

**2017 CFOA Football Bulletin I**  
**July 19, 2017**

To: Commissioners, Board Interpreters, Curriculum reps, CIAC and league reps, media.

From: Bill Riccio, Jr. State Interpreter

Re: Reflections on Interpretations Meeting of July 18

**I. Review of Rules Changes and notes of interest**

- A. 1-3-1h Ball Logos – This year we have restrictions on what can be printed onto a game ball. The aim of the rule change was to eliminate advertising on the ball that is not the manufacturer. I doubt we'll see any violations of this in our games. Just note there is not *size restriction* on the label. As long as what is printed falls within the scope of the rule (ball manufacturer, school name/logo, conference name/logo, etc.) we're on solid ground. If we get a situation where advertising is on the ball and those are the only balls available, play the game and report the violation to the school, conference and CIAC.
- B. 1-5-1a(2) note and 1-5-4 – This allows official(s) other than the U to go with the R during the pre-game walk. It also allows more than one. I doubt we should get into a "more than one" situation. We don't want coaches peppered with questions before the game by several officials. Those of us who've taken these walks know some coaches barely remember who the captains are, and we know to make short work of the visit. Having extra bodies will only make for the possibility of trouble. I would discourage crews visiting as a group with coaches. If the U can't make it to the meeting for some reason, another official can go.
- C. 1-5-1(b) 3 – This does not take effect until 2021, allowing schools to cycle through their uniforms. It's not been a problem so far. Just remember, and this was emphasized: the visiting team is responsible for having the contrasting color if there are similarities in its away jersey and the home team's jerseys. These should be worked out by game management before the contest takes place.

- D. 2-3-10, 9-4-3n and 9-4 Penalty – This is a definition and re-emphasis on the blindside block. The definition is clear: This block involves contact by a blocker against an opponent who, because of physical positioning and focus of concentration, is vulnerable to injury. Unless initiated with open hands, it is a foul for excessive and unnecessary contact when the block is forceful and outside of the free-blocking zone.
- The conference call emphasized that all officials are to be aware of any blocks that come under this heading.
  - The onus **is on the blocker**.
  - **Hands-extended blocks are legal blindside blocks. Those where the shoulder or helmet are used as the initial contact point are illegal.**
  - **WHEN IN DOUBT, IT IS A BLINDSIDE BLOCK AND A PENALTY.**
- E. 2-16-2h – This is a change wherein a substitution foul during a punt or scrimmage kick play is treated as a PSK. It happened in a game last year in another state and was given rule support.
- F. 2-24=10, 6-1-11, 6-1 penalty – This has to do with the new rule on pop-up kicks. Let's make it easy: if a team's kicker tops the ball in such a way that the ball takes an immediate bounce (within the first yard) and then appears like a pooch kick (goes into the air above the kicker's head), it is now a "blow and throw." It's a five-yard penalty. Don't let the play continue. Dribble kicks and so-called "kangaroo kicks" where there is multiple bounces such as we see in on-side kick attempts remain legal. This will be covered thoroughly at the clinic on Aug. 12.
- G. 2-32-16 – This expands the list of "defenseless players" to one who slides feet first to avoid a tackle, and a player already in the grasp of an opponent. If they are subsequently hit, we have to determine: if the hit could have been avoided; if it was necessary contact; or unnecessary and excessive. This type of play is not new and we've called it in the past. The rule is only covering those situations that haven't been listed heretofore.
- H. 3-4-7 – This allows the offended team in the situation of a penalty that stops the clock to start it on the snap. There are several new play situations in the Case Book. Just remember the penalty has to be the reason the clock was stopped. If it is stopped for any reason (incomplete

pass, run out of bounds, etc.) the rule takes precedence. Effectively, the penalty has to be the only reason the clock was stopped.

Note: It was pointed out in a live-ball, dead-ball situation, where both teams have fouled, the live-ball penalty is used to determine application of the rule.

- I. 4-2-2l – There was some discussion on this rule. It states that if a prosthetic device completely detaches off a “runner” the ball is declared dead, much like the helmet rule. The problem is “runner” is defined as the person carrying the ball, or feigning to carry the ball.  
In its attempt to clean up the language in the book, the rules committee realizes “runner” has a compound meaning, but in this case, we are taking specifically about the ball carrier.
- J. 7-1-6 now indicates that attempts to bat the ball out of the hand of the snapper is a violation of the encroachment rule. In most cases, this was a foul because the player attempted is thought to have entered the neutral zone prior to the snap. This was a problem a couple of years ago, and most crews called it an infraction. Now we have rule support for what was an interpretation.
- K. 7-5-10 – Much to the satisfaction of coaches and back judges, alike, the face-guarding rule is now history. For either OPI or DPI to be called, there will have to be contact. This puts the NFHS in line with the other two codes (NFL, NCAA). The NFL got rid of this about eight years ago, and the NCAA has never had it to my knowledge.

## **II. Editorial Changes.**

Most of the editorial changes were part of the ongoing attempt to clean up the language in the book that doesn't conform with past rules changes or definitions, but two items are of interest.

- A. 1-5-3(2), 1-6-1, 1-6-2 – This was changed to emphasize that electronic signs that relay plays onto the field are illegal. Cardboard signs are still legal, but if they are powered by some type of current, they cannot be used.
- B. 9-4-3k – This was a clarification on the horse-collar rule. If a player gets his hand inside the shoulder pad and/or the inside of the collar and

immediately brings the opponent down, it is a horse-collar and a foul. This is a language clarification, rather than a rules change.

NOTE: The NFHS rule does not change for this year. Many had thought, myself included, the grabbing of the nameplate area of the jersey and pulling down would be added to the rule. It was not. The interpreters and I will discuss this at our meeting. It will be discussed at the clinic.

### III. **Points of Emphasis**

**Sideline Management** -- We won't go through the entire four POEs. The biggest one, I think, is the discussion concerning Sideline Management. The rules committee wants us to be consistent on what we expect and what the enforcement procedures are. Referees and Umpires will discuss it in the pre-game walk, but wing officials must be clear and consistent on what they will allow on the sideline – and that it is in conformity with the rules governing the Restricted Area.

We have a lot of inter-conference games now and teams are experiencing crews from various boards. Each board has to be consistent in managing the sidelines. Wing officials have to have the six-foot area to work in.

Commissioners, observers, and those in charge of training have emphasize consistency from week to week. This will be discussed at the clinic.

**Enforcement of rules governing equipment** – Emphasis was on several things, but mostly about pants. Knees must be covered by pants. Players in the past couple of years have tried to emulate what they see on TV. The NCAA has reinstated the pants covering the knees rule. So, we shouldn't see bare knees on TV, and it will trickle down to our level.

### IV. **Reminders**

- A. Jerseys must be tucked if they extend beyond the pants. Undershirts if exposed should be tucked as well.
- B. Exposed shoulder pads is a problem as well as back pads. We will continue what we established last year: Back pads will be covered at all

times by the jersey. Shoulder pads are a problem because of the cut of the cut of the jersey sleeve.

cut of the jersey sleeves. We will monitor them and try to get them fixed between downs. Bob Colgate noted that he's been in discussions with manufacturers about the problem, and they are re-designing the sleeves.

- C. Tooth and Mouth protectors may be white or clear.
- D. Gloves have to have the NOCSAE or SFIA labels affixed to the outside of the glove. Gloves used for warmth are not subject to the rule.
- E. Clipping in the FBZ is illegal as of last year, though the runner (in all forms of that word) can be legally clipped.

## V. Annual Clinic

The annual clinic is set for Notre Dame-West Haven High School, 1 Notre Dame Way, on Saturday, Aug. 12 at 9 a.m. We have an air-conditioned auditorium and a turf practice field.

### **Directions: From Milford/Stratford (points west)**

- *I-95 north to exit 43 (Campbell Ave.). Turn left at the bottom of the exit ramp.*
- *Go to the 4th traffic light and turn left onto Ruden St. (a University of New Haven entrance as well). Go up the hill to the second stop sign.*
- *Turn left onto Zegmont St. At end of Zegmont St., you will access the ND parking lot and campus via our new street address - 1 Notre Dame Way.*

### **FROM INTERSTATE 95 SOUTH FROM NEW HAVEN/SHORELINE TOWNS**

- *I-95 south to exit 43 (First Ave.). Turn right at the bottom of the exit ramp.*
- *Go to the 2nd traffic light (McDonald's will be on your right).*
- *Turn right and get into the left lane.*
- *At the traffic light, turn left onto Ruden St. (a University of New Haven entrance as well). Go up the hill to the second stop sign.*
- *Turn left onto Zegmont St. At end of Zegmont St., you will access the ND parking lot and campus via our new street address - 1 Notre Dame Way.*

**That's it for now. Hope this clarifies some things in preparation for the clinic.**

**Bill R.**