering is to use the clock signal to indicate this fact.

(3) Any officials not involved in an enforcement are to see that all players other than captains remain aside during any conference between Referee and captains. See 16-2-5.

Recording Time Outs

Article 12 All officials must record charged team time outs.

Referee

Referee's Authority

Article 13 The Referee is to have general oversight and control of game. He or she is the final authority for the score, and the number of a down in case of a disagreement. His or her decisions upon all matters not specifically placed under the jurisdiction of other officials, either by rule or the officials' manual, are to be final. See 16-1-6-Clarification and 16-1-10.

Article 14 Prior to the kickoff to start each half and after every time out, the Referee shall sound his or her whistle for play to start without asking captains if they are ready. In such cases where time is in with his or her whistle, he is to indicate it by use of clock signal.

Ball Put in Play

Article 15 He or she is to see that the ball is properly put in play and shall decide on all matters pertaining to its position and disposition at end of down. If any official sounds his or her whistle, the ball is dead (8-2-1). In case the Referee is informed or believes that ball was dead before such signal or down ends, he or she has the authority to make a retroactive ruling after consulting the crew or the official involved.

Article 16 The Referee must notify the coach and field captain when his team has used its three charged time outs, signal both coaches when two minutes remain in a half, and positively inform the coach of any disqualified player. He or she may not delegate any such notifications to any other person. He or she will announce on the microphone when each period is ended.

Foul Options

Article 17 After a foul, the Referee (in the presence of both captains) must announce the penalty and explain to the offended captain the decision and choice (if any) as well as number of next down and distance (usually approximate) to necessary line for any possible positions of ball. See 8-3-3. The Referee is to designate the offending player, when known. After enforcement he or she shall signal to spectators the nature of penalty by means of a visual signal.

Clarification: It is not necessary for the Referee to explain to both captains the decision and distance to the necessary line in such cases when: the enforcement is entirely automatic and/or when there is obviously no choice.

Field captains only may appeal to Referee, and then solely on questions of interpretation of the rules. They shall not be allowed to question the judgment or jurisdiction of any particular official in regard to a foul or in signaling dead ball.

Referee's Position

Article 18 Prior to the snap, the Referee shall assume such a stance that he or she is in the clear of and behind any backfield player. This is also to be construed as including the normal path of any player in motion behind the line as well as the line of vision between such a player and the maker of a pass (forward or backward). He or she shall also favor the right side (if the passer is right-handed). He or she will count offensive players.

Measurement

Article 19 At the end of any down, the Referee may (when in doubt or at the request of a captain unless obviously unnecessary) request the linesman and his or her assistants to bring

the yardage chains on field to determine whether the ball has reached the necessary line. See 4-5-5-a.

Article 20 Prior to each snap, the Referee is to positively check the number of the ensuing down and distance to be gained with the Linesman, signal the Back Judge when to start his or her watch for the timing of 25 seconds (when appropriate), and know the eligible pass receivers.

Spotting Ball

Article 21 He or she is primarily responsible for spotting the ball at the inbounds spot on plays from scrimmage, and should not enter a side zone to cover a runner (other than the quarterback) when the Linesman or Line Judge is in position to do so. See 16-1-11-A.C. 1.

Clarification: When the ball is dead near the sideline during time in, he or she is not to assist in a relay to the inbounds spot, unless the umpire has been remiss or delayed in doing so (16-1-10-Clarification and 16-3-4). In such a case, the Umpire is to spot. See Rule 2-2, in regard to using a new ball at the request of the offensive teams' center in case of rain or a wet, muddy, or slippery field.

Umpire

Article 22 The Umpire has primary jurisdiction over the equipment and the conduct and actions of players on the scrimmage line.

Equipment Inspection

Article 23 Before the game, the Umpire with assistance of other officials shall inspect the equipment of players. He or she may order any changes he deems necessary to any proposed equipment which is considered dangerous or confusing (5-4). This authority extends throughout the game.

Article 24 He or she shall assist in relaying the ball:

- (a) to the inbounds spot when it is dead near a sideline during time in when feasible (16-2-9-Clarification);
- (b) to the previous spot after an incompleteness; and
- (c) to the spot of a free kick when indicated. See 16-1-11-A.C.

Umpire's Duties

Article 25 The Umpire shall record:

- (a) all charged team time outs during the game;
- (b) the winner of the toss; and
- (c) the score.

He or she is to assist the Referee on decisions involving possession of the ball in close proximity to the line, after a loose ball or runner has crossed it. He or she along with the Line Judge is to determine whether ineligible linemen illegally cross the line prior to a pass, and he must wipe a wet ball in accordance with the proper timing. He or she should count the offensive players on the field at the snap.

Linesman

Linesman's Position

Article 26 The Linesman operates on the side of field designated by the Referee during the first half and on opposite side during the second half unless ordered otherwise. See 1-4-Clarification for exception.

Article 27 He or she is responsible for illegal motion, offside, encroaching, and any actions pertaining to scrimmage line prior to or at snap; and for covering in his or her side zone. See 16-1-11-A.C. 1; 16-2-9; and 16-3-4. He or she will count offensive players.

Article 28 Prior to the game, he or she shall see that the chain crew is properly instructed as to their specific duties and mechanics.

Clarification: Each home team appoints the official chain crew (boxman, two rodmen and alternate, drive start and forward stake indicator) subject to approval by the league office. Each member carries a working pass to that effect and it is prohibited for anyone else to work as such. The standardized yardage chains and downs box must be used and if any others are furnished this fact is to be reported to the League Office.

Article 29 The Linesman shall use a clamp on the chain when measuring for first down.

Marking and Chains

Article 30 The Linesman is to mark with his or her foot (when up with ball) the yard line touched by forward point of ball at end of each scrimmage down. At the start of each new series of downs, he or she along with the rodmen set the yardage chains when the Referee so signals. He or she positively must check with the Referee as to the number of each down that is about to start.

Clarification: It is mandatory for Linesman to personally see that rear rod is accurately set and also to see that the forward rodman and boxman have set the safety markers for the forward rod and the previous spot, during any series of downs, as prescribed by the officials' manual.

Linesman's Duties

Article 31 On his or her own side, he or she is to assist the Line Judge as to illegal motion or a shift and umpire in regard to holding or illegal use of hands on end of line (especially during kicks or passes), and know eligible pass receivers.

Article 32 He or she is to mark out-of-bounds spot on his or her side of field when within their range and is to supervise substitutions made by team located on his or her side of field during either half.

Clarification: See 16-1-11-A.C. 1; 16-2-9; and 16-3-4.

Line Judge

Line Judge's Duties

Article 33 The Line Judge is to operate on side of field opposite the Linesman.

Article 34 He or she is responsible for the timing of game. He or she is also responsible for illegal motion, illegal shift, and for covering in his or her side zone. See 16-1-11-A.C. 1 and 16-2-9. He or she will count offensive players.

Article 35 He or she is responsible for supervision of the timing and in case the game clock becomes inoperative, or for any other reason is not being operated correctly, he or she shall take over the official timing on the field.

Article 36 He or she is to time each period and (4-1-3, 4), signal the Referee when two minutes remain in a half and leave in ample time with the Field Judge to notify their respective teams of five minutes before the start of the second half.

Article 37 He or she shall advise the Referee when time has expired at end of a period.

Article 38 He or she must notify both captains, through the Referee, of the time remaining for play not more than 10 or less than five minutes before the end of each half and must signal Referee when two minutes remain in each half. In the event that the stadium clock is inoperable, he or she must notify both captains, through the Referee, of the time remaining for play not more than 10 or less than 5 minutes before the end of each half and must signal Referee when two minutes remain in each half.

Clarification: Upon inquiry of a field captain, he or she may state the approximate time remaining for play at any time during the game, provided he or she does not comply with such request more than three times during the last five minutes of either half, and provided it will not affect playing time near the end of a half (4-7-1).

Article 39 On his or her own side, he or she is to:

- (a) assist the Linesman as to offside or encroaching;
- (b) assist the Umpire as to holding or illegal use of hands on the end of the line (especially during kicks or passes);
- (c) assist the Referee as to whether a pass is forward or backward behind the line and false starts; and
- (d) be responsible for knowing the eligible pass receivers.

Article 40 He or she is to:

- (a) mark the out of bounds spot of all plays on his or her side, when within his or her range (See 16-1-11-A.C. 1-3 and 16-2-9);
- (b) supervise substitutions made by the team seated on his or her side of the field during either half (see 5-2-2);

Notify Home Team Coach

- (c) notify the home team head coach with the Field Judge five minutes before the start of the second half.

Field Judge

Field Judge's Position and Duties

Article 41 The Field Judge will operate on the same side of the field as Line Judge, 20 yards deep.

Article 42 The Field Judge shall count the number of defensive players on the field at the snap.

Article 43 He or she shall be responsible for all eligible receivers on his or her side of the field.

Article 44 After receivers have cleared line of scrimmage, the Field Judge will concentrate on action in the area between the Umpire and Back Judge.

Article 45 In addition to the specified use of the whistle by all officials (16-1-4), the Field Judge is also to use his or her whistle when upon positive knowledge he or she knows:

- (a) that ball is dead;
- (b) that time is out;
- (c) that time is out at the end of a down, during which a foul was signaled by a marker, no whistle has sounded in such cases; and
- (d) that even in the presence of a whistle up or down field, he or she is to sound his or her whistle when players are some distance from such signal. This will help prevent dead ball fouls.

Article 46 The Field Judge will assist Referee in decisions involving any catching, recovery, out of bounds spot, or illegal touching, of a loose ball, after it has crossed scrimmage line and particularly so for such actions that are out of the range of the Line Judge and Umpire. See 16-1-11-A.C. 1.

Position on Field-Goal Attempt and Try

Article 47 On field-goal attempts or Try-kick attempts, the Field Judge will station himself on the end line and cover the upright opposite the Back Judge. He or she, along with the Back Judge, is responsible for indication to the Referee whether the kick is high enough and through the uprights.

Side Judge

Side Judge's Position and Duties

Article 48 The Side Judge will operate on the same side of the field as the Head Linesman, 20 yards deep.

Article 49 The Side Judge shall count the number of defensive players on the field at the snap.

Article 50 He or she shall be responsible for all eligible receivers on his or her side of the field.

Article 51 After receivers have cleared line of scrimmage, the Side Judge will concentrate on action in the area between the Umpire and Back Judge.

Article 52 In addition to the specified use of the whistle by all officials (16-1-4), the Side Judge is also to use his or her whistle when upon his or her positive knowledge he or she knows:

- (a) that ball is dead;
- (b) that time is out;
- (c) that time is out at the end of a down, during which a foul was signaled by a marker, no whistle has sounded in such cases; and
- (d) that even in the presence of a whistle up or down field, he or she is to sound his or her whistle when players are some distance from such signal. This will help prevent dead ball fouls.

Article 53 The Side Judge will assist Referee in decisions involving any catching, recovery, out of bounds spot, or illegal touching, of a loose ball, after it has crossed scrimmage line and particularly so for such actions that are out of the range of the Head Linesman and Umpire.

Position on Field-Goal Attempt and Try

Article 54 The Side Judge will line up in a position laterally from the Umpire on field goals and Try-kick attempts.

Back Judge

Back Judge's Duties

Article 55 The Back Judge is primarily responsible in regard to: covering kicks from scrimmage (unless a Try-kick) or forward passes crossing the defensive goal line and all such loose balls, out of the range of Umpire, Field Judge, and Linesman, noting an illegal substitution or withdrawal during dead ball with time in (see 5-2-11), and a foul signaled by a flag or cap during down. He or she will count defensive team.

Article 56 He or she is to time the intermission between the two periods of each half (4-1-2), the length of all team time outs (4-5-1-Item 2), and the 40/25 seconds permitted Team A to put ball in play (4-6-1 and 2). He or she is to utilize the 40/25 second clock provided for by the home team. If this clock is inoperative he or she should take over the official timing of the 40/25 seconds on the field.

Article 57 In addition to the specified use of the whistle by all officials (16-1-4), the Back Judge is also to use his or her whistle, when upon his or her own positive knowledge he or she knows:

- (a) that ball is dead;
- (b) time is out; or
- (c) is out at end of down, during which a foul was signaled by a flag or cap, and no whistle has sounded in such cases.

Even in the presence of a whistle up the field, he or she is to sound his or hers when downfield players are some distance away from such signal, and in order to prevent dead ball fouls. He or she should be particularly alert for item (c).

Article 58 He or she shall assist the Referee in decisions involving any catching, recovery, out of bounds spot, or illegal touching, of a loose ball, after it has crossed scrimmage line and particularly so for such actions as are out of the range of the Field Judge, Linesman, and Umpire. See 16-1-11-A.C. 1. He or she should count the defensive players on the field at the snap.

Article 59 The Back Judge has the absolute responsibility:

- (a) to instruct kicker and/or placekicker that "kickoff" must be made by placekick or dropkick.
- (b) that the height of the tee (artificial or natural) used for the kickoff conforms to the governing rules.

Notify Visiting Team Coach

Clarification: He or she is to notify the visiting team at least five minutes before the start of the second half.

Section 2 Non-Player Conduct

Non-Player Fouls

Article 1 There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct by a substitute, coach, attendant, or any other non-player (entitled to sit on a team's bench) during any period or time out (including between halves).

ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS

(1) "Loud speaker" coaching from the sidelines is not permissible.

(2) A player may communicate with a coach provided the coach is in his prescribed area during dead ball periods.

Attendants on Field Only on Team Time Outs

Article 2 Either or both team attendants and their helpers may enter the field to attend their team during a team time out by either team. No other non-player may come on the field without the Referee's permission, unless he is an incoming substitute (5-2-2).

Bench Credentials

Article 3 With the exception of uniformed players eligible to participate in the game, all persons in a team's bench area must wear a visible credential clearly marked "BENCH." For all UFL games—preseason, regular-season, and postseason—the home club will be issued a maximum of 27 credentials and the visiting club will be issued a maximum of 25 credentials for use in its bench area. Such credentials must be worn by coaches, players under contract to the applicable club but ineligible to participate in the game, and team support personnel (trainers, doctors, equipment men). From time to time, persons with game-services credentials (e.g., oxygen technicians, ball boys) and authorized club personnel not regularly assigned to the bench area may be in a team's bench area for a brief period without bench credentials. Clubs are prohibited from allowing into their bench areas any persons who are not officially affiliated with the club or otherwise serving a necessary game day function.

Restricted Areas

Article 4 All team personnel must observe the zone restrictions applicable to the bench area and the border rimming the playing field. The only persons permitted within the solid six-foot white border (1-1) while play is in progress on the field are game officials. For reasons involving the safety of participating players whose actions may carry them out of bounds, officials' unobstructed coverage of the game, and spectators' sightlines to the field, the border rules must be observed by all coaches and players in the bench area. Violators are subject to penalty by the officials.

Movement on Sidelines

Article 5 Coaches and other non-participating team personnel (including uniformed players not in the game at the time) are prohibited from moving laterally along the sidelines any further than the points that are 18 yards from the middle of the bench area (i.e., 32-yard lines to left and right of bench areas when benches are placed on opposite sides of the field). Lateral movement within the bench area must be behind the solid six-foot white border (see Article 4 above).

Non-Bench Areas

Article 6 Clubs are prohibited from allowing into the non-bench areas of field level any persons who have not been accredited to those locations by the home club's public relations office for purposes related to news-media coverage, stadium operations, or pregame and halftime entertainment. The home club is responsible for keeping the field level cleared of all unauthorized persons. Photographers and other personnel accredited for field-level work must not be permitted in the end zones or any other part of the official playing field while play is in progress.

Penalty: For illegal acts under Articles 1 through 6 above: Loss of 15 yards from team for whose supposed benefit foul was made. (Unsportsmanlike conduct.)

Enforcement is from:

- a) succeeding spot if the ball is dead.
- b) whatever spot the Referee, after consulting with crew, deems equitable, if the ball was in play.

For a flagrant violation, the Referee may exclude offender or offenders from the playing field enclosure for the remainder of the game.

Palpably Unfair Act (Non-Player)

Article 7 A non-player shall not commit any act which is palpably unfair.

Penalty: For a palpably unfair act, see 12-3-3. The Referee, after consulting the crew, shall make such ruling as they consider equitable (16-1-6 and Clarification) (unsportsmanlike conduct).

Clarification: Various actions involving a palpably unfair act may arise during a game. In such cases, the officials may award a distance penalty in accordance with 12-3-3, even when it does not involve disqualification of a player or substitute.

Article 8 Non-player personnel of a club (e.g., management personnel, coaches, trainers, equipment men) are prohibited from making unnecessary physical contact with or directing abusive, threatening, or insulting language or gestures at opponents, game officials, or representatives of the League.

Penalty: Loss of 15 yards. (Unsportsmanlike conduct.) Enforcement is from:

- a) succeeding spot if the ball is dead;
- b) previous spot if the ball was in play; or
- c) whatever spot the Referee, after consulting with the crew, deems equitable. (Palpably Unfair Act.)

Clarification: Violations which occur before or during the game may result in disqualification in addition to the yardage penalty. Any violation at the game site on the day of the game, including postgame, may result in discipline by the Commissioner.

Section 3 Emergencies, Unfair Acts

Non-Player on Field

Article 1 If any non-player, including photographers, reporters, employees, police or spectators, enters the field of play or end zones, and in the judgment of an official said party or parties interfere with the play, the Referee, after consulting the crew (12-3-3 and 1-1-6), shall enforce any such penalty or score as the interference warrants.

Field Control

Article 2 If spectators enter the field and/or interfere with the progress of the game in such a manner that in the opinion of the Referee the game cannot continue, he or she shall declare time out. In such a case he or she shall record the number of the down, distance to be gained, and position of ball on field. He or she shall also secure from the line judge the playing time remaining and record it. He or she shall then order the home club through its management to have the field cleared, and when it is cleared and order restored and the

safety of the spectators, players and officials is assured to the satisfaction of the Referee, the game must continue even if it is necessary to use lights.

Game Called

Article 3 If the game must be called due to a state or municipal law, or by darkness if no lights are available, an immediate report shall be made to the Commissioner by the home club, visiting club and officials. On receipt of all reports the Commissioner shall make a decision which will be final.

Emergency Situations

Article 4 The UFL affirms the position that in most circumstances all regular-season and postseason games should be played to their conclusion. If, in the opinion of appropriate League authorities, it is impossible to begin or continue a game due to an emergency, or a game is deemed to be imminently threatened by any such emergency (e.g., severely inclement weather, lightning, flooding, power failure), the following procedures (Articles 5 through 11) will serve as guidelines for the Commissioner and/or his duly appointed representatives. The Commissioner has the authority to review the circumstances of each emergency and to adjust the following procedures in whatever manner he deems appropriate. If, in the Commissioner's opinion, it is reasonable to project that the resumption of an interrupted game would not change its ultimate result or adversely affect any other inter-team competitive issue, he is empowered to terminate the game.

League Authority

Article 5 The League employees vested with the authority to define emergencies under these procedures are the Commissioner, designated representatives from his League office staff, and the game Referee. In those instances where neither the Commissioner nor his designated representative is in attendance at a game, the Referee will have sole authority; provided, however, that if a Referee delays the beginning of or interrupts a game for a significant period of time due to an emergency, he or she must make every effort to contact the Commissioner or the Commissioner's designated representative for consultation. In all cases of significant delay, the League authorities will consult with the management of the participating clubs and will attempt to obtain appropriate information from outside sources, if applicable (e.g., weather bureau, police).

Later Date

Article 6 If, because of an emergency, a regular-season or postseason game is not started at its scheduled time and cannot be played at any later time that same day, the game nevertheless must be played on a subsequent date to be determined by the Commissioner.

Pregame Threat

Article 7 If there is deemed to be a threat of an emergency that may occur during the playing of a game (e.g., an incoming tropical storm), the starting time of such game will not be moved to an earlier time unless there is clearly sufficient time to make an orderly change.

Interrupted Game

Article 8 If, under emergency circumstances, an interrupted regular-season or post-season game cannot be completed on the same day, such game will be rescheduled by the Commissioner and resumed at that point.

Alternate Dates, Sites

Article 9 In instances under these emergency procedures which require the Commissioner to reschedule a regular-season game, he will make every effort to set the game for no later than two days after its originally scheduled date, and he will attempt to schedule the game at its original site. If unable to do so, he will schedule it at the nearest available facility. If it is impossible to schedule the game within two days after its original date, the Commissioner will attempt to schedule it on a day in the next calendar week in

which the two involved clubs play other clubs (or each other). Further, the Commissioner will keep in mind the potential for competitive inequities if one or both of the involved clubs has already been scheduled for a game following the rescheduled game.

Postseason Interruption

Article 10 If an emergency interrupts a postseason game and such game cannot be resumed on that same day; the Commissioner will make every effort to arrange for its completion as soon as possible. If unable to schedule the game at the same site, he will select an appropriate alternate site. He will terminate the game short of completion only if in his judgment the continuation of the game would not be normally expected to alter the ultimate result.

Game Resumption

Article 11 In all instances where a game is resumed after interruption, either on the same day or a subsequent date, the resumption will begin at the point at which the game was interrupted. At the time of interruption, the Referee will call time out and he or she will make a record of the following: the team possessing the ball, the direction in which its offense was headed, position of the ball on the field, down, distance, period, time remaining in the period, and any other pertinent information required for an efficient and equitable resumption of play.

Extraordinarily Unfair Acts

Commissioner Authority

Article 12 The Commissioner has the sole authority to investigate and take appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective measures if any club action, non-participant interference, or calamity occurs in an UFL game which he deems so extraordinarily unfair or outside the accepted tactics encountered in professional football that such action has a major effect on the result of the game.

No Club Protests

Article 13 The authority and measures provided for in this entire Section do not constitute a protest machinery for UFL clubs to avail themselves of in the event a dispute arises over the result of a game. The investigation called for in this Section will be conducted solely on the Commissioner's initiative to review an act or occurrence that he deems so extraordinary or unfair that the result of the game in question would be inequitable to one of the participating teams. The Commissioner will not apply his authority in cases of complaints by clubs concerning judgmental errors or routine errors of omission by game officials. Games involving such complaints will continue to stand as completed.

Penalties for Unfair Acts

Article 14 The Commissioner's powers under this Rule include the imposition of monetary fines and draft-choice forfeitures, suspension of persons involved in unfair acts, and, if appropriate, the reversal of a game's result or the rescheduling of a game, either from the beginning or from the point at which the extraordinary act occurred. In the event of rescheduling a game, the Commissioner will be guided by the procedures specified in Rule 16, Section 3, Articles 5 through 11, above. In all cases, the Commissioner will conduct a full investigation, including the opportunity for hearings, use of game videotape, and any other procedure he deems appropriate.

Section 4 Guidelines for Captains

Article 1 One hour and thirty minutes prior to kickoff: Respective coaches designate the captain(s)—a maximum of six per team.

Coin Toss Option

Article 2 Coin toss:

(a) Up to six captains per team can participate in the coin toss ceremony; only one captain from the visiting team (or captain designated by Referee if there is no home team) can declare the choice of coin toss.

(b) The team that won the toss may then have only one captain declare its option.

(c) The team that lost the coin toss may then have only one captain declare its option.

Penalty Option

Article 3 Choice on Penalty Option: Only one captain is permitted to indicate the team's penalty option.

Change of Captains

Article 4 Change of Captains:

(a) The coach has prerogative of informing Referee when he wishes to make a change in team captains; or

(b) A captain who is leaving can inform the Referee which player will act as captain in his place when he is substituted for; or

(c) When a captain leaves the game, the incoming substitute is permitted to inform the Referee which player the respective coach has designated as captain.

Clarification: A captain on the field has no authority to request a change of fellow team captain when that captain remains on the field.

Use of Third Quarterback

Third Quarterback. Provided that the club has two and only two quarterbacks on its **51-player Active List**, one player who is deactivated on the day of the game may be designated as the Third Quarterback, who is eligible to dress for and participate in the game. He also is eligible to participate in all pregame and halftime warm-ups. The two quarterbacks on the **51-player Active List** must be bona fide quarterbacks: a club is not permitted to designate as one of its two quarterbacks a player whose primary position is not quarterback.

If a club has three-or-more quarterbacks on its **50-player Active List** for the game, it is prohibited from designating a player on the Inactive List as a Third Quarterback for that game.

Limitation of Participation of Third Quarterback. If the Third Quarterback enters the game, he must report to the Referee and may participate only at the quarterback position during the first play (i.e., under center or in the shotgun formation). If the quarterback lines up under center or in the shotgun formation, there is no limitation on what he may do during the first play, pursuant to customary playing rules; he may run, throw a pass, quick-kick, or catch a pass, if he becomes an eligible receiver. After the first play, he must continue to play quarterback, but he also is eligible to be used in kicking situations as a punter, kicker, or holder. However, he is prohibited from being used at a position other than quarterback.

Entry in First Three Periods. If the Third Quarterback initially enters the game during the first three periods, the club's other two quarterbacks become ineligible to participate and may not return at any time under any circumstances.

Entry in Fourth Period or Overtime. If the Third Quarterback initially enters the game during the fourth period or an overtime period, both of the club's other two quarterbacks remain eligible to return to the game and participate as a quarterback, punter, kicker, or holder. However, under no circumstances can the Third Quarterback participate in the game at the same time as either of the club's other two quarterbacks.

Re-entry of Third Quarterback. If the Third Quarterback initially enters the game during the fourth period or an overtime period and is removed, he remains eligible to return to the game. Since he has already participated in the game, on the first and any subsequent play of his return, he may participate as a quarterback, punter, kicker, or holder, but he is prohibited from being used at a position other than quarterback. However, under no circumstances can the Third Quarterback participate in the game at the same time as either of the club's other two quarterbacks.

Re-entry of First Two Quarterbacks. If either of the first two quarterbacks returns to the game, he can immediately be used on the first play and any subsequent play only as a quarterback, kicker, holder, or punter. It is permissible under these re-entry procedures for both of the club's first two quarterbacks to participate in the game at the same time only as a holder and kicker, but under no circumstances can the Third Quarterback participate in the game at the same time as either of the club's other two quarterbacks.

Reporting to Referee. Upon his initial entry into the game or his re-entry, the Third Quarterback must report to the Referee. If one of the club's other two quarterbacks return to the game to replace the Third Quarterback, he also is required to report to the Referee.

Coaching Decision. It is not necessary that the club's first two quarterbacks be injured in order for the Third Quarterback to participate; his participation is purely a coaching decision. Likewise, if the Third Quarterback initially enters the game during the fourth period or an overtime period, the permissible return of either of the club's other two quarterbacks is purely a coaching decision, as is the subsequent return of the Third Quarterback, if removed during the fourth period or an overtime period.

Any violations of the provisions for participation by a Third Quarterback could result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty during the game and possible disciplinary action, depending upon the circumstances, by the Commissioner after the game.

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