

2023 Official Football Instant Replay Rules

of the

Ohio High School Athletic Association



Adopted: October 2019

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Article I. Replay specific definitions

Section 1.01 Replay Personnel

- (a) Replay Official – The lead official in the replay booth.
- (b) Replay Assistant – The official in the replay booth that assists the Replay Official with communication, rulings, and administrative information in the replay booth.
- (c) Video Operator – The person in the booth responsible for capturing video information and video replays as they become available from the television broadcast.

Note: All Replay Personnel will be assigned by the Ohio High School Athletic Association to serve in their assigned function(s) for each game in which Instant Replay will be utilized.

Section 1.02 Replay Booth – The designated area within the football stadium where Instant Replay video equipment is located and the area from which the Replay Official, Replay Assistant, and Video Operator all operate. The Replay Booth shall be:

- (a) Located onsite at the football stadium in which the game is being played;
- (b) Located in the press box area as near to the 50-yard line as possible with an unobstructed view of the playing field;
- (c) Unoccupied by any personnel during the game except for those named in Article I, Section 1.01 unless prior authorization is granted by both the OHSAA and the Replay Official.

Section 1.03 Replay Booth technology

- (a) Instant Replay system. This system will provide the ability to pause, rewind, fast forward, and do slow motion forward and backward of all video that is transmitted via the normal broadcast (television broadcast) of the football contest. This system will consist of a dedicated monitor to allow the Replay Official to determine the outcome of an Instant Replay review.
- (b) Instant Replay Assistant monitor. This monitor will have a constant view of the line feed (television broadcast) that will be positioned near the Replay Assistant. This monitor is utilized to assist the Replay Personnel with decisions during the replay process.

Article II. Initiation of an Instant Replay Review

Section 2.01 A replay review may be initiated by the following methods:

- (a) Replay Official request for a review.
 - (i) *These reviews can only be initiated by the Replay Official by sending a request to the field to stop the game.*
 - (ii) *Replay Official request for review may only be initiated if the ruling falls under the approved categories in Article IV.*
- (b) Automatic reviews – The following plays automatically initiate the replay process:
 - (i) *Touchdown;*
 - (ii) *Unsuccessful or Successful 2pt PAT;*
 - (iii) *Unsuccessful or Successful 1pt TRY;*
 - (iv) *Successful Field Goal;*
 - (v) *Turnover; this includes fumbles, interceptions, and failure to make the line to gain on 4th down;*
 - (vi) *Muffed punts that are awarded to the kicking team;*
 - (vii) *Onside kick awarded to the kicking team*
- (c) Egregious error reviews – The following plays will only be reviewed when the result of the play, had it been ruled correctly, would have an immediate and obvious impact to the game. The game situation and the competitive effect of the ruling on the field will govern if the play is reviewed by the Replay Official.
 - (i) *Line to gain corrections. These corrections can be either awarding a team a first down when the ruling on the field was short of the line to gain or reversing to short of the line to gain when the ruling on the field was a first down.*
 - (ii) *Kicker/Passer beyond the line of scrimmage. These corrections are made when a player was beyond the line of scrimmage prior to throwing a pass or kicking the ball.*
 - (iii) *Kickoff Out of Bounds. A ball that has been kicked and prior to player possession touches a boundary line may be reviewed and changed to a kickoff out bounds. Also, a ball that has been kicked and is possessed by a player prior to touching out of bounds that is ruled on the field as a kickoff out of bounds may be reversed to no foul.*
 - (iv) *Players out of bounds. A player who steps out of bounds, either while possessing or prior to possessing the ball, may be reviewed.*
 - (v) *Fair catch signal and subsequent return. A player who signals for a fair catch signal and then allowed to return the kick is reviewable. There must be clear evidence that a player on the receiving team signaled for a fair catch prior to the return.*
 - (vi) *Down by contact and out of bounds. A player in possession of the ball who is not ruled down or out bounds may be reviewed and corrected.*
 - (vii) *Runner ruled down incorrectly. A player who is ruled down but has lost possession of the ball may be reviewed and corrected when the subsequent recovery of the loose ball is done in the immediate continuing action of the play.*

(viii) Direction of a pass. If the ruling on the field is a fumble and the pass is clearly forward, the call on the field will be reversed. If the ruling on the field is a pass and the pass is clearly backward and the ball is recovered by the defense in the immediate continuing action of the play or goes out of bounds, there will be a review.

Article III. Replay Reviews

Section 3.01 Replay reviews are conducted by the Replay Official. The review of the Replay Official and subsequent ruling is final and are not subject to a second review once the final decision has been made.

- (a) Changing a Ruling. An on-field ruling will be changed when the Replay Official determines that there was clear and obvious video evidence to warrant a change.
- (b) Length of Review. Once the Referee begins the process of discussion with the Replay Official, all efforts will be made to conduct the replay review process in less than 2 minutes.
- (c) Scope of Review. Once the Replay Official initiates the review process, all reviewable aspects of a play in Article IV may be subject to change as a result of that review.

Article IV. Reviewable Aspects

Section 4.01 The Replay Review process will cover the following play situations:

- (a) Possession;
- (b) Plays governed by the goal line;
- (c) Scoring plays;
- (d) Plays governed by the boundary lines;
- (e) Plays governed by the line of scrimmage;
- (f) Plays governed by the line to gain;
- (g) Number of players participating during a live ball;
- (h) Game administration items, such as:
 - (i) Penalty enforcement*
 - (ii) Proper down*
 - (iii) Spot of a foul*
 - (iv) Status of the game clock*
- (i) Other reviewable plays.

Section 4.02 Plays involving possession

- (a) Completion of a pass. Whether a pass was complete or incomplete
 - (i) *If a ruling of incomplete was changed to a catch, the ball will be placed at the spot where it was when the receiver completed the process of the catch with no advance awarded.*
 - (ii) *If an incomplete pass was subsequently caught and then fumbled with a recovery by the other team, the play is reviewable if the ball is recovered by the defense in the immediate continuing action.*
- (b) Recovery of a loose ball. Whether a player legally recovered a loose ball in the field of play, at the sideline, goal line, or in the end zone.
- (c) Forward Pass or Fumble. Whether a passers hand started forward with control of the ball, or whether the ball was fumbled.
 - (i) *If the ruling on the field is a fumble changed to an incomplete pass, the ball will be returned to the previous spot and the down advanced (unless a penalty is present).*
 - (ii) *If the ruling on the field is an incomplete pass, no replay review will be initiated.*
- (d) Fumble. Whether a runner lost possession before the player was down by contact.
 - (i) *A ruling on the field of a fumble awarded to the defense will always be reviewed by an automatic booth review. If the ruling on the field is changed to down by contact, the ball will be placed at the spot the runner was down, and all other facets of the play are enforced (fouls, line to gain, etc.).*
 - (ii) *A ruling on the field of down by contact may be reviewed pending that the recovery of the loose ball by is in the immediate continuing action of the play.*

Section 4.03 Plays governed by the goal line

- (a) Ball breaking the plan of the goal line. Whether any part of the ball broke the plane of the goal line while the ball was in player possession and before the ball should have been declared dead by rule.
 - (i) *A ruling of a touchdown can be reviewed to determine if the runner fumbled before the ball broke the plane of the goal line. If the ruling on the field is a touchdown, and it is clear the ball was not in player possession prior to the ball breaking the plane of the goal line, the down will count, and the ball will be placed at the spot of the fumble.*
 - (ii) *A ruling of a safety can be reviewed to determine if the runner with possession of the ball got the entire ball out of the end zone. If it is determined that the ball did get outside of the endzone, and the ruling on the field was a safety, the ball will be placed at the dead ball spot and the down will count.*
- (b) Momentum. Whether a player's momentum spot was in the field of play or in the end zone.
 - (i) *For purposes of a replay review, the momentum spot will be deemed to be the location of the football when the first foot or body part contacts the ground and possession is established. When video evidence is not clear as to the location of the football, the ruling on the field will stand.*

Section 4.04 Scoring plays.

All scoring plays, and plays that should have resulted in a score, are reviewable by the replay official. The plays include: touchdowns, safeties, point after touchdown attempts, and field goals/extra point PAT.

- (a) Touchdowns. The ruling on the field of a touchdown is always reviewed by the replay official and have the same guidelines as all plays governed by the goal line in Section 4.03.
- (b) Safeties. The ruling of a safety on the field is always reviewed by the replay official. For the call to be overturned, there must be clear evidence that the entire ball was outside of the goal line when the ball became dead by rule.
- (c) PAT attempts. Two-point conversions are reviewable by the replay official and have the same guidelines as all plays governed by the goal line in Section 4.03.
- (d) Field Goals/Extra Point PAT. Field goal and 1-pt Try attempts are reviewed by the replay official to determine if the ball passed between the uprights and above the crossbar of the field goal posts. Kicks that pass over top of the uprights are not reviewable by the Replay Official.

Section 4.05 Plays governed by the boundary lines.

- (a) Runner inbounds. A ruling that a runner was out of bounds is reviewable only to determine:
 - (i) *The spot of the ball in relation to the line to gain or the goal line at the spot where the runner was ruled to have touched out of bounds;*
 - (ii) *if the ball broke the plane of the goal line in the runner's possession in the immediate continuing action from where the player was ruled out of bounds.*
- (b) Receiver out of bounds. Whether a receiver touched out of bounds is reviewable to determine whether the player was eligible to touch the ball and whether a defender could legally contact the receiver.
- (c) Passer out of bounds before throwing a pass. A ruling that a player stepped out of bounds before throwing a pass is not reviewable to determine if the player was in bounds when the pass was thrown.
- (d) Loose ball. Whether a loose ball touched a boundary line anything on the boundary line, a pylon, an object, or an official who is touching the boundary line. If the ruling on the field is that the ball touched the boundary line is incorrect, the play may only be reviewed if it is recovered in the immediate continuing action of the play, otherwise the play is not reviewable.

Section 4.06 Plays governed by the line of scrimmage

- (a) Illegal passes. Whether a forward pass was thrown when the passer was on the line of scrimmage, or after the ball had crossed the line of scrimmage and returned behind it.
- (b) Illegal kick. Whether a scrimmage kick was from beyond the line of scrimmage, or a second kick was made after the ball had crossed the line of scrimmage.

Section 4.07 Plays governed by the line to gain.

- (a) The dead ball spot is reviewable to determine whether it was short of, at, or beyond the line to gain.
 - (i) *For purposes of a replay review, forward progress is determined when a player with control of the ball is controlled by an opponent and driven backwards.*
 - (ii) *The dead ball spot is not reviewable to determine whether the ball should be closer to or further from the line to gain. If the play is reviewed and is determined that no change to the ruling on the field is warranted, the ball will ~~not~~ be moved closer to or further from the line to gain.*

Section 4.08 Number of players participating during a live ball.

- (a) Whether or not the offense, defense, kicking or receiving team had more than 11 players participating on the field during the down in which the ball becomes live.

Section 4.09 Game Administration.

The replay officiating crew may consult with the on-field officials, or conduct a replay review, of game administration issues that arise. These issues may include:

- (a) Penalty enforcement. During the enforcement of a penalty, replay staff may correct improper enforcement of a penalty. This includes stopping the game to correct if the subsequent down is about to begin prior to the correction. Reviewable aspects include the down, yardage, offending player (in case of Unsportsmanlike or Disqualification), and the spot of the foul.
- (b) Proper down; At any time during the series, and prior to the snap of the next series, replay staff may correct the down on the field. This includes stopping the game to correct to the proper down if the subsequent down is about to begin prior to the correction.
- (c) Spot of a foul; During the game, replay staff may assist the on-field officials with the proper location of a foul.

- (d) Game clock. The game clock is reviewable only at the end of the 2nd and 4th quarters, and only for the purpose of restoring time to the clock, or for determining that a play was run when time had expired.
- (i) *Time may be restored to the game clock if the clock operator incorrectly starts the game clock when it should remain stopped, provided that the correction occurs before the next legal snap or kick.*
 - (ii) *An on field ruling that time expired during or after the last play of any half is reviewable only when the visual evidence is sufficient to show that there was still time remaining on the clock when the ball became dead by either rule, or by an official's signal. Time shall only be restored in the 4th quarter if the team that will next snap the ball from scrimmage is trailing by eight points or less, or by either team if the score is tied.*
 - (iii) *The game clock is reviewable if there is visual evidence that the clock had expired prior to the ball becoming live. This review is only valid for the last play of the 2nd or 4th quarters.*

Section 4.10 Other reviewable plays.

See Article II, Section 2.01 C for Egregious Error plays that may be reviewed.

Article V. Non-Reviewable plays

There are some plays that are not reviewable. Those plays are as follows:

Section 5.01 Judgement Plays

- (a) Erroneous whistle sounded.
- (b) Intentional grounding
- (c) Illegal bat or Illegal kick
- (d) Illegal blocks
- (e) Ineligible receiver(s) downfield
- (f) Pass Interference, offensive or defensive
- (g) Any aspect of a play that is not specifically mentioned in Article IV.

Article VI. Fouls

In some cases, the changing of the ruling on the field could result in a foul being negated or created.

Section 6.01 Foul nullified by ruling on the field change.

A foul will be nullified when a required aspect of that foul is changed by the Replay Official. (Example: Ruling on the field is defensive pass interference but it is determined in replay that the QB had a knee on the ground prior to releasing the forward pass)

Section 6.02 Foul created by ruling on the field change.

A foul may be created when a required aspect of that foul is changed by the Replay Official. (Example: The ruling on the field is that a player recovered the kick-off near the boundary and carried it out of bounds. In replay, it is determined the ball hit out of bounds prior to the player touching or possessing the kick... kick off out of bounds foul)

Article VII. Loss of Communication and/or Video

The possibility of technical difficulties is possible within the replay system. The following rules apply:

Section 7.01 Loss of video communication to Replay equipment.

Upon loss of video communication to the Replay system, the Replay staff will notify the on-field officials that the replay system is currently down. The Replay Official may still assist the on-field officials with administrative information that does not require video support. Upon loss of communications, the Referee will notify both coaches of the absence of Video Replay assistance. Once video is restored, replay staff will notify the Referee the system has been restored.

Section 7.02 Loss of audio communication with on-field officials

Upon loss of audio communications with the on-field officials, replay staff will attempt to reach alternate officials/sideline assistants through alternative means to notify the Referee of the outage. If a play needs to be reviewed during this time, the on-field officials are authorized to use alternative communication devices to conduct the review.