

Rules Philosophies & Interpretations

Blocking/Holding

1. Takedowns at Point of Attack (POA) &/or in open field must be called. An obvious stretch of a jersey that occurs anywhere must be called. Key words to consider are: Was there restriction? Did the blocker turn the defender? Was there an unnatural movement by the defender? And most importantly, consider advantage/disadvantage at the POA. Once the blocker's "feet are beat" his actions become suspect while engaged.
2. If there is offensive or defensive holding but the action occurs clearly away from the POA & has no (or could have no) effect on the play, holding should not be called since the officials are concentrating on the POA.
3. Rarely should you have a hold on a double team block unless there is a takedown or the defender breaks the double team & is pulled back.
4. For blocks in the back, initial approach angle, contact & reason for contact must be seen in order to call a foul. Force of the block could be slight & still be a foul if the contact propels the player past the runner. Player who is blocked is "face down" – it is usually a foul. Note: On kick plays memorize the RT color, & then watch for a RT player chasing a KT player – he becomes suspect. A hand in the back is not necessarily a foul.
5. Officials must be 100% sure that a foul occurred in the EZ before ruling safety, if accepted.
6. If a player is illegally blocked or held "into" making a tackle, no foul should be called unless the action is a 15 YD foul or there is an element of time between the foul & the tackle.
7. A large number of holding fouls begin at or near the LOS on pass plays. Know where the hold started so the foul can be enforced correctly.

Catch

1. If in doubt, the pass is incomplete vs. the ball caught & then fumbled. The act of making a catch is a process that includes maintaining firm control of the ball throughout the entire act. The receiver must have the opportunity to perform a second act (i.e. dive to pylon, possess & turn up field) in order to rule catch.
2. If a player has control of the ball but, in the act of making the catch, comes to the ground & loses control, it is incomplete. The catch must survive the contact with the ground.
3. If he is upright & immediately hit, he must maintain control of the ball or it is an incomplete pass.

Kicks

1. Punt - It is roughing the kicker if there is significant &/or substantial contact to the plant leg, whether or not the leg is on the ground. All other contact shall be judged based on the severity of contact & the potential for injury.
2. Punt or kickoff - A receiver moving into position or in position to make a catch must not be contacted or diverted until he has had an opportunity to complete the catch. Contact is not necessary for kick catching interference as the receiver must be given an "unhindered opportunity" to make the catch.
3. Holder: The ball remains live if his knee is on the ground to hold for the kick. It also remains live if he rises off his knee to advance, hand, kick, or passes. If the holder has to rise to catch or recover an errant snap, he can return to a knee immediately.

Line of Scrimmage

1. Officials will work to keep offensive linemen legal & will call only when it is obvious. If the offensive lineman is lined up with his head clearly behind the snapper's waistline, a foul must be called without a warning. **Wings** -- If your lineman is in the "gray area" warn him by stating to him, "you need to move up, you are close". Ask the **R** for help since he is closer to them. Procedure: Once either **Wing** has warned the team once, the next time it is a foul – no more warnings. Be sure & tell the HC that his lineman (specify a player's number) has been told to "move up". **Wings** communicate with each other.
2. Don't be technical on an A receiver/slot back in determining if he is off LOS.
3. When calling an ineligible downfield you must see the player more than 2 yards downfield at the time the ball is released. If you do not know the exact location of the downfield player when the ball is released, do not call it.

4. A quick or abrupt movement by any A Player is a false start, regardless of the down. If, in your opinion, the movement simulates the start of the play, rule false start. All shifts must be done with a smooth & rhythmic movement.

Line-to-Gain

1. Ball is placed on an YL after a COP, or a run/pass resulting in a first down. Otherwise, the ball is placed on the FWP spot.

Passing

1. R states "Ball's Away" slowly. If the passer is hit afterwards, it is roughing the passer. If there is a vicious hit such as targeting or spearing the "Ball's Away" statement does not apply.
2. When the ball is controlled in the passer's hand & his arm is moving forward when he is tackled, rule incomplete pass, if the ball becomes loose.

Pass Interference – Defensive & Offensive - (NO Foul)

Actions that do not constitute PI are:

1. When there are tangled feet & both players are looking back at the ball or neither player is looking back at the ball.
2. When either player is making a legitimate play on the ball & there is shoulder to shoulder contact with players coming from different angles.
3. When play is so close to the touching of the pass we refer to it as "bang-bang".
4. When a defender places a hand on a receiver's body, but does not initiate a turn, twist, pull, or push.
5. When contact is made by an eligible player of A or B after the ball has been touched/tipped by any player.

Pass Interference - Defensive (DPI) - Foul

Actions that constitute DPI are:

1. Early **Not Playing the Ball Contact** by a defender provided the contact results in some form of restriction or physical contact. This includes tangled feet if the defender is not playing the ball.
2. **Play through the Back** of a receiver in an attempt to make a play on the ball.
3. **Grab & Restrict** a receiver's arm(s) or body in such a manner that restricts his opportunity to catch a pass.
4. Extending an arm across the body (**Arm Bar**) of a receiver thus restricting his ability to catch a pass, regardless of the fact of whether or not the defender is looking for the ball.
5. **Cut Off** or riding the receiver out of the path to the ball by making contact with him without playing the ball.
6. **Hook & Restrict** a receiver in an attempt to get to the ball in such a manner that causes the receiver's body to turn prior to the ball arriving.

Pass Interference - Offensive (OPI) - Foul

Actions that constitute OPI are:

1. **Creating Separation** by initiating contact with a defender such as shoving or pushing off in an attempt to catch a pass. This includes tangled feet if the player is not playing the ball.
2. **Driving Thru** a defender who has established a position on the field.
3. **Pick Play:** A receiver blocking (contact) a defender downfield to prevent him from making a play on a ball thrown to another receiver in same area.

Personal Foul

1. Contact with helmet in an attempt to punish is a foul & may result in a DQ.
2. A player chasing the runner that is legally blocked with open hands by an opponent out of his visual field is not a defenseless player if he is within 10 -15 YDS of the runner.
3. Forceful contact with an arm, shoulder or helmet on an opponent above the shoulders is

a personal foul for targeting & may result in a DQ. Examples include: QB in passing posture or sliding; kicker in the act of making a kick; receiver in the act of making a catch; & player with no helmet.

4. When a pass is thrown clearly over the receiver's outstretched arms & he relaxes, he becomes a defenseless player. Any "free shot" must be called.
5. If runner's helmet comes off, the ball is dead. If runner is hit & fumbles simultaneously with losing his helmet the ball is dead.
6. A 5 yard face mask foul is rare, but if it is a grasp & let go, it can be called. Most of the face mask fouls are 15YD penalties.
7. If action is deemed to be "fighting", then the player must be DQ.
8. If legal contact occurs before the runner has a foot down OOB it will be considered a legal hit & not a late hit OOB. (Revised 6/3/19)

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