

PRESEASON GUIDE

FOOTBALL

2015

Spearing, Unnecessary Roughness Changes Aimed at Risk Minimization

Continuing the focus on minimizing risk, the NFHS Football Rules Committee adopted modifications to two rules that expand wording directed at player conduct.

Those amendments were among several changes the committee approved during its annual meeting January 23-25, 2015, in Indianapolis, IN.

The unnecessary roughness provisions in Rule 9-4-3g were expanded. No player or nonplayer shall make any other contact with an opponent, including a defenseless player, which is deemed unnecessary or excessive and which incites roughness. The additions of the words "including a defenseless player" and "or excessive" reflect the committee's desire to curtail unnecessary rough play. An example would be when a defensive player who is not in the vicinity of the ball is "blindsided" by a blocker on the offensive team.

Rule 2-20-1c was expanded and now it states spearing is an act by any player who initiates contact against an opponent at the shoulders or below with the crown (top portion) of the helmet.

With "targeting" now defined

SEE "CONTACT" P. 2

Any player who initiates contact against an opponent at the shoulders or below with the crown (top portion) of the helmet is guilty of spearing. The penalty is 15 yards. If the act is judged by the game official to be flagrant, the offender is disqualified.



DALE GARNEY

REFEREE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS (NFHS)

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► Contact CONT. FROM P.1

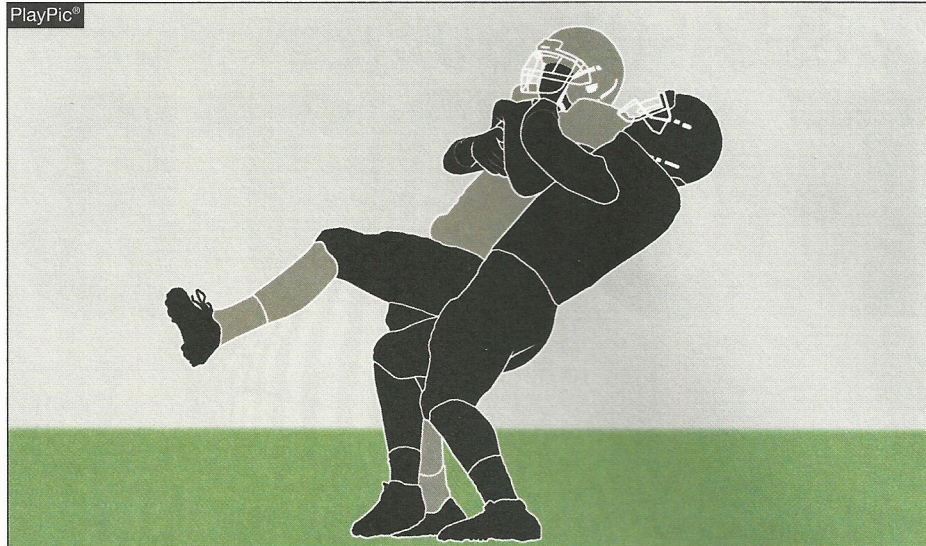
as contact to an opponent above the shoulders, the committee more clearly defined "spearing" as contact to an opponent at the shoulders or below. Colgate said the implementation of the first spearing rule in 1971 has played a significant role in reducing injury in high school football.

"Minimizing risk to players players involved in these situations must remain at the forefront of the game," said Brad Garrett, chair of the NFHS Football Rules Committee and assistant executive director of the Oregon School Activities Association.

Examples of defenseless players include, but are not limited to:

- A quarterback moving down the line of scrimmage who has handed or pitched the ball to a teammate, and then makes no attempt to participate further in the play.
- A kicker who is in the act of kicking the ball, or who has not had a reasonable amount of time to regain his/her balance after the kick.
- A passer who is in the act of throwing the ball, or who has not had a reasonable length of time to participate in the play again after releasing the ball.
- A pass receiver whose concentration is on the ball and the contact by the defender is unrelated to attempting to catch the ball.
- A pass receiver who has clearly relaxed when he/she has missed the pass or feels he/she can no longer catch the pass.
- A kick returner attempting to catch a kick.
- A kick receiver who is immediately contacted after touching the ball.
- A player on the ground.
- Any player who has relaxed once the ball has become dead.
- A player who receives a blindside block.
- A ball carrier already in the grasp of an opponent and whose forward progress has been stopped.
- Any player who is obviously out of the play.

PlayPic®



No player or nonplayer shall make any other contact with an opponent, including a defenseless player, which is deemed unnecessary or excessive and which incites roughness.

The game official must draw distinction between contact necessary to make a legal block or tackle, making unnecessary contact on a defenseless player and targeting any player at any time.

Play 1: Wide receiver A1 goes downfield 15 yards, cuts sharply to the outside and stops near the sideline and catches the pass. B1 drives the crown (top portion) of his helmet into A1. **Ruling:** This use of the helmet is spearing by B1.

Play 2: Runner A1 breaks free beyond the neutral zone. (a) As B1 and B2 are closing in to tackle him, A1 veers into B1 and deliberately drives the crown (top portion) of his helmet into B1's chest; or (b) as B1 and B2 attempt to bring him down, A1 lowers his head and drives forward for yardage and he/she contacts B1 and/or B2 with his helmet. **Ruling:** Spearing by A1 in (a) as he/she uses the crown (top portion) of his helmet to punish B1. It is a 15-yard penalty. If the spearing is judged by the game official to be flagrant, A1 must be disqualified. In (b), the lowering of the head to pick up additional yardage is not illegal unless it is done to punish an opponent, if he/she uses his helmet to butt or ram, or the runner commits spearing or butt blocking or targeting.

The reason for including the runner in the illegal helmet contact and targeting prohibition is to prevent him from using his helmet to abuse an opponent as well as protection of the player. The illegal helmet contact rules apply equally to all players.

Play 3: As A1 is advancing for a touchdown from B's 10-yard line, B1 blindsides A2 at B's 15-yard line. The covering official rules that not only was the contact unnecessarily rough, it was judged by the game official to be flagrant. **Ruling:** The penalty for the foul may be enforced from the succeeding spot and A's touchdown stands. B1 is disqualified because the foul was judged by the game official to be flagrant.

It has been reported that plays like this have occurred and game officials have simply ruled touchdown. Game officials must be alert for flagrant fouls and enforce the disqualification portion of the penalty if necessary.

Play 4: As seen in the PlayPic, A1's forward progress has been stopped. After the game official has declared the ball dead, B2 grabs A1, lifts him off the ground and slams him to the ground. **Ruling:** B2 is guilty of unnecessary roughness. Team B is penalized 15 yards. If the covering official rules that the act was flagrant, B2 is disqualified. □

Timing of Foul for Free Kick Formation Altered

The timing of the foul in Rules 6-1-3 and 6-1-4 for not having at least four players on both sides of the kicker has been changed from the ready signal to the time of the kick. Other elements of the formation rule — no team K player other than the kicker or holder may be beyond the free-kick line and if one player is more than five yards behind the free-kick line, he/she must kick the ball — remain unchanged.

The change continues to allow lateral movement by the kicking team within the five-yard belt but requires game officials to ascertain whether or not the formation is legal when the ball is kicked. The referee will have the best view of the formation after lateral movement takes place.

Communication between the game officials and both teams is critical and the referee should ensure that all

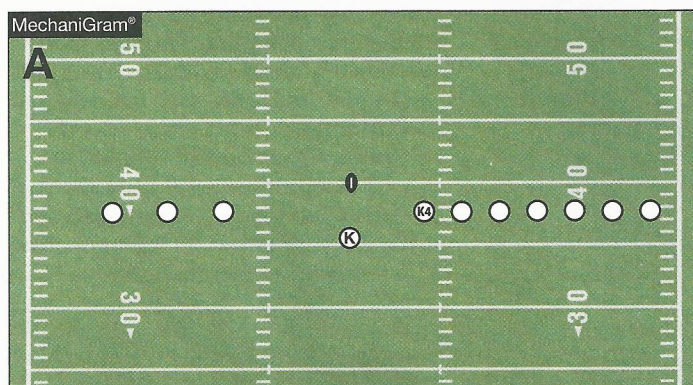
opportunities for assembling in a proper formation have been given before sounding the ready-for-play signal.

Play 1: After the ready for play and prior to the ball being kicked, Team K has five players to the left of the kicker and five players to the right of the kicker with the ball spotted at the K40. The potential kicker, K1, is lined up at the K32 to begin his kick and all other K players are clearly outside of the K35. As K1 approaches the kick, he/she suddenly slows down and K2 then kicks an onside kick that is recovered by R1. **Ruling:** K2 has committed a foul for encroachment and the ball shall be blown dead immediately. R is given the option to accept the distance penalty of 5 yards for the dead-ball foul.

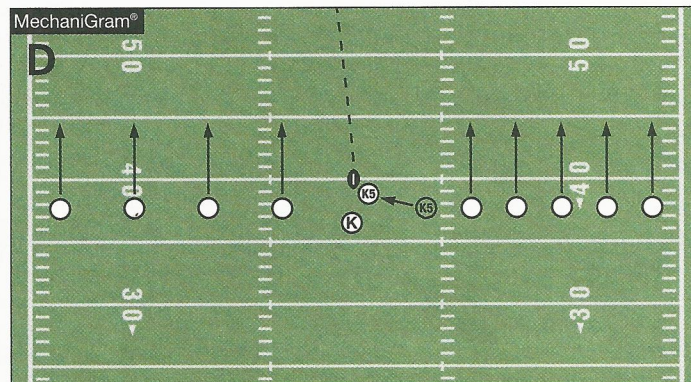
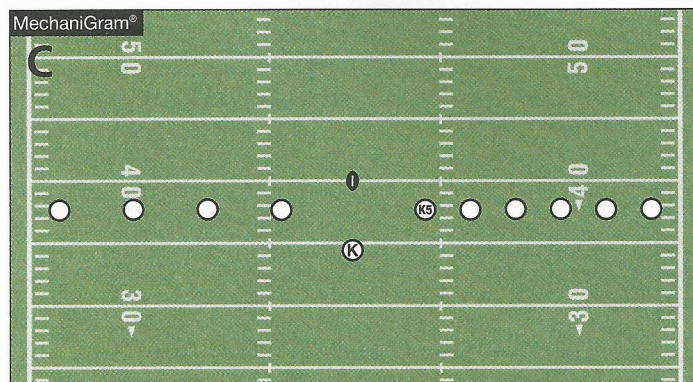
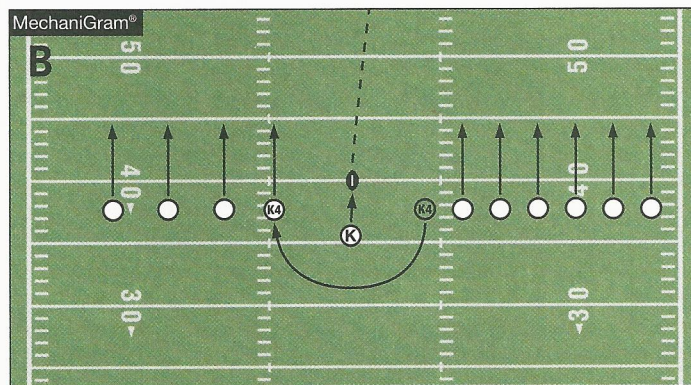
Play 2: After the ready for play and prior to the ball being kicked, Team K has five players to the left of

the kicker and five players to the right of the kicker with the ball spotted at the K40. Prior to the ball being kicked, player K2: (a) has both feet just beyond the K35 (toward midfield); (b) has a foot touching the K35; (c) has one foot touching beyond the K35 toward the K36 and one foot behind the K35; or (d) K has both feet clearly beyond the K35 (toward midfield) but his hand is touching behind the K35 (toward K's goal line). **Ruling:** Legal in (a) and (d). Encroachment in (b) and (c).

Play 3: After the ready for play and as the ball is being kicked, Team K has three players to the left of the kicker and seven players to the right of the kicker. **Ruling:** It is an encroachment foul by K. The ball shall be blown dead immediately and R given the option to accept the distance penalty of 5 yards for the dead-ball foul. □



In MechaniGram A, K has only three players on one side of the kicker. If K4 shifts to the other side of the kicker by going more than five yards from the free kick line after the ready-for-play signal (Mechanigram B), it is a dead-ball foul for encroachment.



The formation in MechaniGram C is legal. In MechaniGram D, K5 (who was not more than five yards behind his free-kick line) kicks the ball. That is a foul. When a player is more than five yards behind the kicking team's free-kick line, that player is the only player who may legally kick the ball.



Down Errors May Be Corrected

Rule 5-1-1b (NEW) gives the referee authority to correct the number of the next down prior to the ball becoming live after a new series of downs being awarded.

Play 1: What procedure is used to correct an error if it is discovered: (a) a fifth down has been run; or (b) A has not been given its allotted four downs?

Ruling: In both cases, the number of the next down can be corrected by

the referee prior to the ball becoming live after a new series of downs is awarded. In (a), play will revert to where it was before the fifth down was run if it was determined prior to the ball becoming live after a new series of downs was awarded. In (b), the referee can declare the proper next down prior to the ball becoming live after a new series of downs has been awarded. **Comment:** Even though play

selection, etc., is determined by the down number displayed on the down marker, the official number of the down is determined by the referee.

Play 2: Erroneously, the chains are set before enforcement of a dead-ball foul instead of following enforcement. Up to what point can this be corrected? **Ruling:** Until the ball is legally snapped. After that point, it is too late. □

Dead-Ball Fouls May Offset

Under a change to Rule 10-2-5, the distance penalty for unsportsmanlike, nonplayer or dead-ball personal fouls committed by teams can offset. Equal numbers of 15-yard penalties by both teams will cancel and remaining penalties may be enforced.

If both teams commit unsportsmanlike, nonplayer or dead-ball fouls prior to the completion of penalty administration for those fouls, the distance penalty for an equal number of 15-yard unsportsmanlike, nonplayer or dead-ball fouls will offset. Any remaining penalties will be enforced separately and in the order of occurrence.

The "trigger" for determining when

penalty administration is completed is the referee signaling the foul.

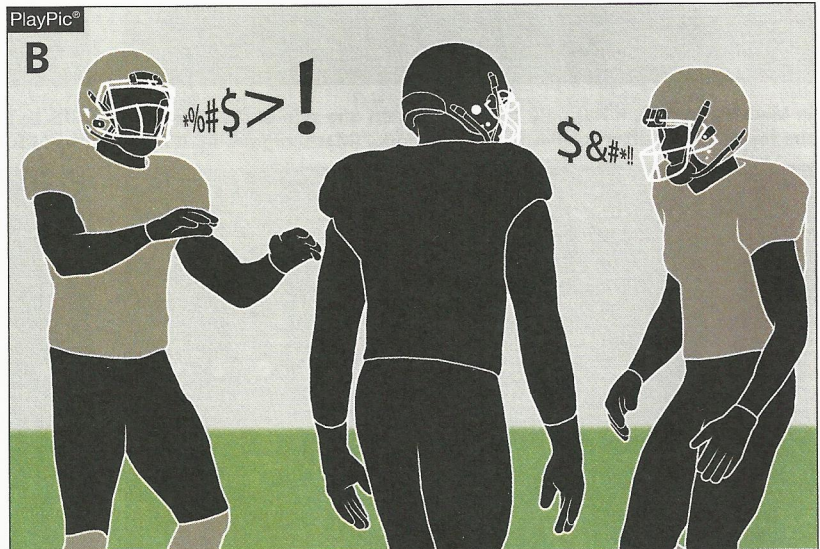
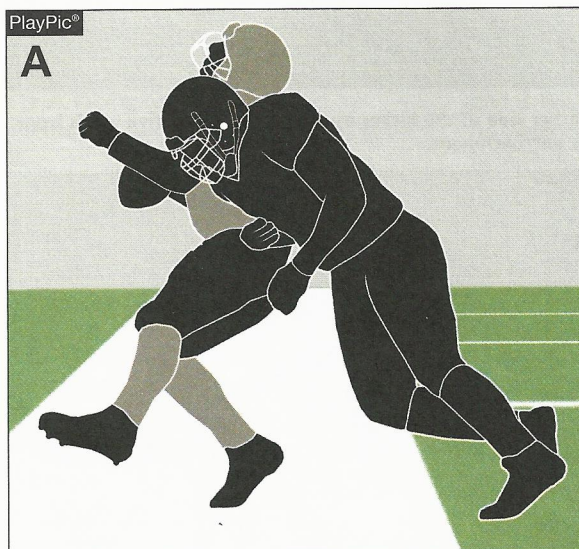
Play 1: With third and 8 on B's 40, A1 advances to B's 35 where he/she is downed. B1 piles on and, almost immediately thereafter, A2 spears B1.

Ruling: The distance penalties for the dead fouls cancel. The down counts; it will now be fourth and 3 from B's 35. If A2's spearing is judged by the game official to be flagrant, he/she shall be disqualified.

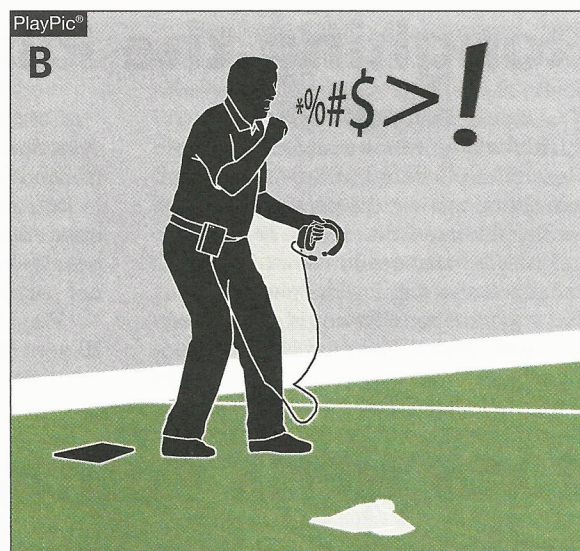
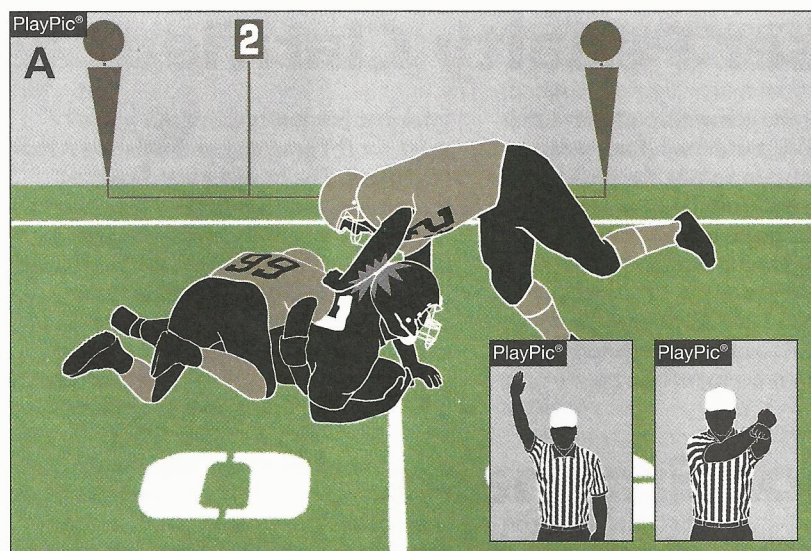
Play 2: In a state where tie games are resolved by the 10-Yard Line Procedure, the game ends in a tie. Immediately following the final whistle, there is a fight between A1 and B1 and: (a) none of the game

officials observed which player actually struck the first blow; or (b) A1 struck B1 who retaliated; or (c) B1 first struck A1 who retaliated. In (a), (b) and (c), A wins the toss and elects to go on defense first. **Ruling:** In (a), (b) and (c), A1 and B1 will be disqualified for fighting and they may not participate in the overtime. In (a), (b) and (c), the distance penalties cancel and the overtime will begin with B putting the ball in play, first and goal, from the 10-yard line.

Play 3: On third and 8 from B's 45-yard line, runner A1 falls to the ground as he/she goes out of bounds at B's 40. B1 piles on. A2 then punches B2. The covering official indicates the



In PlayPic A, the B player hits the runner out-of-bounds, a dead-ball foul. In PlayPic B, two A players commit unsportsmanlike fouls. All fouls occur before the next live ball. One A foul and the B foul offset. The penalty for the remaining A foul is enforced.



In PlayPic A, a B player commits a dead-ball personal foul. After the Referee signals and the penalty is enforced, but before the next live ball, A's coach is flagged for unsportsmanlike conduct (PlayPic B). The fouls do not offset and the penalty for the coach's foul is also enforced. It will be first and 25.

fouls by both B1 and A2. The coach of A then insults the game official for calling the foul on A2. **Ruling:** The distance penalties for B1's dead-ball personal foul and A2's punch cancel. The unsportsmanlike foul against the coach of A will be enforced with a 15-yard penalty, giving A a first and 10 from B's 25. A2 shall be disqualified for fighting.

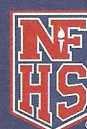
Play 4: A has the ball, third and 7 from A's 20-yard line and runner A1 is driven out of bounds at the A25. Following the play, a fight breaks out involving A1, A2, B1, B2, B3 and B4. All six players are flagged for their involvement in the fight. **Ruling:** The distance penalties for the two fouls against Team A, and two of the fouls against Team B cancel. The remaining two fouls against Team B are enforced separately and in order, resulting in a first and 10 for A at B's 45-yard line. A1, A2, B1, B2, B3 and B4 are disqualified for fighting.

Play 5: A has the ball, third and 6 from B's 45-yard line and runner A1 is driven out of bounds at B's 35-yard line. Following the play, a fight breaks out involving A1, A2, A3, A4, B1 and B2. All six players are flagged for their involvement in the fight. **Ruling:** The distance penalties for two fouls against Team A, and the two fouls against Team B cancel. The remaining two distance penalties against Team A are enforced separately and in order. Since the live-ball action gave A a new series,

the line to gain shall be established after A is penalized for the two remaining fouls. This results in a first

and 10 for A at A's 35-yard line. A1, A2, A3, A4, B1 and B2 are disqualified for fighting. □

National Federation of State High School Associations



Rule Books Available as E-books

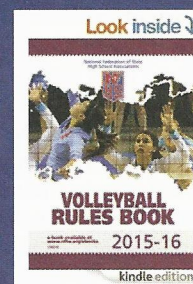
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Roughing the Passer Penalty Clarified

Last year, the NFHS Football Rules Committee made clear that personal fouls found in Rule 9-4 when committed against the passer (such as an illegal horse-collar tackle or grasped and twisted face mask) were to be penalized as roughing the passer. In that way, the penalty would include an automatic first down.

This year the committee clarified that even though an incidental (five-yard) face mask grasp is among the fouls listed in Rule 9-4, an incidental grasp of the quarterback's face mask is a five-yard penalty but an automatic first down is not part of the penalty.

Play: Second and 10 at team A's 20-yard line. B1 fouls passer A2 by (a)

grasping but not twisting A2's face mask, or (b) grasping and twisting A2's face mask. The legal forward pass is incomplete. **Ruling:** In (a) the penalty is five yards only. If A accepts the penalty, it will be second and five at A's 25-yard line. In (b), the foul is roughing the passer. That yields first and 10 for A from its own 35-yard line. □

2015 NFHS Points of Emphasis

RISK MINIMIZATION

Football is a game with the stated objective "of one team carrying or passing the ball across the opponent's goal line or kicking the ball through the opponent's goal by a place kick or drop kick. The game is won by the team which accumulates the most points." NFHS Football Rules Book, Rule 1-1-1.

While this may sound like a simple concept, the game of football has changed with the addition of new offensive and defensive schemes. The blocking and tackling techniques used by high school teams have placed an emphasis on expanding the length and width of each play, resulting in more opportunities for unnecessary or excessive contact to occur between players. As the game of football continues to evolve, coaches, players, game officials and spectators must respect the simplicity of Rule 1-1 and commit to keep the game as safe as possible for all participants.

Coaches should continue to educate their players about the risks of unnecessary or excessive contact regardless of whether or not the contact occurs during a legal block or tackle. While the committee does not believe players are coached to make unnecessary or excessive contact with opponents, coaches should clearly instruct players to avoid such unsafe contact. Risk minimization applies equally to players on both teams.

Players need to have respect for the game and their opponents. Any action which includes identifying and taking aim on an opponent who is not aware of any pending contact increases the potential for serious injury to one or both of the players

and must be avoided. If the contact is judged as flagrant, the offending player will be disqualified and, in most states, will miss the next contest. Players can't help their team be successful if they are not in the current or future contests.

Game officials need to be aware of situations that are likely to produce unnecessary or excessive contact. Blindside blocks, peel-back blocks, and airborne receivers attempting to secure the ball oftentimes provide windows of opportunity for these potentially dangerous contact situations to occur. Players leaving their feet (launching) and initiating contact with opponents should be penalized immediately as unnecessary or excessive contact.

Spectators, players and coaches should not promote nor celebrate any act that endangers the safety, health and welfare of an opponent. Players of both teams should always be treated with the utmost respect. The safety, health and welfare of all players should be everyone's priority.

What is Excessive?

While the NFHS Football Rules now expressly preclude conduct that is "excessive" and "unnecessary," the rules have always barred efforts to injure or "take out" an opponent. Situations involving contact that exceed what is usual, normal or proper must be eliminated from the game.

Considering this potential for serious injury, it is critical that those situations involving unnecessary or excessive contact on players are eliminated whether or not that contact is otherwise deemed legal. While unnecessary or excessive contact can occur between

any players, special attention must be given to those players whose focus of concentration makes them especially vulnerable to injury. The "glamour" associated with these types of hits must be removed in order to minimize risk for all participants.

Another area where contact may be deemed excessive is where players heed the old adage provided by coaches, "Play until you hear the whistle!" The whistle rarely causes the ball to become dead; it only confirms a player's action that has caused the ball to become dead (knee on ground). Playing and hitting until the whistle blows can cause unnecessary contact to opponents who have begun to "let up."

Situations where momentum has slowed or stopped and there is a group of players making the play and someone comes in and drills the pile could be prevented by a timely whistle. Even in the event of a "slow whistle," such conduct should be penalized. In addition, coaches and players need to be aware that this type of contact is unnecessary, unwarranted and is against the rules.

In summary, here is an analysis of several examples:

Does a player have a legitimate chance to make a play? - Yes

Does the player receive a blindside hit? - Yes

Was the contact unnecessary or excessive? - Yes

Ruling: Foul for personal foul/unnecessary roughness or excessive contact.

Does a player have a legitimate

- chance to make a play? - Yes
Does the player receive a blindside hit? - Yes
Was the contact unnecessary or excessive? - No
Ruling: Legal play.

Does a player have a legitimate chance to make a play? - Yes
Does the player receive a blindside hit? - No
Was the contact unnecessary or excessive? - No
Ruling: Legal play.

Does a player have a legitimate chance to make a play? - No
Does the player receive a blindside hit? - Yes or No
Was the contact unnecessary or excessive? - Yes or No

Ruling: Foul for personal foul/unnecessary roughness or excessive contact.

While a contact may be legal, analysis and sound judgment must also determine whether the hit was unnecessary or excessive. Coaches and game officials must work together to minimize risk to players from unnecessary and excessive contact by proper coaching from coaches and assessment of penalties by game officials.

FACILITATING NFHS FOOTBALL RULES

Many often wonder how the rules that govern high school football are developed and why they are written the way they are. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) football playing rules reflect a national perspective based on decisions that best serve the needs of the sport on a national level. Therefore, the purposes of the playing rules are to:

- Minimize risk to participants.
- Preserve the sound traditions of the sport.
- Standardize competition.
- Provide for orderly administration.
- Facilitate the decision-making process of officials.
- Permit common records.
- Provide for evaluating competition.
- Maintain a balance between offense and defense.

With these goals in mind, the NFHS Football Rules Committee believes the rules and the game facilitate and enrich a well-rounded educational experience that promotes academic achievement, encourages positive school/community relations and develops good citizenship and healthy lifestyles. Furthermore, the committee believes the current code of ethics for both coaches and game officials facilitate these goals as written.

One aspect of coach and game official ethics is to teach and officiate the rules within the intent of NFHS Football Rules Book. THE COACH shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to their team members. THE COACH shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules. THE OFFICIAL shall master the rules of the game, and also the officiating mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise that responsibility in an impartial, firm and controlled manner.

Coaching and officiating the rules are extremely important to maintain the integrity of the game, and to minimize risk to the athletes participating in the game. The following are rules identified as a reminder to all coaches and game officials involved in football to minimize risk.

Free-Blocking Zone

For many years, the NFHS Football Rules Committee has addressed a variety of rules related to the free-blocking zone and blocking below the waist. Currently, the rules have been modified and updated to allow blocking below the waist in a specific zone and within a very short period of time. Low blocks can sometimes result in lower leg injuries. On the other hand, blocking below the waist

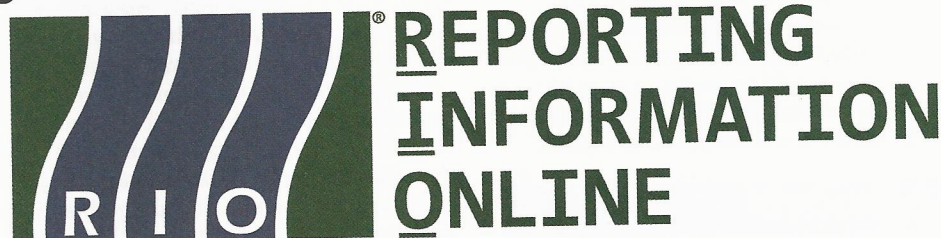
SEE "2015 POE" P. 8

Football Injury Surveillance Study

Football continues to have the highest injury rates based on National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance Study.

As high school sports participation continues to increase in the United States, the number of sports injuries will also likely increase unless effective injury prevention programs are implemented. The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) and the NFHS Sport Rules Committees use information from the National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance Study (High School RIO™) to monitor rates and patterns of sports injuries among high school athletes. High School RIO™ is currently collecting the 10th year of sports exposure and injury data.

High School RIO™ data shows that football has the highest injury rate of the



9 original sports under surveillance. In 2013/14, concussions (25.2% of all injuries) were the most common injury in football followed by ankle strain/sprain (10.6%). Rates of concussion have increased over the past 9 years. However, the proportion of football players returning to activity the same day or within a week of sustaining a concussion has decreased dramatically over the past six years. Annually, over a third of all football concussions occur during practice. Understanding such

patterns of injury is one important tool in the efforts to keep football players as safe as possible.

If you are interested in more information on the High School RIO™ Study or a certified athletic trainer is interested in becoming a reporter for football, please visit <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/PublicHealth/research/ResearchProjects/piper/projects/RIO/Pages/Study-Reports.aspx> for summary reports. □



► 2015 POE CONT. FROM P.7

helps to level the playing field for those players who are at a size disadvantage compared to that of their opponents. The committee continues to stress the importance of officiating the rule as written, instead of prohibiting blocking below the waist completely.

The free-blocking zone is a rectangular area extending laterally four yards either side of the spot of the snap and three yards behind each line of scrimmage. A player is in the free-blocking zone when any part of his or her body is in the zone at the snap. All players involved in the block must be on the line of scrimmage, in the zone at the snap and the contact must take place within the zone. Blocking below the waist is permitted from the time the ball is snapped until the ball leaves the zone. When the free-blocking zone exists, offensive and defensive linemen may block each other below the waist. Backs, linebackers and receivers are not permitted to block below the waist.

When the ball is directly snapped hand-to-hand to a back, a block below the waist is legal as long as the blocks are between linemen who were in the zone at the snap, the contact is in the zone, and the ball has not left the zone. As long as the ball remains in the zone, those players may legally block below the waist.

When the ball is snapped to a back in shotgun formation, however, the ball leaves the zone, and the zone disintegrates almost immediately. To be legal, a block below the waist must occur immediately after, and nearly simultaneously with, the snap. Any delay would cause the block to occur after the ball has left the zone. It is nearly impossible for a lineman in a two-point

stance to legally block below the waist in this situation because of the time required for the lineman to drop from an upright position and block an opponent below the waist. For linemen in three or four-point stances, they must block their opponents immediately after the snap in order for a low block to be legal in this situation.

Prior to the snap, game officials should be aware of whether the ball will be snapped hand-to-hand or to a back in shotgun formation, player positioning and alignment, and which players may legally block below the waist.

Illegal Equipment

No player shall participate while wearing illegal equipment. This applies to any equipment, which in the opinion of the umpire is dangerous, confusing or inappropriate. The coaches' pregame verification to the referee and umpire that all players are properly equipped in compliance with the rules also includes the exterior helmet warning labels. Coaches should bring casts, braces and other such items to the game officials' attention so that the umpire can inspect the items.

Players should be instructed on how to wear equipment properly, and must wear all mandatory equipment when participating in the game. When a player's equipment becomes damaged during play, it must be corrected before the player may participate further.

Players cannot be allowed to participate in the game, and substitutes cannot be allowed to become players when they are not properly wearing required equipment or when they are wearing illegal equipment. Game officials should not allow players to enter the game or let the ball become live when they observe infractions of the equipment rule. It is not always necessary for a game official to call a foul and penalize a team if game officials are able to make the player and coach aware of the problem so it can be fixed before the ball becomes live.

Sideline Interference

To ensure the safety of all involved, nonplayers, including substitutes, athletic trainers and coaches, must remain in their team box and out of any restricted areas, especially while the ball is live. Nonplayers may never be on the field while the ball is live and may only be on the field when the ball is dead in

limited situations.

In the excitement of the game, it is not uncommon for substitutes and other nonplayers to move closer to the sideline beyond their team box area. This inevitably causes coaches to move up into restricted areas and closer to the field, often impeding game officials in their duties. Crowding at the sideline puts players, nonplayers, coaches and game officials in danger of severe injury. Game officials and coaches must be aware of this problem and take steps to prevent and correct it.

Coaches, substitutes, athletic trainers and others affiliated with the team may be in their team's area, which is out-of-bounds and between the 25-yard lines. Their movements and positions are limited by the sideline, the 25-yard lines, a coaches' area and the team box.

The coaches' area extends at least 2 yards deep out-of-bounds from the sideline. A maximum of three coaches — and only coaches — may be in this area when the ball is dead between plays. However, all coaches must leave this area when the ball is about to become live, such as when the snapper is approaching the ball, and no one may be in this area while the ball is live.

The team box area is outside the field, beyond the restricted area and between the 25-yard lines. All coaches and nonplayers associated with the team may be in this area. A non-player may not be outside of this area unless to become a player or return as a replaced player.

When nonplayers are outside of the team box area, or anyone is in the restricted area while the ball is live, game officials will give a sideline warning to the team involved. A second offense results in a 5-yard penalty. All subsequent offenses result in 15-yard penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, which are charged to the head coach.

If a game official unintentionally contacts a coach or other nonplayer in the restricted area while the ball is live, the team is assessed a 15-yard penalty for a nonplayer, illegal personal contact foul. As a nonplayer foul, the penalty is enforced from the succeeding spot. A second such offense would result in the head coach's disqualification. Unlike a foul for sideline interference (non-contact, Rule 9-8-1k or 9-8-3), no warning or 5-yard penalty is required in this situation. □

QUICK TIP

Keeping the whistle out of the mouth not only helps game officials prevent inadvertent whistles, it also enables them to give verbal instructions. For instance, referees can alert onrushing linemen that the quarterback has passed the ball or the punter has kicked it. "The ball's gone!" is a good officiating technique to prevent injuries to defenseless players. Covering officials can use phrases such as, "That's all," or "He's down," to let players know the play has ended, thus helping prevent late hits.