



# 2019 NFHS FOOTBALL RULES INTERPRETATIONS

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## RULES BOOK CLARIFICATIONS:

(Underlining shows additions; strikethrough shows deletions.)

Page 65, TABLE 7-5, 2. Forward Pass Interference – Enforcement Spot b and c:

| FOUL  | PENALTY                   | ENFORCEMENT SPOT                               |
|---|---------------------------|--|
| <b>2. Forward Pass Interference</b><br>Restrictions apply only to a legal pass, untouched by B in or behind the neutral zone which crosses the neutral zone and interference may occur only beyond the neutral zone. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A hinders B. (Restriction begins with the snap.)</li> <li>B hinders A. (Restriction begins when the pass is thrown.)</li> <li>Intentional pass interference.</li> </ol> | a: Loss of 15 yards       | <i>Previous Spot</i>                           |
|   | b: Loss of 15 yards       | <i>Succeeding Spot</i><br><i>Previous Spot</i> |
|   | c: An additional 15 yards | <i>Succeeding Spot</i>                         |

## CASE BOOK CLARIFICATIONS:

(Underlining shows additions; strikethrough shows deletions.)

**Page 33, 3.6.1 SITUATION C:** When the ball is dead after a running play that ends out of bounds, the 40-second play clock is started. The umpire receives the ball from the line judge, and as he is placing it on the ground, he sees that it is one of Team B's balls. He tosses the ball to the line judge who attempts to get a Team A ball from the ball boy. **RULING:** If the play clock reads 25 or less before the correct ball is in from the sideline and ready for play, the referee declares a time-out and signals to reset the play clock to 25 seconds. When the correct ball is ready for play, he signals to start the game clock (if appropriate to the situation) and the play clock.

**Page 34, 3.6.1 SITUATION E:** On third and two, A45 fumbles after gaining 3 yards. The game officials cannot determine who has recovered the fumble, so the line judge signals the game clock to stop while the ball is being located. A45

is found to be in possession of the ball and (a) has not made his line to gain or (b) has made his line to gain. **RULING:** ~~The 40-second play clock starts when the ball is declared dead. In (a) and (b), when the ball is ready for play, the referee immediately will give the ready-for-play signal starting the 25-second play clock and signal the game clock to start due to this administrative stoppage. In (b), the game clock will start on the referee's signal when the ball is ready for play.~~

**Page 34, 3.6.1 SITUATION F:** Team A fumbles or the ball is loose after a backward pass. Several players dive on the ball, attempting recovery. **RULING:** The covering official(s) shall stop the game clock. If recovered by A short of the line to gain (no first down), the 40-second play clock shall start. If recovered by B, the 25-second clock will start on the ready-for-play snap following a reset of the 25-second play clock.

**Page 99, 10.1.3 SITUATION:** With fourth and 10 at the 50-yard line, K2

illegally uses his hands at R's 45-yard line during a scrimmage kick by K1. R1 signals for a fair catch at the R30. The ball is caught by R2 who advances following the whistle. **RULING:** R may accept the distance penalty for K's illegal use of hands and have the yardage assessed from the previous spot or 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 K's 45-yard line. If R elects to accept the distance penalty from the succeeding spot, it will be R's ball first and 10 at R's 40-yard line.~~ At this point, K is given the options related to R's foul and will likely accept the distance penalty for R's delay-of-game foul. ~~If R's original choice was to assess the penalty from the previous spot, it would 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 would now be R's ball, first and 10 at R's 35-yard line. (3-6-2b, 10-2-3, 10-4-2 EXCEPTION)~~

## RULES BY TOPIC CLARIFICATIONS:

(Underlining shows additions; ~~strike-through~~ shows deletions.)

**Page 162, 3.6.1 SITUATION C:** When the ball is dead after a running play that ends out of bounds, the 40-second play clock is started. The umpire receives the ball from the line judge, and as he is placing it on the ground, he sees that it is one of Team B's balls. He tosses the ball to the line judge who attempts to get a Team A ball from the ball boy. **RULING:** If the play clock reads 25 or less before the correct ball is in from the sideline and ready for play, the referee declares a time-out and signals to reset the play clock to 25 seconds. When the correct ball is ready for play, he signals to start the game clock (if appropriate to the situation) and the play clock.

**Page 163, 3.6.1 SITUATION E:** On third and two, A45 fumbles after gaining 3 yards. The game officials cannot determine who has recovered the fumble, so the line judge signals the game clock to stop while the ball is being located. A45 is found to be in possession of the ball and (a) has not made his line to gain or (b) has made his line to gain. **RULING:** The 40-second play clock starts when the ball is declared dead. In (a) and (b), when the ball is ready for play, the referee immediately will give the ready-for-play signal starting the 25-second play clock and signal the game clock to start due to this administrative stoppage. In (b), the game clock

will start on the referee's signal when the ball is ready for play.

**Page 163, 3.6.1 SITUATION F:** Team A fumbles or the ball is loose after a backward pass. Several players dive on the ball, attempting recovery. **RULING:** The covering official(s) shall stop the game clock. If recovered by A short of the line to gain (no first down), the 40-second play clock shall start. If recovered by B, the 25-second clock will start on the ready-for-play snap following a reset of the 25-second play clock.

**Page 232, 10.1.3 SITUATION:** With fourth and 10 at the 50-yard line, K2 illegally uses his hands at R's 45-yard line during a scrimmage kick by K1. R1 signals for a fair catch at the R30. The ball is caught by R2 who advances following the whistle. **RULING:** R may accept the distance penalty for K's illegal use of hands and have the yardage assessed from the previous spot or 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 K's 45-yard line. If R elects to accept the distance penalty from the succeeding spot, it will be R's ball first and 10 at R's 40-yard line. At this point, K is given the options related to R's foul and will likely accept the distance penalty for R's delay-of-game foul. If R's original choice was to assess the penalty from the previous spot, it would 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 would now be R's ball, first and 10 at R's 35-yard line. (3-6-2b, 10-2-3, 10-4-2 EXCEPTION)

**Preseason Guide Clarifications:** (Underlining shows additions; ~~strike-through~~ shows deletions.)

**Page 2, PLAY 5:** On third and two, A45 fumbles after gaining 3 yards. The game officials cannot determine who has recovered the fumble, so the line judge signals the game clock to stop while the ball is being located. A45 is found to be in possession of the ball and (a) has not made his line to gain or (b) has made his line to gain. **RULING:** The 40-second play clock starts when the ball is declared dead. In (a) and (b), when the ball is ready for play, the referee immediately will give the ready-for-play signal starting the 25-second play clock and signal the game clock to start due to this administrative stoppage. In (b), the game clock will start on the referee's signal when the ball is ready for play.

**Page 2, PLAY 6:** Team A fumbles or the ball is loose after a backward pass. Several players dive on the ball, attempting recovery. **RULING:** The covering official(s) shall stop the game clock. If recovered by A short of the line to gain (no first down), the 40-second play clock shall start. If recovered by B, the 25-second clock will start on the ready-for-play snap following a reset of the 25-second play clock.