



2018 NFHS FOOTBALL RULES INTERPRETATIONS

Publisher's Note: The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.

Dr. Karissa L. Niehoff, Publisher, NFHS Publications © 2018

RULES BOOK CLARIFICATIONS:
(Underlining shows additions; strike-through shows deletions.)

Page 51, Rule 5-2-4: NOTE: Unless R accepts to add the penalty yardage to the succeeding spot, as in 6-1-9b.

Page 75, Rule 9-9 PENALTY NOTE: The penalties in Rules 9-9-3 ~~9-10-3~~ and 9-9-4 ~~9-10-4~~ are not charged to the coach or player for the purpose of unsportsmanlike conduct disqualifications.

Page 79, Rule 10-5-1c: Unfair acts. (~~9-9~~ ~~9-10~~)

Page 86, (Resolving Tied Games Interpretations) 3.1.1 SITUATION F: The fourth period ends during a scoring play. During the successful 2-point try, B9 is called for pass interference or other live-ball foul during the down. A accepts the result of the play, which ties the score, and chooses to have the penalty assessed at the succeeding spot. **RULING:** This is correct. Since A, by rule, can choose succeeding spot enforcement, and the try was successful, A will likely take enforcement at the succeeding spot to begin overtime. Game officials must be certain to explain the options clearly, not only during penalty administration, but also during the overtime coin toss.

Page 91, PENALTY SUMMARY (Loss of 15 Yards): 30. Unfair acts ... ~~9-9~~ ~~9-10~~

Page 91, PENALTY SUMMARY (Disqualification Associated with Certain 15-Yard Penalties): 5. A second unsportsmanlike foul by player or non-player ... ~~9-5, 9-8~~ ~~9-5-5, 9-5-8~~

CASE BOOK CLARIFICATIONS:
(NEW) – 6.1.9 SITUATION J: K's attempt for a field goal is unsuccessful and (a) the ball enters the end zone where it is declared dead; or (b) the ball is fielded by R at the R 5-yard line and returned to the 25-yard line. During the kick, K commits a holding foul. RULING: In (a), while R has other options by rule, R will likely accept the foul with the distance penalty enforced from R's 20-yard line. In (b), while R has other options by rule, R will likely accept the foul with the distance penalty enforced from R's 25-yard line. (6-1-9, 10-4-2c EXCEPTION)

Page 29, 3.5.10 SITUATION H: B10 has (a) a two-attachment point chin strap or (b) a four-attachment point chin strap and the umpire notices that not all attachment points are secured. **RULING:** ~~This is a foul in both situations.~~ All available attachment points must be secured and all helmets must be secured with a four-attachment points system. An official's time-out is declared and the player must be replaced for at least one down unless halftime or an overtime intermission occurs. ...

Page 30, 3.5.10 SITUATION K: Near the end of the first period, A1 is discovered to be wearing: (a) shoes with cleats that are more than ½ inch in length; (b) a slippery substance on his uniform, exposed body part or hands; (c) a knee brace which has an unpadded strip of metal across the front of the leg; (d) ~~a glove that does not contain the appropriate NOCSAE or SFIA glove seal; a multicolored towel or streamer attached at the waist;~~ or (e) a helmet without an exterior warning label. **RULING:** In (a), (b) and (e), an unsportsmanlike penalty is assessed

from the succeeding spot because the head coach has previously verified all players were using only legal equipment. In (c) and (d), an official's time-out is declared and the player must be replaced for at least one down unless halftime or an overtime intermission occurs. If the equipment is detected between downs and can be removed or made legal without delaying the ready-for-play signal, the player may remain in the game. ...

Page 96, 10.1.3 SITUATION: With fourth and 10 at the 50-yard line, K2 illegally uses his hands during a scrimmage kick by K1. R1 signals for a fair catch at R's 30-yard line. The ball is caught by R2 who advances following the whistle. **RULING:** R may accept the distance penalty and have the yardage assessed from the previous spot or have the yardage assessed from the succeeding spot. If the decision is to accept the distance penalty from the previous spot, it will be K's ball fourth and 15 from the K's 45-yard line. If the R decision is to accept the distance penalty from the succeeding spot, it will be R's ball first and 10 at the K's 35-yard line. At this point, K is given the options related to R's foul and will accept the distance penalty for R's delay of game foul. If R's choice was to assess the penalty from the previous spot, it will now be K's ball, fourth and 10 at the 50-yard line. If R's choice was to assess the penalty from the succeeding spot, it will now be R's ball, first and 10 at the R's 30-yard line. may decline the penalty for the illegal use of hands by K2 and retain possession. If this choice is made, R will put the ball in play first and 10 following the penalty for the dead-ball, delay-of-game foul by R2. If R decides to accept the penalty for the

~~foul by K2, the result will be fourth and 15 for K following the enforcement of penalties for both fouls and the down will be replayed. (3-6-2b, 10-2-3)~~

RULES BY TOPIC CLARIFICATIONS:
Page 32, 3.5.10 SITUATION H:

B10 has (a) a two-attachment point chin strap or (b) a four-attachment point chin strap and the umpire notices that not all attachment points are secured. **RULING:** ~~This is a foul in both situations.~~ All available attachment points must be secured and all helmets must be secured with a four-attachment points system. An official's time-out is declared and the player must be replaced for at least one down unless halftime or an over-time intermission occurs. ...

Page 230, 10.1.3 SITUATION: With fourth and 10 at the 50-yard line, K2 illegally uses his hands during a scrimmage kick by K1. R1 signals for a fair catch at R's 30-yard line. The ball is caught by R2 who advances following the whistle. **RULING:** R may accept the distance penalty and have the yardage assessed from the previous spot or have the yardage assessed from the succeeding spot. If the decision is to accept the distance penalty from the previous spot, it will be K's ball fourth and 15 from the K's 45-yard line. If the R decision is to accept the distance penalty from the succeeding spot, it will be R's ball first and 10 at the K's 35-yard line. At this point, K is given the options related to R's foul and will accept

the distance penalty for R's delay of game foul. If R's choice was to assess the penalty from the previous spot, it will now be K's ball, fourth and 10 at the 50-yard line. If R's choice was to assess the penalty from the succeeding spot, it will now be R's ball, first and 10 at the R's 30-yard line, may decline the penalty for the illegal use of hands by K2 and retain possession. If this choice is made, R will put the ball in play first and 10 following the penalty for the dead-ball, delay-of-game foul by R2. If R decides to accept the penalty for the foul by K2, the result will be fourth and 15 for K following the enforcement of penalties for both fouls and the down will be replayed. (3-6-2b, 10-2-3)