



# 2013 NFHS FOOTBALL RULES INTERPRETATIONS

**Publisher's Note:** The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.

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**SITUATION 1 (9.4.3):** B54's helmet comes completely off while trying to legally tackle runner A32, who does not immediately go down after the contact with B54. As A32 drags B54 for a few yards, A76, in an attempt to keep A32 from being tackled, contacts (blocks) B54. **RULING:** A76 contacts a helmetless player, therefore, illegal personal contact has occurred and a personal foul shall be called. After the play is over, B54 must leave the field for at least one play. (3-5-10d; 9-4-3l; 9-6-4g)

**SITUATION 2 (9.4.3):** B54's helmet comes completely off while trying to legally tackle runner A32, who continues running after breaking free from B54's grasp. After disengaging, B54 puts his helmet back on, then resumes his pursuit of runner A32. B54 is then contacted (blocked) by A76. **RULING:** B54 should be flagged for an "illegal participation" foul as soon as he resumes his pursuit of the runner, or otherwise participates in the play. No foul should be called on A76. B54 must leave the field for at least one play. **COMMENT:** Since B54 is illegally participating after putting his helmet back on, the game official should assume that A76 is not aware that B54's helmet had come completely off earlier during the play. (3-5-10d; 9-4-3l; 9-6-4g)

**SITUATION 3 (9.6.4):** B54's helmet comes completely off while trying to legally tackle runner A32, who does not immediately go down after the contact. Without ever losing contact, A32 drags B54 for a few yards before finally going down to the ground. **RULING:** Legal play by B54 because he is still engaged in the "immediate action" of attempting to tackle A32.

After the play is over, B54 must leave the field for at least one play. (3-5-10d; 9-6-4g)

**SITUATION 4 (9.6.4):** B54's helmet comes completely off while trying to legally tackle runner A32, who fumbles the ball nearby upon contact. B54, (a) without disengaging, completes his immediate action of attempting to tackle A32; (b) without disengaging, completes his immediate action of attempting to tackle A32, and upon contacting the ground, ends up in possession of the ball that has fallen directly below him; (c) disengages immediately from A32 and tries to recover the fumble; or (d) after bringing A32 down, then attempts to recover the fumble. **RULING:** Legal in (a). In (b), the covering official must decide whether the player disregarded his immediate action of trying to tackle the opponent to that of attempting the separate act of recovering the fumble – if so, then it is illegal participation; if, however, it is judged that he fell on the ball by chance, then it should be ruled a legal recovery. Illegal participation in (c) and (d). In all cases, B54 must leave the field for at least one play. (3-5-10d; 9-6-4g)

## 2013 NFHS Football Rules Book Clarifications

(Underlining shows additions; ~~strikethrough~~ shows deletions.)

**Page 41, Rule 3-4 -Clarification:** When an airborne receiver is carried out of bounds, the clock shall stop unless the receiver is carried out backwards and his forward progress was stopped inbounds.

## Page 53, Rule 6-1-8a:

**ART. 8 . . .** A free kick shall not be kicked out of bounds between the goal lines untouched inbounds by R. If it is, R has the following choices:

- Accept a 5-yard penalty from the previous spot and have K rekick unless Rule 6-5-4 has been invoked.
- Put the ball in play at the inbounds spot 25 yards beyond the previous spot.
- Decline the penalty and put the ball in play at the inbounds spot.

## Page 73, Rule 9-8-1:

**ART. 1 . . .** No coach, substitute, athletic trainer or other team attendant shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner once the game officials assume authority for the contest. Examples are, but not limited to:

- Failure to properly wear legal or required player equipment during a down. See Rule 3-6-2d for failure to properly wear legal or required player equipment when the ball is about to become live.

**PENALTY: Nonplayer foul (Art. 1m) – (S27, S23) – 5 yards.**

## Page 75, RULES 10-1-6, 7:

**ART. 6 . . .** The following fouls by A include loss of the right to replay a down:

- Illegally handing the ball forward.
- Illegal forward pass.
- ~~Forward pass interference.~~
- ~~♣~~ Illegal touching of forward pass by an ineligible.

**ART. 7 . . .** The following fouls by B give A an automatic first down:

- Roughing the kicker or holder.
- Roughing the passer.
- Roughing the snapper.
- ~~Forward pass interference.~~

**Page 83, Rule 5-2-1:**

**5-2-1:** The offensive team shall be awarded a new series of downs when any one of the following occurs:

- ~~a. Penalty for defensive pass interference is accepted.~~
- a. ~~b.~~ Offensive team recovers a scrimmage kick (field-goal attempt) between the goal lines after it has been touched first by the defensive team beyond the neutral zone.
- b. ~~e.~~ Defensive team is guilty of roughing the kicker, place-kick holder, snapper or passer.

**Page 84, 3.1.1 SITUATION P:**

**3.1.1 SITUATION P:** In overtime play with fourth and goal from B's 24-yard line, B1 interferes during a legal forward pass. **RULING:** ~~Fourth~~ First down and goal for A on the 12-yard line if the penalty is accepted.

**2013 NFHS High School Football Rules Simplified and Illustrated**

(Underlining shows additions; ~~striketrough~~ shows deletions.)

**Page 19, 6-5-6 Penalty:**

K commits kick-catching interference (MechaniGram A). If R accepts the foul for kick-catching interference, the 15-yard penalty may be enforced from the spot of the foul. ~~chooses an awarded fair catch, the 15-yard penalty may be enforced from the spot of the awarded fair catch.~~ R may then choose a free kick (MechaniGram B).

**Page 90, 3-3-4b:**

In the MechaniGram – QUARTER ~~NOT~~ EXTENDED FOR UNTIMED DOWN.

In the paragraph – **3-3-4b** ....The period will ~~not~~ be extended with an untimed down if the penalty is accepted. An unsportsmanlike ....

**Page 128, 6-5-6:**

**6-5-6** .... R may choose an awarded fair catch at the spot of the foul with ~~no~~ a 15-yard distance penalty or have the distance penalty enforced from the previous spot and rekick.

**2012 and 2013 NFHS Football Game Officials Manual Clarifications**

(Underlining shows additions; ~~striketrough~~ shows deletions.)

**Page 14, II. UMPIRE:**

~~B. Second-half choices:~~

- ~~— 1. On signal from referee, escort captain(s) to center of field.~~
- ~~— 2. Remain with referee and captains and check on options given teams to ensure accuracy.~~

**Page 14, III. LINESMAN, LINE JUDGE AND BACK JUDGE:**

A. Pregame: ~~and start of second half:~~

**Page 14, IV. ALL GAME OFFICIALS:**

B. Second-half choices:

- ~~1. Use same mechanic as used for pregame.~~

- ~~1. The game official – escorting the team with the second-half choice – obtains from that team's head coach its second-half choice and communicates same to the referee.~~
- ~~2. The referee then obtains the opposing team's response to the second-half choice team's choice from the game official escorting that team.~~
- ~~3. 2.~~ After choices are completed, come together at center of field for any final instructions.
- ~~4. 3.~~ Hustle to kickoff positions. Linesman, umpire and judge(s) clear sidelines before going to kickoff position.
- ~~5. Following the mandatory three-minute warm-up period after the halftime intermission expires, both teams assume their respective free-kick formations.~~

**Page 31, KEYS AND PRIORITY OF KEYS – "STRENGTH TO L's SIDE" DIAGRAM:**

Delete the Diagram on the bottom of the page 31. The text description is correct.

**Page 32, KEYS AND PRIORITY OF KEYS – "DOUBLE WING, OR ANY FORMATION WITH TWO RECEIVERS EACH SIDE" DIAGRAM:**

Delete the Diagram on the bottom of the page 32. The text description is correct.