



2025 Football Memo – Week 11

October 29, 2025

Mechanics for Obvious Onside Kicks

NFHS onside kick mechanics require a crew to anticipate the play and cover responsibilities based on the crew size and the location of the kick. Officials must be aware of mechanics concerning the situation, use your Football IQ, and be focused on implementing the following:

1. Chain Wing hands the ball to the kicker, Away Wing opposite side on kicking line
2. In **all onside kick situations**, treat the kickers restraining line like a pane of glass and enforce encroachment
3. (K) initial touch, if short of 10 yards, it is not a foul, it is first touching
4. Ensure the football travels 10 yards
5. Is touched by the receiving team (R) before K can legally recover or block
6. Observe and rule on a potential “pop-up” kick. A pop-up kick is defined as a kick driven straight into the ground, strikes the ground once, and then goes into the air in a manner of a ball kicked off a tee. The threshold for the ball's height in the air is that the ball cannot go higher than the heads of the receiving team's players.

NOTE = Deep kick situations (non-onside kick situations) We want to avoid being over officious and too technical on deep kick (non-onside kick) situations. Encroachment shall be penalized when the torso is in, or foot/leg is past the kicker's restraining line.

Specific responsibilities for the Back Judge and Umpire (Co5) or Side Judge and Field Judge (Co7), involve controlling the restraining line, watching for first touches, and ensuring the kick travels the required distance. Back Judge and Umpire on (Co7) line up opposite each other in between the kicking line and the restraining line. Officials on the sideline where the football is coming towards you, you have the **“touches”**. Officials on the opposite sideline where the football is going away from you, you have the **“blocks”**.

Muff vs Fumble

NFHS rules state that a fumble is the loss of possession by a player who previously had control of the ball, while a muff is an unsuccessful attempt to gain possession of a loose ball. It is important to know the difference when making a ruling. Remember that a fumble is a live ball that can be advanced by either team. A muffed punt is a dead ball when recovered by the kicking team and cannot advance the ball. If the receiving team recovers a muffed punt they can advance the ball.



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Two-Minute End of Half Timing

Rule 3-4-7: When a foul is committed with less than two minutes remaining in either half, the offended team will have the option to start the game clock on the snap. After enforcement of the penalty, the clock starts on the snap, the offended team DOES NOT have the option to have the game clock start on the RFP. The rule applies only when the game clock is to start on the RFP - the offended team can have the start of the game clock delayed to the snap.

3.4.7 SITUATION A: With time expiring inside the last two minutes in the second or fourth period and A behind in the score, A1 intentionally throws the ball forward to the ground in order to stop the game clock. A1's action took place: (a) immediately after receiving the snap while A1 was lined up 3 yards deep; or (b) immediately after receiving the snap; or (c) after A1 delayed and throws an illegal forward pass.

RULING: In (a) and (b), the grounding is legal, and the game clock remains stopped until the subsequent snap. Illegal forward pass in (c), and the game clock shall be started on the ready-for-play signal unless Team B chooses to start the game clock on the snap. (7-5-2d EXCEPTION)

3.4.7 SITUATION B: With less than a minute remaining in the game, the score is 21-20 in favor of B. The game clock is running, and the ball is on B's 10-yard line. An option play on third down gains 5 yards but is short of a first down. Following the tackle, the tackler B1 holds A1 down for a few moments, but the covering official does not judge the action to be illegal.

RULING: Though B1 may have held A1 down momentarily, the game clock will continue to run because no foul was called.

COMMENT: In some situations, there is a delay in un-piling, and no individual player or team is to blame. In such situations the referee is authorized to stop the game clock momentarily so no more clock time than normal is used in getting the ball ready for play. (3-4-3h)

3.4.7 SITUATION C: With less than a minute remaining in the game, Team B trails 21-20. B1 commits a holding foul during the down. Following the play, A2 commits an unsportsmanlike conduct foul.

RULING: The fouls are administered separately and in order of occurrence. In addition, Team A is given the choice of starting the game clock on the snap. If Team A declines to start the game clock on the snap, Team B is then given the option of starting the game clock on the snap. With Team B trailing, Team B will likely choose to start the game clock on the snap. (10-1-3)

3.4.7 SITUATION D: Team B is trailing with less than two minutes remaining in the game. On third down, A53 commits a holding foul and Team A is stopped short of the line to gain inbounds.

RULING: Whether or not B accepts A's foul for holding, B may choose to start the clock on the snap. (3-6-1)



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Game Clock

Tenths of a second should not be used in the timing of a football game. Football is to be timed in full seconds only. As a crew chief, you should before the start of the game verify with game management and timers that tenths shall not be used on the game clock. Most of the timing systems can toggle off the tenths of a second setting. In the event the game clock cannot have the tenths shut off and the clock is displaying tenths and the crew has definitive knowledge of the time on the game clock when a player or head coach calls for the time out, it should be granted. Again, this is **ONLY** with definitive knowledge of the time on the game clock. Without the tenths displaying, the game clock would display 1 second. It would be only when the clock showed 0:00 time would be expired. Game clock with tenths of a second displayed, shall never be reset into tenths of a second. Only full seconds in a game clock reset in football.

9-Man Differences

Rule 1: Each team has nine players.

Rule 2: The free-blocking zone is a square area extending laterally 3 yards either side of the spot of the snap and 3 yards behind the line of scrimmage.

Rule 6: K is required to have at least three players on each side of the kicker.

Rule 7: a. At least three A players shall be on the line at the snap and may have any legal jersey number.

b. Each A player (regardless of jersey number) who at the snap was on the end of the scrimmage line (total of two) and each A player who was at the snap was legally behind the scrimmage line (maximum of four) is eligible. There are no numbering requirements.

Umpires, it is good practice to write the lineman numbers on your card to help keep track of the lineman when ruling ineligible players downfield.

Quarterfinal Crew Chief Zoom Meeting from Tuesday 10/28/25

A Zoom Crew Chief session was held on Tuesday 10/28/25. We reviewed selected plays that covered blocks below the waist, free kicks, and enforcing dead-ball fouls after A has reached the LTG. Please consult with your crew chief about the plays and incorporate them into your pregame preparation. The plays that were discussed can be found here, with play narratives in the description:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2uQm8IOZdPsKhJJnfPgBqZLEem9frBnG>



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Quarterfinal Official Assignments

Below are the crew assignments for the **quarterfinal round of the football playoffs**. Crew chiefs should ensure their crews are entered into **Bound** as soon as possible. In addition, the crew chief should contact the **Athletic Director of the home school** to confirm start times and coordinate any other necessary game details. Thank you all for your continued professionalism and commitment throughout the season. Your dedication and support play a vital role in the success of high school football across the state.

Date	Visitors	Home	Class	Official
30-Oct	Corsica Stickney	St, Mary's	9B	Van Heerde, Steve - Estelline
30-Oct	SF Lutheran	Avon	9B	Boone, Colin - Sioux Falls
30-Oct	Herreid-Selby Area	Colman-Egan	9B	Fiegen, Ed - Madison
30-Oct	Sully Buttes	Faulkton Area	9B	Jondahl, Tanner - Aberdeen
30-Oct	Castlewood	Wall	9A	Distel, Brett - Box Elder
30-Oct	Howard	Warner	9A	Cantine, Kevin - Milbank
30-Oct	Platte-Geddes	Alcester-Hudson	9A	Hoeke, Scott - Brookings
30-Oct	Ipswich	Philip	9A	Besler, Scott - Reva
30-Oct	Kimball/White Lake	Freeman/Marion/Freeman Academy	9AA	King, Mike - Irene
30-Oct	Hanson	Elkton-Lake Benton	9AA	Riswold, Steve - Sioux Falls
30-Oct	Bon Homme	Parkston	9AA	Duffy, Terry - Brookings
30-Oct	Hamlin	Hill City	9AA	Olson, Alan - Belle Fourche
30-Oct	Sioux Valley	Elk Point Jefferson	11B	Beukelman, Dale - Sioux Falls
30-Oct	Mt. Vernon-Plankinton	St. Thomas More	11B	Tucker, Bradley - Rapid City
30-Oct	Winner	Clark/Willow Lake	11B	Ochsner, Scott - Tea
30-Oct	Wagner	Deuel	11B	Whetham, Brian - Garretson
30-Oct	Rapid City Chrisitan	SF Christian	11A	Mayer, Steve - Vermillion
30-Oct	Milbank	Dell Rapids	11A	Schoenfelder, Steve - Mitchell
30-Oct	Tri-Valley	Lennox	11A	Frederiksen, Joe - Brookings
30-Oct	West Central	Madison	11A	Beers, Jerry - Brookings
30-Oct	Spearfish	Yankton	11AA	Ricketts, Jr., James - Sioux Falls
30-Oct	Brookings	Huron	11AA	Gordon, Chad - Sioux Falls
30-Oct	Tea Area	Pierre T.F. Riggs	11AA	Stanton, Randy - Rapid City
30-Oct	Watertown	Sturgis Brown	11AA	Jacobson, Joe - Rapid City
30-Oct	SF Roosevelt	Brandon Valley	11 AAA	Reisdorfer, Jason - Sioux Falls
30-Oct	Rapid City Central	SF Lincoln	11 AAA	Penisten, Tom - Sioux Falls
30-Oct	SF Washinton	SF Jefferson	11 AAA	Ohme, Derek - Sioux Falls
30-Oct	Harrisburg	O'Gorman	11 AAA	Perrion, Micheal - Sioux Falls
31-Oct	ANFC #4	Winnebago, NE	ANFC - A	
31-Oct	ANFC #3	Todd County	ANFC - A	Kludt, Randy - Winner
31-Oct	ANFC #4	McLaughlin	ANFC - B	Rounds, Steve - Pierre
31-Oct	ANFC #3	White River	ANFC - B	Young, Louis - Fort Pierre



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Ability to officiate is the ability to concentrate.

For suggestions, feedback, and comments, please feel free to contact.

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