

TO: OHSAA Football Officials

FROM: Bruce Maurer, DOD & Beau Rugg, Director of Officiating & Sports Management

Subject: FB Bulletin - Week 1; 8/18/21

Thank you Very Much for your incredible dedication to the youth of Ohio. Indicated below are some items that have arisen during State Rules Interpretation (SRI) Meetings & at Local Officials Association Meetings. These Rulings supersede any previous ones issued.

1. Rule 1 – Player Equipment: Check the players before the game for any illegal equipment & required equipment. Let's get it straight Week 1 so all teams are on the "same page". Remember, there is no foul for illegal equipment.
2. OHSAA SRI Meetings: Officials can attend face-to-face meetings and receive credit for 2 meetings. Over 700 officials took advantage of these highly informative mini clinics in Athens, Cleveland, Columbus, Findlay, Hamilton, New Philadelphia, Orrville, Toledo, & Wapakoneta. A BIG thank you to the Associations who "stepped up to the plate" & helped us. Approximately half the time was devoted to video review & discussion.
3. COVID & Dressing Facilities – Varsity Games Only: A. **Crews** can have their pregame anywhere they feel safe – in the parking lot, off site, or at the school. Each **Crew** will make this decision. And where they have their pregame can change from week to week depending on the available school facilities. B. the **Crew** can come dressed, can dress in the parking lot (similar to LAX, BB, SB), can come partially dressed, or can dress somewhere in the school facilities. C. the **Crew** will contact the AD the week of the game & determine the viability of using the school locker room usually assigned to the officials or instead, use a gym, wrestling room, classroom, or some other suitable facility that is made available by the AD, or not use any school facility. D. The only requirement is the **Crew** must enter the field dressed approximately 40 minutes prior to the KO time (Gold Book, P. 49) & commence meeting with the Coaches 35 minutes before KO.
4. OHSAA POE for 2021: A. Legality of Low Blocks by A & B; B. Player Conduct; C. Ineligible Receivers Illegally Downfield on RPO Plays. Please discuss this week.
5. Rule 2-28-2: There have been questions on pass plays from the +1 yard line as it relates to the Expanded Neutral Zone. We consulted with the NFHS office and the definition should say "field" not "field of play". Thus the expanded neutral zone may extend into B's EZ.
6. Field of Play (2-10-2) & Neutral Zone Expanded (2-28-2): Ball is snapped at the + 1 YL, QB A10 rolls out to pass, & ineligible A 56 & A72 are clearly more than 2 YDS beyond the Neutral Zone in the End Zone before the pass is thrown. Pass is complete to A81, 5 YDS deep in the End Zone. Ruling: Ineligibles Illegally Downfield, 5 YD Penalty.

7. Blind Side Blocks: Please read the Rules carefully as we have heard comments that are not part of the Rule. There are 5 criteria that must be met to call a BSB Foul: 1. Outside the Free Blocking Zone; 2. Not with Open Hand (s); 3. Forceful; 4. Not against the Runner (Check Rule 2 – how is the Runner defined); & 5. Out of the Visual Field of the Opponent. Check 9-4-3n – “unless initiated with open hands” which is a legal block.
8. Gold Book, P. 41 – 43: Do you consider yourself & your **Crew** as contenders or pretenders? Through self-study & **Crew** discussion, we must all have a thorough knowledge of the Rules Philosophies. Learn these 3 pages just like you learn & understand the RB, CB, & GB. Pick a Section & discuss it weekly at your pre game.
9. **Crew Communication:** It is imperative that the entire **Crew** be aware of the GC, especially late in the 2Q & 4Q. The GC was running & Encroachment was called. The Timer did not stop the GC even though all 5 officials signaled time-out. The score was tied 21 – 21. Ten seconds ran off the GC before the Timer stopped the GC.
10. **Game Control:** We are paid to Control the game. It is one of our highest priorities when we officiate the game. The Gold Book - Mechanics, Section 17, Game Management, gives us the authority to suspend players if their behavior warrants it. Please use it.
11. **BJ IP:** On run/pass plays between the + 15 YL & +10 YL– do you know your IP? Please review P.18, # 26 B-4. Remember the **BJ** has responsibility for the GL in this situation.
12. **ENFORCE THE RESTRICTED AREA BEGINNING WITH THE OPENING KO!!!!**
13. Comments to Players: Be careful what you say to players, especially regarding their skills as a player that does not involve a possible Rule infraction. A popular saying in officiating is “You Can’t Misquote Silence”. An official made a comment to the long snapper about his ability to snap the ball to another player.
14. Ejection Reports: Please be specific regarding the actions, language, & behavior. The Official who DQ’s the person MUST file the report online with OHSAA within 24 hours and contact the school AD.
15. Reminder: UNS Fouls are Non-Contact Fouls while Personal Fouls are contact.
16. Concussion: When a player has signs or symptoms of a concussion he/she is suspended from the game & may not reenter, even if a doctor says he/she is “okay”. When any player is injured, bring available medical personnel on the field. Let them do their job first, then check with them regarding the player. Obviously when there are no doctors or trainers on site then we must make the decision.
17. Knee Pads: The knee pad does not have to be part of the pant. However, the pants must cover the knee pad & the pads must cover the knee.
18. Officials Dress: All officials must wear the same uniform for Varsity Games Only.
19. NFHS Rules Book: Delete PP. 85 - 88 regarding OT. OHSAA starts the OT from the + 20 YL. (Remember in Ohio we play OT in Varsity Games ONLY).
20. Sunglasses: Yes, you can wear sunglasses during any game.

Best of luck this weekend. We appreciate all you do for the youth in Ohio who love playing this Great Game.