

TO: OHSAA Football Officials

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

Subject: FB Bulletin - Week 1; 8/17/22

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. Local Association MTGS & Pre Game Crew MTGS: We are getting too many reports of officials spending too much time on things that rarely happen. INSTEAD, we need to be “Spending Most of Our Time on Things That Happen Most Often in Our Games”!!
2. 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. **Players simply may not play if they are not properly equipped.**
3. OHSAA SRI Meetings: Officials can attend face-to-face meetings and receive credit for 2 meetings. Over 850 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.  
**NOTE:** Due to unforeseen circumstances with a power outage the Monday NE District SRI Meeting at Brooklyn HS has been rescheduled for M August 22, 630pm.
4. OHSAA POE for 2022: A. Legality of Low Blocks by A & B; B. Ineligible Receivers Illegally Downfield on RPO Plays; C. Penalty Enforcement – Fouls on Kicking Plays & Carry Over Fouls on Scoring Plays. Please discuss this week.
5. New Intentional Grounding (ING) Rule (7-5-2): If in doubt, the pass has reached the neutral zone. If in doubt, the passer is beyond the lateral boundary of the Free Blocking Zone (FBZ). Once You Are Out You Are Out – If the passer runs beyond the lateral boundary of the FBZ & then returns inside the FBZ, he/she can legally throw a pass that reaches the neutral zone (NZ) with no receiver in the area. If, in the opinion of the officials, a pass would have reached the NZ or NZ extended, but the pass is hit by someone & knocked down short of the NZ or NZ extended, it has reached the NZ. Yes, Ineligibles Illegally Downfield (Rule 7-5-12) still applies to the new ING Rule.
6. New ING Rule (7-5-2): When the passer is contacted while they are in the act of passing the ball, the requirement for the ball reaching the NZ & the passer being outside the “tackle box” is moot. This is similar to the note in 2-31-2 on the direction of the pass. There is no ING Foul. If in doubt, the offensive player is in the act of passing.

7. New Sub Varsity Punt Rule (GB P. 38. # 211): During the Pregame Conference, if either HC indicates his/her team does not have a punter, bring both HC's together. Let them discuss what they want to do. Ask them questions such as if the FB is located on the +35 YL or inside the + 35 YL. It is the coaches' decision as to what to do. This is very rare as Bruce asked over 450 officials at SRI MTGS about this & only one official had it. There is no need to ask the HC's in their pregame meeting if they have a punter.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. **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 17 – 17. Eight seconds ran off the GC before the Timer stopped the GC.
11. **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.
12. **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.
13. **ENFORCE THE RESTRICTED AREA BEGINNING WITH THE OPENING KO!!!!**
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. Reminder: UNS Fouls are Non-Contact Fouls while Personal Fouls are Contact Fouls.
17. 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.

18. Team Box Extended: AD's must contact Beau Rugg & gain his approval to extend both Team Boxes from the 25 YL's to the 10 YL's. If he approves, he will forward a letter which must be presented at the Pre Game Conference. Coaches are NOT allowed in the "Extension". Teams must still huddle during time-outs between the 25 YL's. (Rule 2-6).
19. OHSAA Logo: The "old" OHSAA logo that we wear on our shirt & hat will remain as the official OHSAA Officiating Logo. We will Not have to purchase new gear.
20. 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.
21. 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.
22. Officials Dress: All officials must wear the same uniform for Varsity Games Only.
23. NFHS Rules Book: Delete PP. 86 - 89 regarding OT. OHSAA starts the OT from the + 20 YL. (Remember in Ohio we play OT in Varsity Games ONLY). OT is in the Gold Book.
24. Sunglasses: Yes, you can wear sunglasses during any game.
25. FG/Try-Kick Mechanics **CJ** IP (6 Person): The **CJ** can move back 10 YDS from the Holder rather than 8 YDS if he/she thinks 8 YDS is too close. Your IP is still 5 YDS wide.

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