

# **National Federation Rule Changes - 2006**

## **A Planned Loose Ball Play “Fumblerooski”, No Longer Legal (7-2-8)**

A team A linesman may no longer advance a planned loose ball in the vicinity of the snapper. In the past the play was legal if the referee had been notified in advance about the play. The foul occurs when the linesman picks up the ball. The 5-yard penalty is for illegal formation and is enforced from the spot of the foul (where the linesman picks up the ball). The restriction on planned loose ball plays applies to linesmen only.

## **Illegal Touching (7-5-13)**

The penalty for an ineligible receiver who bats, muffs, or catches a forward pass has been changed. It is now illegal touching regardless if it occurs behind, in or beyond the neutral zone. In the past, those acts beyond the line would have been offensive pass interference. The penalty for illegal touching beyond the line is 5-yards from the previous spot and loss of down. Illegal touching is an intentional act, if the guard is hit in the back with a pass, no infraction.

## **Participation and Substitution (2-29, 3-7-6, 9-6-4a)**

In order to distinguish illegal substitution from illegal participation, a definition for participation was added. Participation is any act or action by a player that has an influence on the play. Rule 9-6-4a now indicates it is illegal participation when any player, replaced player or substitute enters and participates during the down. Rule 3-7-6 specifies that a replaced player or substitute who enter the field but does not participate is guilty of illegal substitution. Which is a 5-yard nonplayer foul enforced from the succeeding spot.

## **Tooth and Mouth Protectors, Chin Straps (1-5-1a. i)**

Tooth and mouth protector must be any color except completely white or completely clear and a four-snap chinstrap must secure the helmet.

## **Authorized Conferences (1-6-2, 2-6-2a, 3-5-8)**

An authorized conference in front of the team box can be conducted as far onto the field as the 9-yard mark. The old rule indicated a 5-yard limit. Teams and officials now have a reference point to guide enforcement. Also, players are allowed to use headsets and headphones during authorized conferences conducted in front of their team box and within 9-yards of the sidelines. The old rule restricted use of that equipment only to coaches and non-players. A coach who uses the other time out procedure between the inbounds marks with no more than 11 players may use headphones during the conference, but players may not. If that occurs, it is a 15-yard penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct.

## **Kicker Definition Clarified (2-31-8)**

A player becomes a kicker when his knee, lower leg or foot makes contact with the ball. The official must decide if it is reasonably certain a kick would be made. If so, it is roughing the kicker to run into him, a 15-yard penalty is enforced from the previous spot. The penalty includes an automatic first down. It is the defensive player's responsibility to avoid illegal contact, however, if the official believes the rusher could not be certain a kick would be made, there is no foul.

## **Spearing Definition (2-40)**

Officials no longer have to determine whether a player who is guilty of spearing did so purposely. The word “intentional” has been removed from the definition. Spearing is the use of the helmet in an attempt to punish an opponent. The use of the helmet as a weapon must be penalized. If flagrant, the offender must be ejected. This rule change eliminates the official's burden of reading “intent” into a clearly unsafe act.

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### **Holder Recovers an Errant Snap (4-2-2 Exc. 2)**

One of the exceptions for keeping a ball live if a placekick holder has his knee on the ground was expanded. The ball remains live if the holder rises and catches or recovers an errant snap and immediately returns his knee(s) to the ground and places the ball for a kick or again rises to advance, hand or pass. Under the previous rule, the holder had no opportunity to recover a bad snap and return to his position for a placekick.

### **Advertising on the Field (1-2-3g)**

Advertising or commercial markings are prohibited on the field of play (goalline to goalline and between boundary lines). The change leaves open the option to allow such markings in the end zones.

### **Jerseys (1-5-1c)**

Starting in 2010, players of the visiting team must wear white jerseys.

The old rule allowed "light color" jerseys.

Players of the home team may not wear white jerseys (except for uniform numbers).