

# Interpretations

A rule interpretation, or approved ruling (A.R.), is an official decision on a given statement of facts. It serves to illustrate the spirit and application of the rule.

Approved Rulings relating to Rules 1 and 11-13 can be found within those rules.

## RULE 2. Definitions

### SECTION 2. The Ball: Live, Dead, Loose

#### Catch, Interception, Recovery—ARTICLE 7

##### Approved Ruling 2-2-7

- I. B1 attempts to catch a punt (no fair catch signal) that crosses the neutral zone and strikes his shoulder (a muff) and bounces into the air. The ball does not touch the ground and airborne A1 receives the ball in flight and first returns to the ground out of bounds. **RULING:** Team B's ball at the spot where the ball crossed the sideline. First and 10.
- II. On third down, B1 blocks a Team A scrimmage kick that goes into the air and does not cross the neutral zone. The ball does not touch the ground and A1 jumps and receives the ball in flight and first returns to the ground out of bounds. **RULING:** Team B's ball at the spot where the ball crossed the sideline. First and 10.
- III. Airborne A3 receives a pass at Team A's 40-yard line. As he receives the ball, he is contacted by B1 and comes to the ground out of bounds with the ball at Team A's 37-yard line. **RULING:** Incomplete pass (Rule 7-3-7-a).
- IV. On second down, A1 fumbles the ball, which strikes the ground and bounces high in the air. B2 receives the ball while off the ground and returns to the ground out of bounds (a) in advance of the spot of the fumble or (b) behind the spot of the fumble. **RULING:** (a) Team A's ball at the spot of the fumble. (b) Team A's ball at the spot where the ball crossed the sideline (Rule 4-2-4-e).
- V. A1 fumbles the ball, which strikes the ground and bounces high into the air. B1 receives the ball while off the ground and returns to the ground inbounds. **RULING:** Team B's ball at the spot where Team B recovered the fumble; ball continues in play.

### SECTION 3. Blocking

#### Chop Block—ARTICLE 3

##### Approved Ruling 2-3-3

- I. On a forward pass play, A75 is blocking B66 behind the neutral zone. While A75 maintains contact, A47 subsequently blocks B66 at his thigh. **RULING:** Chop block. Previous-spot enforcement.
- II. As the flow of the play moves to the left, right tackle A77 is disengaging from his contact with B50 when A27 blocks B50 at his knee. **RULING:** Chop block. Basic-spot enforcement. Previous-spot enforcement if the foul occurs behind the neutral zone.
- III. Immediately following the snap, left guard A65 and left tackle A79 simultaneously block B66, who is in the neutral zone. (a) Both contacts are at the thigh. (b) One contact is at the waist and the other at the knee. **RULING:** (a) Legal blocks. (b) Legal blocks.
- IV. Tight end A87 and wingback A43 are leading the play when both simultaneously block linebacker B17, who is three yards beyond the neutral zone. (a) Both blocks are above the waist. (b) One block is above the waist and the other at the knee. **RULING:** (a) Legal blocks. (b) Chop block. Basic-spot enforcement.

## SECTION 11. Lines

### Goal Lines—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 2-11-1

- I. Team A's untouched scrimmage kick strikes the ground in the field of play and breaks the plane of Team B's goal line. While the ball is in the air, A81, who is on the one-yard line, bats the ball into the field of play. **RULING:** Violation. Team B's option: touchback or possession of the ball where declared dead (*Exception:* Rule 8-4-2-b).

### Restraining Lines—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 2-11-2

- I. A free kick breaks the plane of Team B's restraining line. While the ball is in the air, A1, who is behind Team B's restraining line, touches the ball. **RULING:** Legal touching (Rule 6-1-3-b).

## SECTION 15. Kicks

### Place Kick—ARTICLE 4

#### Approved Ruling 2-15-4

- I. On a free kick to start a game, the kicker uses the toe of a teammate for a tee or builds a tee with a mound of dirt or sod. **RULING:** Illegal kick. Dead-ball foul. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.

## SECTION 19. Passes

### Forward and Backward Pass—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 2-19-2

- I. A1 intends to throw a forward pass, but B1 bats the ball from his hand before A1's arm starts forward. **RULING:** Fumble (Rule 2-10-1).

### Catchable Forward Pass—ARTICLE 4

#### Approved Ruling 2-19-4

- I. A88, beyond the line of scrimmage, is maneuvering to catch a legal forward pass thrown directly to his position. Just before the ball reaches A88, defensive back B30 drives through A88's back. B12 then steps in front of A88 and intercepts the pass. **RULING:** Pass interference by B30, if the pass is ruled as catchable and the interception occurs after the block by B30.
- II. A88, beyond the line of scrimmage, is maneuvering to catch a legal forward pass thrown directly to his position. Just before the ball reaches A88, defensive back B30 drives through A88's back. B12 intercepts or touches the pass before the block by B30. **RULING:** Not pass interference. Even though the pass was thrown directly to A88's position, the touching voids pass interference, but another foul is possible (Rule 7-3-8-a).

## SECTION 23. Snapping the Ball

#### Approved Ruling 2-23-1

- I. Fourth and goal on Team B's five-yard line. A55's legal snap is muffed by A12 and (a) any player of Team A recovers and advances the ball into the end zone, or (b) a player of Team B recovers and advances the ball. **RULING:** (a) Touchdown. Since the snap becomes a backward pass, there is no restriction on a Team A player recovering and advancing the ball. (b) The snap is a backward pass and may be advanced by the defense.

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## SECTION 27. Team and Player Designations

### Lineman and Back—ARTICLE 4

#### Approved Ruling 2-27-4

- I. A player between the snapper and the lineman adjacent to the snapper does not have his head breaking the plane of the line drawn through the waistline of the snapper but does break the plane of the line drawn through the rear-most part (other than the legs or feet) of the adjacent lineman. **RULING:** Illegal formation. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot.

## SECTION 30. Play Classification

### Running Play—ARTICLE 4

#### Approved Ruling 2-30-4

- I. A21 catches a forward pass with his knees on the ground. The passer is roughed during the pass. **RULING:** A21's catch started a running play, which ended immediately. Penalize 15 yards from the end of the run, first down for Team A.
- II. Third and 10. A21 catches a forward pass and fumbles when tackled after gaining 10 yards. The fumble is recovered by grounded A24 five yards in advance of the fumble. During the pass, the passer is roughed. **RULING:** Penalize 15 yards from the spot of recovery by A24 (end of last run), first down for Team A.

# RULE 3. Periods, Time Factors and Substitutions

## SECTION 2. Playing Time and Intermissions

### Extension of Periods—ARTICLE 3

#### Approved Ruling 3-2-3

- I. During the extension of a period after the ball is ready for play and before the snap, Team A commits a foul. **RULING:** Dead-ball foul. Team A is penalized for the foul and is entitled to complete the down.
- II. Time expires during Team A's free kick. A1 encroached on the kick. **RULING:** Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot, the end of Team B's run, or the touchback spot, and the period is extended. Repeat the free kick or Team B is awarded an untimed down.
- III. Time expires during Team A's attempted field goal. Team B was offside or committed another foul less than three yards beyond the neutral zone during the kick. **RULING:** Penalty—Five, 10 or 15 yards from the previous spot, the period is extended (Rule 10-2-2-e Exception 3).
- IV. A Team A player interferes with the opportunity to catch a kick (not a try) during a down in which time expires. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the spot of the foul, the period is extended.
- V. Time expires during Team A's run for a touchdown after A70 fouls at the snap or clips during the down. **RULING:** Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot or 15 yards from the basic spot, the period is extended. Fifteen yards from the previous spot, if the foul occurs behind the neutral zone.
- VI. Team A scores a touchdown during a down in which time expires. After the touchdown, but before the try, either team fouls. **RULING:** The period is not extended other than for the try. The penalty may be enforced on the try or the succeeding kickoff.
- VII. Team A scores a touchdown during a down in which time expires. During Team A's successful try, Team B fouls. **RULING:** The period is not extended for the kickoff. Team A may accept the penalty and replay the try, or decline the penalty and accept the score. Personal fouls against the snapper (in a scrimmage kick formation), holder, kicker or passer may be enforced on the subsequent kickoff or succeeding spot in extra periods.
- VIII. Team A scores a touchdown during a down in which time expires. After the try ends, either team commits a dead-ball foul. **RULING:** The try may be repeated due to an accepted penalty for a live-ball foul that occurred during the try. The dead-ball foul penalty will then also be enforced on the replayed try. The period is not extended to enforce a dead-ball foul. If accepted, the penalty must be enforced on the kickoff to start the next period or at the succeeding spot in extra periods (Rule 8-3-5).

### When Clock Starts—ARTICLE 5

#### Approved Ruling 3-2-5

- I. Team B makes a fair catch. **RULING:** Clock starts on the snap. The clock stopped at the end of a legal kick down.
- II. Fourth and six. Team A's running play, which ends inbounds, gains (a) eight yards or (b) five yards. B1 is offside during the play. **RULING:** (a) Team A's ball. First and 10. The

clock starts on the ready-for-play signal. (b) Team A's ball. Fourth and one. The clock starts on the snap.

- III. Fourth and four. Team A's running play, which ends inbounds, gains (a) six yards or (b) three yards. B1 is offside during the play. **RULING:** (a) Team A's ball. First and 10. The clock starts on the ready-for-play signal. (b) Team A's ball. First and 10 after accepting the penalty. The clock starts on the snap.
- IV. Third and four. Team A's pass is intercepted by B1, who is downed inbounds. B2 was offside during the play. **RULING:** Team A's ball. First and 10. The clock starts on the snap since the clock was stopped to award Team B a first down.

### **When Clock Stops—ARTICLE 6**

#### **Approved Ruling 3-2-6**

- I. The ball is snapped before it is declared ready for play, or a false start occurs. **RULING:** The ball remains "dead," and "timeout" and "no play" signals should accompany immediate sounding of the whistle to prevent possible consumption of playing time or action during which injury or personal fouls might occur (Rules 4-1-1, 4-1-4 and 7-1-1).

## **SECTION 3. Timeouts**

### **Timeout—ARTICLE 2**

#### **Approved Ruling 3-3-2**

- I. Neither team has been charged with a timeout when a field captain or an official designates an obviously injured player who is replaced. **RULING:** Referee's timeout.
- II. On third and 2½, A45 fumbles a live ball after gaining three yards. The officials cannot determine who has recovered the fumble, so the line judge signals the clock to stop while the ball is being located. A45 is found to be in possession of the ball and (a) has not made his line to gain or (b) has made his line to gain. **RULING:** (a) The referee immediately will signal the clock to start. (b) The clock will start on the ready-for-play signal.
- III. On second and 14, A45 gains six yards and is downed with the ball in his possession. The linesman, mistaking the back stake of the line-to-gain chain for the front stake, erroneously signals the clock to stop. **RULING:** As soon as the error is detected by any official, the signal to start the clock shall be given by the game official detecting the error.
- IV. Team A fumbles or the ball is loose after a backward pass. Several players dive on the ball, creating a "pile." **RULING:** The covering official(s) shall stop the clock. Upon positive knowledge of who recovered, the referee will (a) if recovered by Team A, point in the possession direction and start the clock (if no first down), or (b) if recovered by Team B, point in the possession direction and start the clock on the snap.

### **Referee's Discretionary Timeout—ARTICLE 3**

#### **Approved Ruling 3-3-3**

- I. The ball goes out of bounds after being declared dead in the field of play. **RULING:** The clock is stopped only if there is an unusual delay or unfair tactics are involved.
- II. A shoelace, padlace, jersey, number or equipment breaks or tears. **RULING:** No referee's discretionary timeout permitted for repair or replacement.

### **Charged Team Timeouts—ARTICLE 4**

#### **Approved Ruling 3-3-4**

- I. Before the snap, a Team B linebacker requests a timeout. **RULING:** Timeout request granted.

- II. Before the snap, the Team A quarterback requests a timeout. **RULING:** Timeout request granted.
- III. Before the snap, a legal substitute of either team running from the bench requests a timeout from any official before being within the nine-yard marks. He does not request a timeout again before the ball is snapped. **RULING:** Timeout request not granted (Rule 7-1-3-a-2).
- IV. Before the snap, a legal substitute of either team running from the bench requests a timeout before being within the nine-yard marks. He then requests a timeout again after being within the nine-yard marks. **RULING:** Second timeout request granted (Rule 7-1-3-a-2).

### **Injury Timeout—ARTICLE 5**

#### **Approved Ruling 3-3-5**

- I. At the end of a play, with the game clock running, the referee notices that A22 is bleeding. **RULING:** The referee will stop the clock and declare an injury timeout. A22 will leave the field of play (including the end zone) for treatment by appropriate medical personnel.
- II. After being treated for a bleeding or oozing wound, A22 (A.R. 3-3-5-I) attempts to enter the game before the next snap. **RULING:** Unless the period has ended or Team A has taken a timeout, A22 must remain out of the game for one play.
- III. B52's jersey has blood spots on it. **RULING:** Unless the official determines that the jersey is saturated with blood, B52 may remain in the game. (*Note:* Saturated is defined as soaked with moisture or drenched. If blood has penetrated through a garment to the skin or can be transferred to another player or game official, the garment is saturated.)
- IV. An official notices that blood has soaked through B10's jersey. **RULING:** B10 must leave the game until medical personnel have determined if the jersey must be replaced.
- V. B10 tackles A12. An official determines that B10's jersey is saturated with blood from a cut on A12's arm. **RULING:** Both players must leave the game—A12 for treatment of his open wound, B10 for a determination by medical personnel as to whether he has to replace his jersey.
- VI. During a dead-ball interval, A85 notices a bleeding cut on his arm. He voluntarily goes to the team area and is replaced by A88. **RULING:** This is a legal substitution and there is no variation in game timing. A85 may return to the game after the injury has been treated, but he must adhere to substitution rules.
- VII. During a dead-ball interval, A12 notices that he has a bleeding elbow and runs to the sideline adjacent to his team's bench. Medical personnel at the sideline bandage the elbow and approve A12's immediate return to the game. **RULING:** Legal. The starting of the 25-second count will not be delayed to accommodate A12's trip to the sideline.

## **SECTION 4. Delays**

### **Illegal Delay of the Game—ARTICLE 2**

#### **Approved Ruling 3-4-2**

- I. After any timeout, one of the teams is not ready to play. **RULING:** Illegal delay. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.

## Unfair Game-Clock Tactics—ARTICLE 3

### Approved Ruling 3-4-3

- I. In an attempt to consume time in the fourth period, Team A “stalls” and exceeds the 25-second count. **RULING:** Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot. The clock starts on the snap.
- II. A Team B player, late in either half and with no timeouts remaining, crosses the neutral zone and touches a Team A player in an effort to conserve time. **RULING:** Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot. The clock starts on the ready-for-play signal.
- III. A runner, late in the second period, throws a backward pass out of bounds from behind or beyond the neutral zone to conserve time. **RULING:** Penalty—Five yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down. The clock starts on the ready-for-play signal.
- IV. A runner throws a forward pass while beyond the neutral zone to conserve time. **RULING:** Penalty—Five yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down. The clock starts on the ready-for-play signal (Rule 7-3-2 Penalty).

## SECTION 5. Substitutions

### Legal Substitutions—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 3-5-2

- I. Any player(s), in excess of 11, obviously is withdrawing but has not reached a boundary line when the ball is put in play and he does not interfere with play or players. **RULING:** Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot.
- II. A1 enters from outside his team area. **RULING:** Illegal substitution. Dead-ball foul. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot. Sound the whistle.
- III. After the ready-for-play signal, A33, an incoming substitute, enters the huddle or assumes a position in a formation and (a) after approximately two seconds, A34 leaves the huddle and departs the field of play at his sideline, or (b) after approximately four seconds, A34 leaves the huddle and departs the field of play at his sideline. **RULING:** (a) Legal. (b) Foul. (*Note:* A departing player who leaves the huddle or his position within three seconds is considered to have left immediately.)
- IV. After the ready-for-play signal, substitute B12 enters the huddle or defensive formation and the departing player delays more than three seconds before leaving the huddle or formation and departing the field of play. **RULING:** Violation of the substitution rule. Dead-ball foul. (*Note:* The referee is not required to warn a departing player to leave the huddle immediately.)
- V. After a change of team possession or any timeout, the ball is declared ready for play. When Team A has completed its offensive formation, Team B must promptly position its personnel. Team B will be allowed time to complete substitutions. **RULING:** Either team is subject to a delay-of-game foul -- Team B for not completing its substitutions promptly (Rule 3-4-2-b-3) or Team A for causing the 25-second clock to expire. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.
- VI. On third down (no change of team possession), runner A27 goes out of bounds or Team A’s legal forward pass falls incomplete. During this interval between downs, there is no other referee’s timeout. Before the fourth-down snap, substitute B75 enters the game and then departs without remaining in the game for one play. **RULING:** Live-ball foul. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot.
- VII. Team A has 11 players in the huddle at the ready-for-play signal. A81 mistakenly thinks he has been replaced and runs to his team area. He is immediately sent back onto the field



and assumes a position on the line of scrimmage near his sideline. The entire team has been stationary for one second prior to the snap and there has not been a referee's timeout. **RULING:** Live-ball foul. A player loses his status as a participant when he enters the team area while the ball is dead, and then must adhere to substitution rules. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot or 15 yards from the previous spot, depending upon defensive coverage (Rules 3-5-2-d and 9-2-2-b).

VIII. Team A has 11 players in its huddle when A27 approaches the huddle (within 10 yards) as it breaks. **RULING:** Dead-ball foul. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.

# RULE 4. Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out of Bounds

## SECTION 1. Ball in Play—Dead Ball

### Live Ball Becomes Dead—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 4-1-2

- I. Fourth and 16 at the 50-yard line, Team A kicks. B1 clips on Team B's 40-yard line, and B2 muffs the kick on the 25-yard line. While the ball is loose, an inadvertent whistle is sounded. **RULING:** If Team A accepts the penalty, penalize Team B from the 50-yard line. Team A's ball, first and 10 on the 35-yard line. If Team A declines the penalty, replay the down.
- II. Fourth and 16 at the 50-yard line. At the snap, B1 is offside. Team A advances the ball to the 30-yard line and fumbles. During the loose ball, an inadvertent whistle is sounded. **RULING:** Team A may refuse the penalty and put the ball in play on the 30-yard line, first and 10.

### Ball Declared Dead—ARTICLE 3

#### Approved Ruling 4-1-3

- I. While A1 is holding the ball for a place kick, a Team B player tackles him or plays the ball by (a) recovering a loose ball, (b) snatching it from A1 or (c) batting it from his hands. **RULING:** (a) The ball remains alive. (b) The ball remains alive. (c) Fumble, the batting by Team B is legal.
- II. A player, ineligible to touch a kick, catches or recovers it. **RULING:** The ball is dead, no exception for illegal possession.

### Ball Ready for Play—ARTICLE 4

#### Approved Ruling 4-1-4

- I. Snapper A1 snaps the ball before the official declares the ball ready for play. A2 muffs the snap and B1 recovers the ball. **RULING:** Dead-ball foul. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot, Team A's ball. The ball does not become alive, and all action should be stopped immediately by the game officials.
- II. Kicker A1 kicks off before the referee has declared the ball ready for play. **RULING:** Dead-ball foul. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot. The ball does not become alive, and all action should be stopped immediately by the game officials.

## SECTION 2. Out of Bounds

### Player Out of Bounds—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 4-2-1

- I. An inbounds runner bumps into or is touched by a player or game official on the sideline. **RULING:** The runner is not out of bounds.
- II. Runner A1 is running inbounds near the sideline when he is contacted by a substitute of Team B, who is on the sideline. **RULING:** Rule 4-2-1 states a player is out of bounds when any part of his person touches anything other than a player or an official. Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot or other illegal-interference penalties (Rules 9-1-4-a and 9-2-3).

**Out of Bounds at Forward Point—ARTICLE 4****Approved Ruling 4-2-4**

- I. A player with one foot out of bounds behind a goal line touches a loose ball in the field of play. **RULING:** Ball is out of bounds and dead at its most forward point in the field of play. If this loose ball was an untouched free kick, it is a free kick out of bounds and a foul. Penalty— Five yards from the previous spot or Team B's ball 30 yards beyond Team A's free-kick line.

# RULE 5. Series of Downs, Line to Gain

## SECTION 1. A Series: Started, Broken, Renewed

### When to Award Series—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 5-1-1

- I. After Team A's fourth-down fumble out of bounds between the goal lines, with the spot of the fumble short of the line to gain, the ball belongs to Team A at the spot of the fumble or out-of-bounds spot, but Team B is awarded a new series of downs. The clock starts on the snap.

### Forward Progress—ARTICLE 3

#### Approved Ruling 5-1-3

- I. Airborne A1 receives a legal forward pass one yard within the opponent's end zone. As A1 receives the ball, he is contacted by B1 and first comes to the ground with the catch at the one-yard line, where the ball is declared dead. **RULING:** Touchdown (Rule 8-2-1-a).
- II. Airborne A1 receives a legal forward pass one yard within Team B's end zone. As A1 receives the ball, he is contacted by B1 and first comes to the ground, on his feet, with the catch at the one-yard line. After he regains his balance, he runs and is downed at Team B's five-yard line. **RULING:** Not a touchdown. Team A's ball at the spot where the ball is declared dead.
- III. Airborne A2 receives a legal forward pass at Team A's 35-yard line. As A2 receives the ball, he is contacted by B1 and first comes to the ground with the ball at Team A's 33-yard line, where the ball is declared dead. **RULING:** Team A's ball at the 35-yard line. This is the point of forward progress.
- IV. A4, with the ball breaking the plane of the 50-yard line while in his possession, dives over the 50-yard line, which is the line to gain for a first down. He is knocked back to Team A's 49-yard line, where any part of his body except his hand or foot touches the ground. **RULING:** First down at forward progress spot (Rule 4-1-3-b).
- V. A6, with the ball in his possession and not controlled by an opponent, dives over the 50-yard line, which is the line to gain for a first down, and is forced back across the 50-yard line. A6 continues to run and is tackled at Team A's 49-yard line, where any part of his body except his hand or foot strikes the ground. **RULING:** No first down. The point of forward progress is Team A's 49-yard line.
- VI. A5, with the ball breaking the plane of the goal line while in his possession, dives over the goal line and is knocked back to the one-yard line, where any part of the runner's body except his hand or foot touches the ground. **RULING:** Touchdown.

## SECTION 2. Down and Possession After a Penalty

### Penalty Resulting in First Down—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 5-2-2

- I. Fourth and 20 on the 50-yard line. Team B roughs the kicker. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot. Team A's ball, first and 10 (Rule 9-1-3-a).

**Foul Before Change of Team Possession—ARTICLE 3****Approved Ruling 5-2-3**

- I. Team A's fourth-down legal forward pass touches an originally ineligible receiver who is illegally beyond the neutral zone in the field of play and then strikes the ground.  
**RULING:** Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot. Team B's ball, first and 10, if the penalty is declined (Rule 7-3-10).
- II. A Team A runner attempts a backward pass that is ruled forward and illegal. The pass strikes the ground. **RULING:** Penalty—Five yards from the spot where the pass was thrown and, unless thrown after a change of team possession, the scrimmage down counts (7-3-2-a).

**Foul After Change of Team Possession—ARTICLE 4****Approved Ruling 5-2-4**

- I. Team B runs back Team A's kick or intercepted pass. During the run, a Team B player clips. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot. Team B's ball, first and 10.

**Foul Between Downs—ARTICLE 6****Approved Ruling 5-2-6**

- I. Fourth and two on Team A's 35-yard line. A1 receives the snap and fumbles the ball on Team A's 38-yard line, with the ball going out of bounds on (a) Team A's 40-yard line or (b) Team A's 30-yard line. Immediately after the ball goes out of bounds, Team A commits a personal foul. **RULING:** (a) Team A's ball, first and 10 on Team A's 23-yard line. Start the clock on the ready-for-play signal. (b) Team B's ball, first and 10 on Team A's 15-yard line.
- II. First and 10 for Team A. A Team A runner gains seven yards, then deliberately advances the ball after it is declared dead. **RULING:** Delay of game. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot. Second down for Team A (Rule 2-5-1).

**Foul Between Series—ARTICLE 7****Approved Ruling 5-2-7**

- I. Team A's punt goes out of bounds at Team B's 20-yard line, immediately after which a Team B player clips. **RULING:** First and 10 for Team B on its 10-yard line.
- II. Team A's ball on Team B's 30-yard line. Third and four. A Team A runner goes out of bounds on the 18-yard line. Team B commits a foul immediately after the ball is out of bounds. **RULING:** Team A's ball on the nine-yard line. First and goal.
- III. Team A's ball on Team A's 16-yard line. Fourth and four. A Team A runner goes out of bounds on the 18-yard line. A Team A player commits a foul immediately after the ball is out of bounds. **RULING:** Team B's ball on the nine-yard line. First and goal.
- IV. B20 intercepts a legal forward pass at the 50-yard line and returns the ball to Team A's 18-yard line, where he goes out of bounds. Immediately after the ball becomes dead, A55 commits a personal foul. **RULING:** Team B's ball on the nine-yard line. First and goal.
- V. On fourth and five, Team A gains six yards and is awarded a new series. After the ball is declared ready for play and before the snap, A55 commits (a) a personal foul or (b) a false start. **RULING:** (a) First and 25. (b) First and 15.
- VI. Team A's ball, third and four from the 50-yard line. After the ball is declared ready for play and before the snap, B60 charges across the neutral zone and contacts snapper A50. A61 then fouls B60. A61's foul is a personal foul. **RULING:** Penalize Team B five yards for B60's offside, then penalize Team A 15 yards and reset the line-to-gain indicator to indicate first and 10 from Team A's 40-yard line.

# RULE 6. Kicks

## SECTION 1. Free Kicks

### Free Kick Formation—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 6-1-2

- I. The ball is kicked while teed illegally, punted on a kickoff or kicked from a spot between the inbounds line and the nearer sideline. **RULING:** Illegal kick. Dead-ball foul. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot (Rule 2-15-1-a).
- II. Kicker A11 places the ball on the tee in the center of the field for a free kick with four teammates to the left side of the ball and six teammates to the right side of the ball. The ball blows off the tee, and A55—who was lined up to the left of the ball—holds the ball on the tee for right-footed kicker A11. No other Team A players move. When the ball is kicked by A11, A55 is to the kicker's right. **RULING:** Foul by Team A for illegal formation at the kick. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot.
- III. Free-kicker A11 places the ball on the tee just inside the inbounds line on his right. All of his teammates line up to his left. At the ready for play, four Team A players who were on A11's left run to their right and are in the area to A11's right when he kicks the ball. **RULING:** Legal formation.
- IV. A11 places the ball on the tee for a free kick on the 35-yard line in the center of the field. A12 lines up near the ball. After the ready for play, A11 starts forward as if to kick the ball, and A12 suddenly crosses in front of him and kicks the ball. When the ball is kicked, A11 is directly behind the ball with three teammates on one side of the ball. A12 plants his nonkicking foot on the same side of the ball as his three teammates. **RULING:** Foul by Team A for illegal formation. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot, and rekick if Team B chooses.
- V. Team A is encroaching during its free kick and B27 recovers the kick with his knee touching the ground. **RULING:** Foul by Team A for encroachment. The ball is dead at the spot of the recovery. Penalty—Team B may choose five yards from the previous spot and another free kick, or five yards from the dead-ball spot with a first and 10. B27's recovery started a running play that ended immediately. This scenario also would have been valid if B27 had completed a fair catch.
- VI. Team A is encroaching during its free kick and B37 fumbles while returning the kick. The ball is recovered by B45, who has a knee touching the ground. **RULING:** Foul by Team A for encroachment. The ball is dead at the spot of the recovery. Penalty—Team B may choose five yards from the previous spot and another free kick, or five yards from the spot of B45's recovery with a first and 10.

### Free Kick Recovery—ARTICLE 3

#### Approved Ruling 6-1-3

- I. A player of Team A illegally touches a free kick; then he or a teammate illegally recovers the kick. **RULING:** Unless canceled by an accepted penalty, Team B may elect to take the ball at any spot of illegal touching by Team A.

## Free Kick Caught or Recovered—ARTICLE 6

### Approved Ruling 6-1-6

- I. A player of Team A recovers a rolling free kick beyond Team B's restraining line and makes a backward pass that goes out of bounds. **RULING:** The ball is dead and belongs to Team A where recovered (Rule 4-1-3-e).

## SECTION 2. Free Kick Out of Bounds

### Kicking Team—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 6-2-1

- I. A kickoff from Team A's 35-yard line goes out of bounds untouched by Team B, and no other foul (or violation) occurs. **RULING:** Team B may accept a five-yard penalty from the previous spot with Team A kicking from the 30-yard line, or Team B may put the ball in play at Team B's 35-yard line at the inbounds spot or at the inbounds spot where the ball went out of bounds.
- II. A kickoff from Team A's 35-yard line goes out of bounds untouched by Team B, and Team A has illegally touched the kick. **RULING:** Team B may snap at the spot of violation, accept a five-yard penalty from the previous spot with Team A kicking from the 30-yard line, or put the ball in play at Team B's 35-yard line at the inbounds spot or at the inbounds spot where the ball went out of bounds.
- III. A kickoff goes out of bounds after it has been touched by Team B, and no fouls occur. **RULING:** Team B snaps at the inbounds spot.
- IV. Team A encroaches or commits a substitution infraction, and the kickoff from the 35-yard line goes out of bounds after it has been touched by Team B. **RULING:** For the encroachment foul, Team B may snap at the inbounds spot or elect to have the kick repeated at Team A's 30yard line. For the substitution infraction, Team B may refuse the penalty and snap at the inbounds spot or elect the five-yard penalty at the previous spot.

### Receiving Team—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 6-2-2

- I. A free kick from Team A's 35-yard line, untouched by Team B, goes out of bounds between the goal lines, and Team A encroached. **RULING:** Team B has the choice of Team A kicking again after a five-yard penalty or putting the ball in play on Team B's 35-yard line at the inbounds spot or at the inbounds spot where the ball went out of bounds.
- II. A free kick from Team A's 35-yard line, untouched by Team B, goes out of bounds between the goal lines, and Team A fouled after the ball went out of bounds. **RULING:** Team B has the choice of Team A kicking again after a five-yard and 15-yard penalty or putting the ball in play at the 50-yard line at the inbounds spot or 15 yards beyond the inbounds spot.
- III. A free kick in flight strikes a Team B player who is in his end zone, and the ball then goes out of bounds at the three-yard line. **RULING:** Team B's ball, first and 10, on the three-yard line at the inbounds spot.
- IV. Airborne B17 has leaped from inbounds and is the first player to touch Team A's free kick when he receives the ball. He subsequently lands out of bounds with the ball in his possession. **RULING:** Team B's ball, first and 10, where the ball crossed the sideline, at the inbounds spot.

## SECTION 3. Scrimmage Kicks

### Behind the Neutral Zone—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 6-3-1

- I. A Team A punt crosses the neutral zone, and the ball is touched (not blocked) by a Team B player and then rebounds behind the zone, where it is recovered by Team A in the field of play. **RULING:** The ball is dead and may not be advanced. First down for Team A (Rules 6-3-3 and 6-3-6-a).
- II. Team A's untouched kick goes beyond the neutral zone in flight, is blown back by the wind and first touches the ground, a player or an official behind the neutral zone. **RULING:** The kick is not considered to have crossed the neutral zone until it has touched the ground, a player, an official or anything beyond that zone. Any scrimmage kick may be advanced after catch or recovery by Team B, or after catch or recovery by Team A in or behind the neutral zone if the kick had not crossed the neutral zone (Rule 2-15-7).
- III. A1 interferes with B1's opportunity to catch a kick when a scrimmage kick fails to cross the neutral zone. **RULING:** Interference with the opportunity to catch a kick does not apply, and all players are eligible to touch, recover and advance the ball. Therefore, any player legally may push an opponent in an actual attempt to get at the ball; but no player may hold an opponent to prevent his reaching the ball or in an attempt to permit a teammate to reach it (Rules 9-1-2-d Exception 3 and 9-3-3-c Exception 3).
- IV. Team A's punt from behind its own goal line crosses the neutral zone into the field of play. It then strikes a Team B player and rebounds across Team A's goal line, where Team A falls on the ball. **RULING:** Safety (Rules 6-3-3, 6-3-6-a and 8-5-1-a).
- V. Team A's punt from behind its own goal line crosses the neutral zone into the field of play. It then strikes a Team B player and rebounds behind Team A's goal line, where Team A recovers the ball and advances to the one-yard line. **RULING:** Safety—Ball dead where recovered (Rules 6-3-3, 6-3-6-a and 8-5-1-a).

### Beyond the Neutral Zone—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 6-3-2

- I. Team A illegally touches its kick; then after Team B has touched it, Team A recovers. **RULING:** Touching by Team A after Team B has touched the kick is legal; and, in order to get the ball, Team B must take it where Team A illegally touched it. Unless illegal touching is also illegal recovery by the kicking team and no fouls are involved, the receiving team may play the ball with the assurance that it later may elect the ball at any spot of illegal touching.
- II. During a scrimmage kick, A1 commits a touching violation, after which B1 recovers, advances and fumbles. A2 recovers the fumble and, during the advance, B2 holds, trips or slugs. **RULING:** Team A may have the ball where left by the penalty for Team B's foul; but declining the penalty permits Team B to have the ball by electing the touching violation.
- III. Players of both teams, attempting to recover a blocked kick behind Team A's scrimmage line, force the ball across the neutral zone. **RULING:** After a scrimmage kick has crossed the neutral zone, no Team A player may touch the ball until it has been touched by an opponent.
- IV. Team A commits an illegal touching. **RULING:** Not a foul. Team B may choose to put the ball in play at the spot of illegal touching or where the ball is dead, including a touchback. If this was an unsuccessful field goal attempt and Team B did not touch the



kick beyond the neutral zone, the options of Rule 8-4-2-b are available to the receiving team.

- V. Team A's punt is first touched by A80, then picked up by B40, who runs five yards and fumbles. A20 picks up the fumble and scores. During A20's run, B70 holds. **RULING:** Five- and 10-yard penalties are not administered on the try or the succeeding kickoff. Team B's foul is declined by rule. The ball belongs to Team B at the spot of illegal touching.
- VI. Team A's ball, fourth and 12 at Team A's 20-yard line. During Team A's scrimmage kick, B85 taunts A44. The ball is illegally touched by A20 at the 50-yard line and then recovered by B14, who advances the ball before fumbling at Team A's 25-yard line. A27 recovers the fumble and is downed immediately. **RULING:** Team A accepts the penalty. Team B's ball, first and 10 at Team B's 35-yard line following enforcement of the live-ball foul penalized as a dead-ball foul.

#### **Forced Touching Disregarded—ARTICLE 4** **Approved Ruling 6-3-4**

- I. Team A's scrimmage kick is "at rest" on the Team B two-yard line. Receiver B4 is blocked by A7 and forced to touch the ball. **RULING:** Touching by Team B is disregarded since B4 is deemed not to have touched the kick. A new impetus is not possible without contact of the ball by a player (Rule 8-7-1).
- II. Team A kicks from its own 30-yard line. The untouched kick has come to rest on Team B's three-yard line when A3 blocks B1 into the ball, which is forced through the end zone by Team B's contact with the ball. **RULING:** Touchback. Since Team A blocked Team B into the ball, Team B is not deemed to have touched the ball. Impetus cannot be charged to Team B (Rule 8-7-1).
- III. Team A's long field goal attempt is first touched when A1 legally bats the rolling ball into nearby B1. **RULING:** Team B is not deemed to have touched the ball (Rule 8-4-2-b).
- IV. Team A's untouched scrimmage kick is at rest on the Team B three-yard line when B22 blocks A80 into the ball, forcing it into the end zone where it touches the ground. **RULING:** Touchback—Ignore touching by A80. Neither team has touched the kicked ball (Rule 8-6-1-b).

#### **Touching Ground On or Behind Goal Line—ARTICLE 9** **Approved Ruling 6-3-9**

- I. A Team A player illegally touches a punt and the ball then rolls into Team B's end zone, where Team B recovers and advances the ball into the field of play. **RULING:** The ball is dead when it strikes the ground in the end zone. Team B may choose a touchback or take the ball at the spot of Team A's illegal touching (Rule 4-1-3-c).
- II. Team A's scrimmage kick goes into Team B's end zone, and the ball is untouched by Team B beyond the neutral zone. Team B commits a personal foul after the ball touches the ground in the end zone. **RULING:** Team B's ball, first and 10 on the 10-yard line (**Exception:** Rule 8-4-2-b).
- III. Team A's scrimmage kick goes into Team B's end zone and the ball is untouched by Team B beyond the neutral zone, and Team A commits a personal foul after the ball touches the ground in the end zone. **RULING:** Team B's ball, first and 10 on the 35-yard line. If the snap was outside the 20-yard line on an unsuccessful field goal attempt, the penalty is at the previous spot.

- IV. A Team B player touches a scrimmage kick in flight in Team B's end zone and downs the ball in the end zone. **RULING:** Touchback (Rule 8-6-1-a).
- V. A Team B player touches a scrimmage kick in flight in Team B's end zone and catches or recovers the ball and runs to Team A's end zone. **RULING:** Team B touchdown (Rule 6-3-5).
- VI. A Team B player touches a scrimmage kick in flight in Team B's end zone, and Team A downs the ball in the end zone. **RULING:** Team A touchdown (Rules 6-3-3 and 8-2-1-e).

### **Loose Behind the Goal Line—ARTICLE 11**

#### **Approved Ruling 6-3-11**

- I. Team A kicks from the 50-yard line. During the kick, B1 clips at Team B's 25-yard line. The untouched kick is batted backward out of bounds from the end zone by Team A and goes out of bounds on the two-yard line. **RULING:** Team B's ball, first and 10 on the 10-yard line.

## **SECTION 4. Opportunity to Catch a Kick**

### **Interference With Opportunity—ARTICLE 1**

#### **Approved Ruling 6-4-1**

- I. A Team A player catches a free kick, thus preventing an opponent from making the catch. **RULING:** Illegal interference. Penalty—15 yards from the spot of the foul.
- II. A Team B player, about to catch a scrimmage kick, is tackled before the ball arrives but catches the kick while he is falling. **RULING:** Illegal interference. Penalty—15 yards from the spot of the foul. Disqualification of the Team A player if the contact is flagrant. If the foul is between the goal lines, enforcement is from the spot of the foul and Team B puts the ball in play by a snap; if behind Team B's goal line, award a touchback and penalize from the succeeding spot. The ruling would be the same had the kick been muffed or fumbled. The ruling is also the same on an unsuccessful field goal attempt since Team B touched the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
- III. A1 of the kicking team beyond the neutral zone is standing or running between a kick in flight and B1, and (a) A1 is struck by the ball while B1 is in a position to catch the ball; or (b) B1, in attempting to catch the ball, bumps into A1. **RULING:** Illegal interference. Penalty—(a) 15 yards for interference with the opportunity to catch the kick; or (b) 15 yards for interference with the opportunity to catch the kick.
- IV. A player of Team B, attempting to catch a kick (no fair catch signal), muffs the ball that is then touched by an opponent who was not interfering with the opportunity of the receiver when he was in position to make the catch. **RULING:** Not interference. Protection against interference with the opportunity to catch a kick ends when any player of Team B muffs the ball.
- V. A Team A player beyond the neutral zone first touches or catches a scrimmage kick that no receiver could have caught while it was in flight. **RULING:** Illegal touching but not interference.
- VI. On a scrimmage kick beyond the neutral zone, a Team A player stands in or runs through an area close to a Team B player who is in position to catch the ball and is deemed to have impeded the Team B player. **RULING:** Interference with the opportunity to catch a kick. Penalty—15 yards from the spot of the foul, which is where the Team B player was positioned to catch the kick.

- VII. On a free kick, catch interference occurs. The ball subsequently goes out of bounds between the goal lines untouched by Team B. **RULING:** Team B may elect the interference penalty or decline it and consider the kick out of bounds.
- VIII. B10 signals for a fair catch, muffs the ball and then catches it. **RULING:** If B10 has an opportunity to catch the kick following the muff, he must be given an unimpeded opportunity to complete the catch. If B10 catches the muffed kick, the ball is dead where first touched by B10.
- IX. Team A's ball, fourth and 10 at the 50-yard line. B17 is at Team B's 20yard line and in position to catch Team A's high scrimmage kick. During the downward flight of the ball, A37 contacts B17 viciously and flagrantly before he touches the ball. A37 did not alter his speed or make any attempt to elude B17. **RULING:** Team A personal foul, interference with the opportunity to catch a kick. Penalty—15 yards from the spot of the foul. A37 is disqualified.
- X. Team A's ball, fourth and 10 at the 50-yard line. Team A's windblown scrimmage kick is on its downward flight at Team B's 30-yard line. B18, who was at the 20-yard line, must detour around A92 at the 25yard line to make the catch at the 30-yard line. **RULING:** Team A foul, interference with the opportunity to catch a kick. Penalty—15 yards from the spot of the foul, which is the 25-yard line.

## SECTION 5. Fair Catch

### Dead Where Caught—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 6-5-1

- I. After a valid or invalid signal, B1 muffs and B2, who did not signal, catches the kick. **RULING:** The ball is dead when and where caught.
- II. After a valid or invalid signal by both B1 and B2, one muffs the kick and the other catches it. **RULING:** Ball is dead. Team B's ball at the spot of the catch.
- III. B1 has a foot out of bounds when he gives a valid or invalid signal. He then catches the kick inbounds. **RULING:** There is no rule against a receiver going out of bounds during a kick. The signal is valid or invalid; the inbounds catch is legal, and the ball is dead.
- IV. Following his valid fair catch signal, B17 muffs the kick but still has a reasonable opportunity to catch the kick. **RULING:** After a valid fair catch signal, the unimpeded opportunity to complete the catch does not end when the kick is muffed. The player who signaled must be given a reasonable opportunity to catch the ball without being interfered with by members of the kicking team. An intentional muff forward prior to the catch is an illegal bat.

### No Advance—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 6-5-2

- I. A Team B player who has made a fair catch is tackled after he has carried the ball more than two steps. **RULING:** Foul by the catcher. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.
- II. B1 signals before a muff by B2, and then B1 catches or recovers the kick and advances. **RULING:** Advancing after the fair catch does not cancel the dead ball that is established when the ball is caught or recovered. Two steps are permitted to enable B1 to come to a stop or to regain balance. A third or subsequent step inbounds is subject to penalty from where the ball is caught or recovered. If B1 is tackled, the tackle is disregarded unless deemed unnecessarily rough or is so late that the tackler should know that there was no

intention to advance. If the kick is caught or recovered by Team B in the end zone, it is a touchback. If B1 is tackled before completion of a third step, only the tackler has fouled.

- III. B1, who signaled for a fair catch, is on the run and off balance when he catches the ball, and his third step ends on or outside a boundary line. **RULING:** No advantage is gained by carrying a dead ball out of bounds. Therefore, the third step is disregarded and the ball is put in play at the succeeding spot, the spot of the catch.
- IV. Team A punts. B1, after signaling for a fair catch on his 20-yard line, deliberately lets the ball strike the ground, where B2 recovers the bouncing ball and advances to Team B's 35-yard line. **RULING:** The ball is dead at the spot of recovery. Advance is illegal. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot, the spot of recovery. Team B's ball, first and 10 (Rule 5-2-7).

### **Invalid Signals—ARTICLE 3**

#### **Approved Ruling 6-5-3**

- I. A1 or B1 signals for a fair catch beyond the neutral zone during a kick that does not cross the neutral zone. **RULING:** Not an invalid signal, and the ball remains alive (Rule 2-7-1-a).
- II. A1 signals for a fair catch beyond the neutral zone during a kick that crosses the neutral zone. **RULING:** Not an invalid signal (Rule 2-7-3).
- III. On a free kick, B17 makes an invalid signal for fair catch near the sideline, muffs, and the kick goes out of bounds. **RULING:** Team B's ball, first and 10 at the inbounds spot.
- IV. A scrimmage kick strikes the ground beyond the neutral zone and bounces high into the air, and B1 signals for a fair catch. **RULING:** Invalid signal. The ball is dead when recovered.
- V. B1 catches a scrimmage kick beyond the neutral zone and then signals for a fair catch. **RULING:** Invalid signal. The ball is dead where the signal first was given.
- VI. Team A's scrimmage kick is rolling beyond the neutral zone when B17 alerts his teammates to stay away from the ball by a "get away" signal at his waist or below. **RULING:** This is not an invalid signal and Team B may recover and advance until the ball is dead by rule.

### **Illegal Block or Contact—ARTICLE 4**

#### **Approved Ruling 6-5-4**

- I. B1 signals and does not touch a punt, but while the untouched ball is loose in the field of play, he blocks an opponent (a) more than three yards beyond the neutral zone or (b) in the receiver's end zone. **RULING:** (a) If the ball crosses the neutral zone and Team B has possession when the down ends, Team B is penalized 15 yards from the post-scrimmage kick enforcement spot. (b) Safety. The ruling is the same on an unsuccessful field goal attempt.
- II. B1 signals at the 50-yard line and does not touch a punt. While the ball is rolling on the ground at Team B's 45-yard line, B1 illegally uses his hands in an attempt to get to the ball, and the ball is declared dead in Team B's possession. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the postscrimmage kick enforcement spot. Team B retains the ball (Rule 10-2-2-e Exception 3).

### **No Tackling—ARTICLE 5**

#### **Approved Ruling 6-5-5**

- I. B1 and B2 each signal. B1 muffs, and B2 is about to catch the kick when he is tackled by A1. **RULING:** Not interference, but holding. Penalty— 10 yards from the previous spot.

- II. A Team B player who has made a fair catch signal is tackled before he has carried the ball more than two steps. **RULING:** Foul by the tackler. Penalty—15 yards from the succeeding spot.
- III. The fair catch signal is by a teammate of B1, who catches the ball. **RULING:** The ball is dead when and where caught. B1 is not entitled to catch protection but is entitled to the same protection he has after any other dead ball (Rule 6-5-1-c).

# RULE 7. Snapping and Passing the Ball

## SECTION 1. The Scrimmage

### Offensive Team Requirements—ARTICLE 3

#### Approved Ruling 7-1-3

- I. A Team A player moves when the snap is started. **RULING:** Legal. A Team A player may start motion of any part of his body when the snap is started.
- II. A21 is legally on the end of the line of scrimmage next to A88, who is in the stance of a restricted lineman. Team A stops for one second while A21 and A88 are in the above positions, and then A21 moves to a legal backfield position and stops. Then A88 shifts to a wider position on the line. **RULING:** Legal if both A21 and A88 are stationary at the snap (Rules 2-22-1 and 7-1-4-a).
- III. A21 is legally on the end of the line of scrimmage next to A88, who is in the stance of a restricted lineman. Team A has stopped for one second when A21 leaves the line of scrimmage and goes in motion into the backfield. A88 shifts to a wider position on the line. **RULING:** A88 may break his three-point stance since he is now on the end of the line of scrimmage, but Team A must stop again for one second before the snap to make the play legal (Rule 7-1-4).
- IV. B71 crosses the neutral zone into the Team A backfield and does not threaten any Team A player. A23, legally in the backfield, intentionally reaches to contact B71. **RULING:** Team A foul, false start. Penalty— Five yards from the succeeding spot.
- V. Snapper A7 touches the ball and then releases it to communicate with teammate A1. **RULING:** The snapper may release the ball after touching to communicate with a teammate.
- VI. Snapper A1 lifts or moves the ball forward before backward motion of the snap. B2 bats the ball, causing it to roll loose with B3 recovering. **RULING:** Team A foul, illegal snap, ball remains dead. Penalty— Five yards from the succeeding spot (Rule 4-1-1).
- VII. A73, a lineman between the snapper and the player on the end of the line who is restricted in the movement of his hand or hands, adjusts his feet and:
  1. Draws no reaction from B1. **RULING:** No foul.
  2. Draws a charge resulting in contact by B1. **RULING:** Dead ball. Team A foul. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.
  3. B1 contacts A73 with a delayed charge. **RULING:** Dead ball. Team B foul. Penalty—Five or 15 yards from the succeeding spot (Rules 7-1-5-a and 9-1-2-j).
- VIII. A66, a restricted lineman between the snapper and the player on the end of the line, or A72, a restricted player on the end of the line of scrimmage:
  1. Lifts a hand or hands from the ground immediately when threatened by B1, who is in the neutral zone. **RULING:** Blow the whistle immediately. Team B foul, offside. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.
  2. Lifts a hand or hands from the ground immediately when threatened by B1, who is in the neutral zone, and A66 or A72 is in or beyond the neutral zone. **RULING:** Blow the whistle immediately. Team B foul, offside. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.

3. Lifts a hand or hands from the ground upon initial charge by B1, who (a) does not enter the neutral zone or (b) enters the neutral zone but does not threaten the position of A66 or A72. **RULING:** In both (a) and (b), blow the whistle immediately. Team A foul, false start. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.

Note: Before the snap, a Team B player who enters the neutral zone may threaten a maximum of three Team A linemen. If the Team B player enters the neutral zone directly toward a Team A lineman, then that Team A player and the two adjacent linemen are considered to be threatened. If the Team B player enters the neutral zone toward a gap between two Team A linemen, then only those two Team A players are considered to be threatened.

IX. A Team A player on the line of scrimmage whose hand(s) is not on or near the ground:

1. Moves immediately into the neutral zone when threatened by B1, who is in the neutral zone. **RULING:** Blow the whistle immediately. Team B foul. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.
2. Moves immediately, but not into the neutral zone, when threatened by B1, who is in the neutral zone. **RULING:** Blow the whistle immediately. Team B foul. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.

X. Before the snap, A80 on the end of the line, a nonrestricted interior lineman or a back, misses the snap count and makes an abrupt movement that simulates the start of a play. No Team B player reacts. **RULING:** Team A foul, false start. Dead-ball foul. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.

XI. Before the snap, A80 on the end of the line, a nonrestricted interior lineman or a back, misses the snap count and makes a casual movement that is not abrupt, quick or jerky and does not simulate the start of a play. **RULING:** No foul by Team A.

XII. A30, lined up legally as a back, starts in motion legally. He then turns so that he still is legally in motion but is facing his line of scrimmage using a “side-step” motion. At the snap, A30 is bent slightly forward at the waist and is either continuing his “side-step” motion or is “marking time” in place. **RULING:** Legal.

XIII. A30, lined up legally as a back, starts in motion legally. He then turns so that he still is legally in motion but is facing his line of scrimmage using a “side-step” motion. At the snap, A30, still behind the neutral zone, is moving slightly forward from the waist up or his “side-step” motion has veered slightly toward the line of scrimmage. **RULING:** Illegal motion. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot.

XIV. A30, lined up legally as a back, starts in motion legally. He then turns so that he still is legally in motion but is facing his line of scrimmage using a “side-step” motion. At the snap, A30 has inadvertently moved forward while still facing his line of scrimmage with his sideways shuffling motion and is now moving along Team A’s line of scrimmage. **RULING:** Illegal motion. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot.

## **Shifts and False Starts—ARTICLE 4**

### **Approved Ruling 7-1-4**

- I. After a huddle or shift, all Team A players come to a stop and remain stationary for one second. Then, before the snap, two or more simultaneously change their positions. **RULING:** All 11 Team A players must remain stationary for one second before the snap, otherwise it is an illegal shift. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot (Rule 2-22-1).
- II. After a huddle or shift, Team A players take preliminary positions then advance or drop into final positions. **RULING:** Such movement constitutes a shift; players must hold their final positions for one second before the snap (Rule 2-22-1).

- III. Ten Team A players shift while A1 remains stationary. A1 then starts moving backward before one second elapses and the ball is snapped. **RULING:** If A1, who moved, did not halt with the other Team A players for one second before the snap, it is an illegal shift. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot (Rule 2-22-1).
- IV. After the Team A players have stopped for one second, end A88 runs wide and stops, and before one second elapses, back A36 starts moving backward. **RULING:** Legal. But if back A36 starts before end A88 stops, the simultaneous movement of two players constitutes a shift, and all Team A players must be stationary for one second before the snap (Rule 2-22-1).

### **Defensive Team Requirements—ARTICLE 5**

#### **Approved Ruling 7-1-5**

- I. Snapper A1 lifts the ball before backward passing it, B2 bats the ball away, and B3 recovers the ball. **RULING:** Team A foul, illegal snap. The ball is dead because it was not put in play by a legal snap. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot. Team A retains possession.
- II. Snapper A1 legally begins the snap, but B2 bats the ball before A1 completes the snap, and B3 recovers the ball. **RULING:** Team B foul and the ball is dead. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot. Team B may not touch the ball until it has been snapped. Team A retains possession.
- III. Prior to the snap, a Team B player crosses the neutral zone and continues his charge behind a Team A lineman and directly toward the quarterback or kicker. **RULING:** A Team B player who is on Team A's side of the neutral zone and is moving in a direct path toward the quarterback or kicker while he is behind an offensive lineman is considered to be interfering with Team A's formation. Penalty—Team B foul, offside. Dead ball. Five yards from the succeeding spot.

### **Handing the Ball Forward—ARTICLE 6**

#### **Approved Ruling 7-1-6**

- I. A83, an eligible receiver, is the end on his line and adjacent to the snapper in an unbalanced "T" formation. Quarterback A10 receives a handed snap and immediately conveys the ball to A83. **RULING:** If the movement of the ball is forward and it left A10's hand before having been touched by A83, it is a legal pass. A83 may have turned sufficiently to receive a backward pass or handoff (legal); but if the action immediately followed the snap, it is not likely that a handoff would have had time to comply with the "turn" and "two yards behind the line" requirement.

## **SECTION 2. Backward Pass and Fumble**

### **Caught or Recovered—ARTICLE 2**

#### **Approved Ruling 7-2-2**

- I. An opponent snatches (steals) the ball from the runner in the field of play. **RULING:** Fumble; the ball continues in play (Rule 2-10-1).
- II. A player of the receiving team in the field of play catches a kick, then fumbles the ball. A player of the kicking team intercepts or recovers the fumbled ball. **RULING:** The ball continues in play.

### **Out of Bounds—ARTICLE 4**

#### **Approved Ruling 7-2-4**

- I. B20 intercepts a legal forward pass (a) in his end zone, (b) on his three-yard line, and his momentum carries him into his end zone, or (c) in the field of play and retreats into his



end zone. In each instance, B20 fumbles in the end zone and the ball rolls forward and out of bounds on Team B's two-yard line. **RULING:** The ball belongs to Team B at the spot of the fumble (Team B's end zone); (a) touchback, (b) Team B's ball at the three-yard line, and (c) safety (Rules 8-5-1 and 8-6-1).

### SECTION 3. Forward Pass

#### Illegal Forward Pass—ARTICLE 2

##### Approved Ruling 7-3-2

- I. Any time during the game, quarterback A10, who is not five yards toward a sideline from the position of the ball at the snap and is attempting to save yardage, intentionally throws a desperation forward pass that falls incomplete where no eligible Team A player has a reasonable opportunity to catch it. **RULING:** Intentional grounding. Penalty—Loss of down at the spot of the foul. The clock starts on the snap (Rule 3-2-5-a).
- II. In the closing minutes of either half, A10 is unable to locate an open receiver. To conserve time, he throws a forward pass that is incomplete where no eligible Team A player has a reasonable opportunity to catch it. **RULING:** Illegal pass. Penalty—Five yards and loss of down from the spot of the foul. The clock will start on the ready-for-play signal (Rule 3-2-5-a-8).
- III. On third down near the end of either half, potential field goal holder A4 muffs the snap and A4 or potential kicker A3 recovers the ball and immediately throws it forward to the ground. **RULING:** Illegal pass, not a valid attempt to conserve time.
- IV. The ball is snapped over the head of quarterback A12, who is in the “shotgun” formation. A12 recovers the ball and immediately throws it forward to the ground. **RULING:** Illegal pass, not a valid attempt to conserve time.
- V. On third down near the end of the first half, A1 muffs the hand-to-hand snap, immediately recovers the ball and throws it forward into the ground. **RULING:** Illegal pass, not a valid attempt to conserve time.
- VI. On third down near the end of the half, A1 muffs the snap. A1 or A4 catches the muffed ball and immediately throws it forward into the ground. **RULING:** Legal play.
- VII. On third down near the end of the half, A1—positioned seven yards behind the snapper—catches the snap and immediately throws the ball forward to the ground. **RULING:** Legal play.
- VIII. With seconds remaining in a half and the ball declared ready for play, Team A quickly lines up and the ball is legally snapped to quarterback A12, who throws the ball forward directly to the ground. Team A's formation was not legal at the snap. When the ball becomes dead, two seconds show on the game clock. **RULING:** Illegal formation. Penalty— Five yards from the previous spot. The clock starts on the next snap.
- IX. Quarterback A10 sprints out and is five or more yards toward the sideline from the position of the ball at the snap when he throws a legal forward pass that lands beyond the neutral zone. **RULING:** It is not intentional grounding when a passer, who is five or more yards toward a sideline from the position of the ball at the snap, and facing loss of yardage, throws a forward pass that lands beyond the neutral zone, even if no eligible offensive player(s) has a reasonable opportunity to catch the ball (including if the ball lands out of bounds over a sideline [neutral zone extended] or endline).

### Eligibility to Touch Legal Pass—ARTICLE 3

#### Approved Ruling 7-3-3

- I. At the snap, tight end A85 is on the line of scrimmage. Flanker A23 is two yards outside of A85 and is neither on his line of scrimmage nor in the backfield. **RULING:** A23 is in an illegal position and is an ineligible pass receiver. A85 is an eligible pass receiver since he is on the end of the line of scrimmage (Rules 2-21-2 and 2-27-4).

### Eligibility Lost by Going Out of Bounds—ARTICLE 4

#### Approved Ruling 7-3-4

- I. Eligible A88 goes out of bounds but does not touch the pass, which is legally completed to A80. **RULING:** Legal play.
- II. Eligible A88 voluntarily goes out of bounds, returns, and is the first player to touch the legal forward pass. This touching by A88 occurs in Team B's end zone. **RULING:** Illegal touching. Penalty—Loss of down at the previous spot.
- III. Eligible A88 voluntarily goes out of bounds during a down in which a legal forward pass is thrown. He returns to the field of play but does not touch the ball and is fouled by an opponent before the ball is touched by any player. **RULING:** Not pass interference—A88 is not eligible to catch a legal forward pass. Penalty—Five, 10 or 15 yards from the previous spot.
- IV. Wide receiver A88 is forced out of bounds by B1 and then runs 20 yards before returning to the field of play. A88 catches a legal pass in Team B's end zone. **RULING:** Loss of down at the previous spot due to A88's failure to return inbounds immediately.

### Eligibility Gained or Regained—ARTICLE 5

#### Approved Ruling 7-3-5

- I. Team B touches the legal forward pass near a sideline while A1 is out of bounds. A1 comes inbounds and touches the pass. **RULING:** Touching by Team B made all players eligible during the remainder of the down.

### Completed Pass—ARTICLE 6

#### Approved Ruling 7-3-6

- I. Team A's legal forward pass is first touched by one of its eligible players, then caught by another. **RULING:** Completed pass.
- II. Two opposing players receive a legal forward pass while both are off the ground, and both players return to the ground inbounds at the same time. **RULING:** Simultaneous catch; the ball is awarded to the passing team (Rule 2-2-8).
- III. Two opposing players receive a ball while both are off the ground, and one player returns to the ground inbounds before the other. **RULING:** No simultaneous catch. The legal forward pass is completed or intercepted by the player who first returned to the ground (Rule 2-2-8).
- IV. An airborne player receives a legal forward pass. While still in the air, he is tackled by an opponent and obviously held for a moment before being carried in any direction. He then lands inbounds or out of bounds with the ball. **RULING:** Completed pass. The ball is dead at the yard line where the receiver/interceptor was held in a manner that prevented him from immediately returning to the ground (Rule 4-1-3-p).
- V. Airborne A80 receives a legal forward pass at his 30-yard line. While still in the air, he is tackled by B40 and driven forward to Team A's 34-yard line, where he is downed. **RULING:** Team A's ball at its 34-yard line (Rule 5-1-3-a).

- VI. Airborne A80 receives a legal forward pass at his 30-yard line. While still in the air, he is tackled by B40 and driven backward to Team A's 26-yard line, where the ball becomes dead. **RULING:** Team A's ball at the 30-yard line (Rule 5-1-3-a Exception).
- VII. A86 is legally forced out of bounds by B18 at Team B's two-yard line. A86, while attempting an immediate return to the field of play, leaps from out of bounds and is airborne as he receives A16's legal forward pass. He lands in Team B's end zone completing the catch. **RULING:** Touchdown (Rules 4-1-3-c, 4-2-3-a, 7-3-4 Exception and 8-2-1-b).
- VIII. B33 leaps from out of bounds and is airborne as he receives Team A's legal forward pass. He lands in the field of play (or Team B's end zone) completing the interception. **RULING:** B33 is a runner until he loses player possession or the ball becomes dead by rule. First and 10 for Team B (or possibly a touchback) (Rules 4-1-3-c, 4-2-3-a, 5-1-1-e and 7-3-4).
- IX. A84 voluntarily goes out of bounds to elude B28. A84 leaps from out of bounds and is airborne as he receives A15's legal forward pass. He subsequently lands in the field of play completing the catch. **RULING:** A84 is a runner until he loses player possession or the ball becomes dead by rule. Loss of down at the previous spot (Rules 4-2-3-a and 7-3-4).
- X. While airborne, eligible receiver A89 touches a forward pass when he propels it toward: (a) eligible receiver A80, who catches the pass; or (b) B27, who intercepts the pass. **RULING:** Legal play, and the ball remains live in both (a) and (b). A89 has batted a forward pass (Rules 2-2-7, 2-10-3 and 9-4-1-a).

### **Incompleted Pass—ARTICLE 7**

#### **Approved Ruling 7-3-7**

- I. Eligible A88 touches a legal forward pass while he is contacting a boundary line. **RULING:** The ball is out of bounds, the pass is incomplete, and the down counts. Eligibility of the touching player does not affect this ruling.
- II. Third and nine on Team A's six-yard line. A1 intentionally grounds a forward pass in his end zone to save loss of yardage. **RULING:** Team B may accept a safety or it is Team A's ball, fourth and nine on the six-yard line. The clock starts on the snap.
- III. Fourth and nine on Team A's six-yard line. A1 intentionally grounds a forward pass in his end zone to save loss of yardage. **RULING:** Team B may accept a safety or it is Team B's ball, first and goal on the six-yard line.
- IV. Third and nine on Team A's six-yard line. A1 throws a second forward pass from his end zone. B2 intercepts and is downed on Team A's 20-yard line. **RULING:** Team B may accept a safety or take the result of the play (i.e., first down on Team A's 20-yard line).

### **Illegal Contact and Pass Interference—ARTICLE 8**

#### **Approved Ruling 7-3-8**

- I. A Team B player, defending against a legal forward pass beyond the neutral zone, has his back to the ball and is waving his arms in the face of an eligible player of Team A, who, in his attempt to catch the pass, bumps into the Team B player. **RULING:** Pass interference by the Team B player, first down. He was not making a bona fide attempt to catch or bat the pass.
- II. Wide receiver A80, 15 yards beyond the neutral zone, turns his back toward the neutral zone. The passer throws the ball over A80's hands, which are extended above his head. The ball is overthrown and beyond the receiver (uncatchable pass) when B2 intentionally contacts A80. **RULING:** Personal foul (Rule 9-1-2-f), not pass interference. Penalty—15

yards from the previous spot. Flagrant offenders shall be disqualified. First and 10 for Team A.

- III. Wide receiver A88, 15 yards beyond the neutral zone, runs a curl pattern and stops near the sideline. The passer throws the ball several yards over A88's hands, which are extended above his head (uncatchable pass) when B2 intentionally contacts A88. **RULING:** Personal foul (Rule 9-1-2-f), not pass interference. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot. Flagrant offenders shall be disqualified. First and 10 for Team A.
- IV. A83, a wide receiver 10 yards from the nearest interior lineman, slants toward the middle of the field. Before the ball is thrown, B1, a backer, legally blocks him and knocks him down. **RULING:** Legal unless the block was below the waist (Rule 9-1-2-e-2).
- V. Before the ball is thrown, A88 is directly in front of B1, a backer, who legally pushes him with both hands and knocks him down. **RULING:** Legal.
- VI. Team A lines up at the snap with A88 spread 10 yards wide and A44 four yards to his inside. Just before the Team A passer releases the ball, A88 contacts B1 five yards beyond the neutral zone. The pass is thrown to A44, who has moved in front and to the outside of the spot where A88 had contacted B1. **RULING:** Team A foul, offensive pass interference. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot.
- VII. Before the ball is thrown, wide receiver A88 moves four yards downfield directly toward and in front of the defender, B1. At this spot, B1 pushes A88, who then uses his hands to contact B1. **RULING:** Team A foul, offensive pass interference, if the legal forward pass is beyond the neutral zone. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot.
- VIII. Before the ball is thrown, wide receiver A88 slants to the inside where B1, the backer, attempts to block him. A88 uses his hands to shove B1 away. **RULING:** Team A foul, offensive pass interference, if the legal forward pass crosses the neutral zone. If B1's initial contact was below the waist and beyond the neutral zone, Team B also has fouled and the live-ball fouls offset.
- IX. A88, an eligible receiver, curls and stops 10 yards beyond the neutral zone. After the ball, a catchable forward pass, is thrown and before it touches A88, B1 contacts A88 from the back or side with a tackle, grasp or push and the pass is incomplete. **RULING:** Team B foul, defensive pass interference. Penalty—Spot foul and first down.
- X. A88, a spread receiver, runs a 10-yard route and cuts 90 degrees to the sideline; and after the ball is thrown, B2 recovers and contacts A88 with a tackle, block, grasp or push before A88 touches the ball, a catchable forward pass. **RULING:** Team B foul, defensive pass interference. Penalty—Spot foul and first down.
- XI. A80, a tight end, runs 10 yards into the secondary and cuts toward the goal posts. B1 is one step behind and to the outside when he recovers. After the legal forward pass has been thrown, B1 contacts A80 with a tackle, block, grasp or push as the ball goes over A80's outstretched hands. **RULING:** Team B foul for defensive pass interference. Penalty—Spot foul and a first down if the infraction occurs less than 15 yards from the previous spot; 15-yard penalty from the previous spot and a first down if the foul is more than 15 yards beyond the neutral zone.
- XII. A88 and B2 are running closely together before or after the ball has been thrown. Either A88 or B2, or both, falls when their feet become entangled. Neither player was tripped intentionally. **RULING:** No foul.
- XIII. Before the pass is thrown, wide receiver A88 and defender B1 are running shoulder to shoulder and side by side 15 yards beyond the neutral zone. A88 is nearest to the sideline, and B1 is nearest to the hash mark. A88 breaks to the inside. B1 does not move, and A88 collides with him. **RULING:** No foul.

- XIV. Wide receiver A88 and defender B1 are running shoulder to shoulder and side by side 15 yards beyond the neutral zone. A88 is nearest to the sideline, and B1 is nearest to the hash mark. A legal forward pass is thrown toward the goal post. While the ball is in the air, A88 breaks to the inside toward a catchable forward pass. B1 does not move and makes no attempt to go for the pass, and A88 collides with him. **RULING:** Team B foul, defensive pass interference. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot and a first down.
- XV. A44, a slot back, runs a pattern 25 yards downfield toward the goal line pylon. B1, a safety, is positioned between A44 and the pylon when the ball is thrown. B1 obviously reduces his speed and collides with A44 before the catchable ball touches the ground. **RULING:** Team B foul, defensive pass interference. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot and first down.
- XVI. A80, a tight end, moves across the formation on a pass pattern at a depth of 25 yards where he contacts B1, a safety, before or after the ball has been thrown. A88, a wide receiver positioned on the opposite side from the tight end at the snap, crosses behind the contact of A80 and B1 and catches the legal forward pass. **RULING:** Team A foul, offensive pass interference. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot.
- XVII. Fourth and goal for Team A on Team B's five-yard line. Team A's legal forward pass is incomplete, but Team B interfered on its one-yard line or in its end zone. **RULING:** First and goal for Team A on Team B's two-yard line.
- XVIII. A80 and B60 are attempting to catch a forward pass thrown toward A80's position, which is beyond the neutral zone. The pass is high and ruled uncatchable. As the ball passes overhead, A80 pushes B60 in the chest. **RULING:** Not offensive pass interference.
- XIX. On a legal forward pass beyond the neutral zone, A80 and B60 are attempting to catch the pass thrown to A80's position. A14, who is not attempting to catch the pass, blocks B65 downfield, either before the pass is thrown or while the uncatchable pass is in flight. **RULING:** Team A foul, offensive pass interference. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot.

### **Contact Interference—ARTICLE 9**

#### **Approved Ruling 7-3-9**

- I. A80, a tight end, goes downfield eight yards, stops and turns to catch a pass, and does not contact an opponent. A44, a wing back, goes downfield eight yards and cuts to the inside, causing B1, who is pursuing him, to contact A80 after the ball was thrown. **RULING:** No foul against B1 unless the ball, a catchable forward pass, is thrown to A80.
- II. A legal forward pass beyond the neutral zone is tipped or muffed by an eligible receiver of either team or glances off an official, and thereafter, while the pass is still in flight, either Team A or Team B holds or otherwise fouls an eligible opponent who is beyond the neutral zone. **RULING:** Interference rules do not apply after the pass has been touched. Penalize as a foul during a loose ball. Penalty—Five, 10 or 15 yards from the previous spot (Rule 9-3-6).

### **Ineligibles Downfield—ARTICLE 10**

#### **Approved Ruling 7-3-10**

- I. Ineligible lineman A70 crosses the neutral zone and does not make contact with an opponent. He circles toward the flank and returns across the neutral zone before A10 throws a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone. **RULING:** Ineligible downfield. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot.

- II. Ineligible lineman A70 makes contact with an opponent within one yard of the neutral zone. A70 drives B4 more than three yards beyond the neutral zone and then circles back across the neutral zone before A1 throws a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone. **RULING:** Team A foul, ineligible downfield or offensive pass interference. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot or 15 yards from the previous spot (Rule 7-3-8-b).

### **Illegal Touching—ARTICLE 11**

#### **Approved Ruling 7-3-11**

- I. Late in the half, quarterback A10, who is not five yards toward a sideline from the position of the ball at the snap, throws a desperation pass to intentionally save yardage that falls incomplete after first touching ineligible A58. **RULING:** Penalty—Loss of down at the spot of the pass. The clock starts on the snap (Rule 7-3-2-d).
- II. An originally ineligible player of Team A intentionally first touches a legal forward pass inbounds. **RULING:** Illegal touching. The ball continues in play, but the foul is subject to penalty when the ball becomes dead. Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot (Rule 4-1-3).
- III. Team A snaps on its 10-yard line. A10 retreats and then passes forward to ineligible A70 who, while in his end zone, (a) touches the ball as he attempts to catch the pass, and the pass is incomplete; (b) catches the pass and is downed in the end zone; or (c) catches the pass and is downed after having advanced to his three-yard line. **RULING:** (a) Team B may elect the penalty to get the five yards or refuse the penalty so the down will count. (b) The ball is dead in the end zone with impetus by Team A, and Team B may elect the safety or the penalty at the previous spot. (c) The down counts if the penalty is refused and the dead-ball spot is more advantageous to Team B than the penalty [*Note:* (a), (b) and (c) could be intentional grounding depending on the location of an eligible Team A player or the location of A10 when the ball is thrown] (Rule 10-1-1-b). If intentional grounding is warranted, there is no illegal touching.

# RULE 8. Scoring

## SECTION 2. Touchdown

### How Scored—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 8-2-1

- I. The runner is thrown or falls to the ground on his opponent's one-yard line, but his momentum causes him to slide across the goal line. **RULING:** Not a touchdown unless the ball's forward point was on, above or across the goal line when any part of the runner's body except his hand or foot struck the ground (Rules 4-1-3-b and 5-1-3).
- II. Runner A1, while attempting to score, strikes the pylon located on the right intersection of the goal line and sideline with his foot. He is carrying the ball in his right arm, which is extended over the sideline. **RULING:** Whether or not a touchdown is scored depends on the forward progress of the ball as related to the goal line when the ball becomes dead by rule (Rules 4-2-4-d and 5-1-3-a).
- III. Runner A1, advancing in the field of play, becomes airborne at the two-yard line. His first contact with the ground is out of bounds three yards beyond the goal line. The ball, in possession of the runner, passed over the pylon. **RULING:** Touchdown (Rule 4-2-4-e).
- IV. The ball, in possession of airborne runner A21, crosses the sideline above the one-yard line, penetrates the plane of the goal line extended and is then declared dead out of bounds in possession of A21. **RULING:** Ball is declared out of bounds at the one-yard line (Rules 2-11-1 and 4-2-4-e).

## SECTION 3. Try Down

### How Scored—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 8-3-1

- I. During a two-point try, after having obtained possession, Team B fumbles and Team A recovers in the Team B end zone. **RULING:** Team B can fumble after intercepting a pass, catching or recovering a fumble or recovering a backward pass. Touchdown. Award Team A two points (Rule 8-3-2-d-1).
- II. Team B intercepts Team A's legal forward pass (PAT attempt) and returns the ball for a touchdown. **RULING:** Award Team B two points. Team B will receive the next free kick, or extra-period rules govern (Rule 8-3-2-a).
- III. B19 is the first player beyond the neutral zone to touch Team A's blocked PAT kick when he muffs the kick in the end zone. A66 recovers in the end zone. **RULING:** Award Team A two points.

### Opportunity to Score—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 8-3-2

- I. On a two-point try attempt, B2 adds new impetus to a Team A fumble that is recovered in the Team B end zone by Team B. **RULING:** One-point safety (Rules 8-3-1 and 8-5-1).
- II. On a two-point try attempt, B2 kicks a Team A fumble into the Team B end zone and Team B recovers. **RULING:** One-point safety or the option of accepting the penalty from the basic spot for illegally kicking the ball (Rules 8-3-1 and 8-3-3-b-1).
- III. On a one-point try attempt, B2 blocks A1's kick. The ball, which did not cross the neutral zone, is picked up by A2, and he advances the ball across Team B's goal line. **RULING:** Award Team A two points (Rule 8-3-1).

- IV. On a one-point try attempt, Team A's kick is blocked. A2 picks up the ball beyond the neutral zone in the field of play. **RULING:** The ball is dead where picked up by A2. The try is over.
- V. On a one-point try attempt, Team A's kick is blocked. The ball is advanced by runner B1 across Team A's goal line. **RULING:** Award Team B two points (Rule 8-3-1).
- VI. On a one-point try attempt, Team A's kick is blocked. The ball, untouched beyond the neutral zone, (a) is recovered by B3 on his one-yard line or (b) hits the ground in Team B's end zone. **RULING:** (a) B3 may advance the ball. (b) The ball is dead, the try is over (Rule 8-3-1).
- VII. On a one-point try attempt, Team A's kick is blocked. The ball is recovered by B3 and advanced across Team A's goal line. During B3's run, B4 clips. **RULING:** No score, the try is over, and the penalty is declined by rule (Rule 8-3-4-b).
- VIII. On a two-point try, B1 intercepts Team A's legal forward pass in his end zone. He runs the ball across Team A's goal line, and (a) there are no fouls during the run, (b) B3 clips during the run or (c) A2 fouls during the run. **RULING:** (a) Award Team B two points. (b) No score, the try is over, and the penalty is declined by rule. (c) Award Team B two points, and the penalty is declined by rule (Rules 8-3-1 and 8-3-4-a and b).
- IX. On a two-point try attempt, A1 muffs the hand-to-hand snap from the snapper and it is recovered by A2, who runs it into the opponent's end zone. **RULING:** Award Team A two points (Rule 2-10-2).
- X. On a one-point try attempt, A10 snaps the ball over the head of the holder or the holder muffs the ball. It is recovered by A3, who runs it into the end zone. **RULING:** Award Team A two points.
- XI. On a two-point try attempt, quarterback A2, running an option play, throws a backward pass that is muffed and recovered by A9, who runs it into the end zone. **RULING:** Award Team A two points.

### **Fouls During a Try Before Team B Possession—ARTICLE 3**

#### **Approved Ruling 8-3-3**

- I. During a try attempt, Team A's legal kick, untouched and in the air, has crossed the neutral zone when a foul occurs. **RULING:** If the foul is by Team A and the try is unsuccessful, and Team B does not gain possession, the try ends. If the foul is by Team A and the try is successful, the penalty is at the previous spot. If the foul is by Team B and the try is successful, score the point unless Team A chooses to accept the penalty and attempt a two-point play. The try is exempt from postscrimmage kick enforcement. Personal fouls against the snapper, holder or kicker may be enforced on the subsequent kickoff or succeeding spot in extra periods. If unsuccessful, Team A may accept the penalty and the down will be replayed.
- II. Both teams foul during a try after playing time has expired, and Team B had not gained possession. **RULING:** Replay at the previous spot.
- III. During a try, Team A advances the ball into Team B's end zone or completes a pass there, but Team A fouls during the run or behind its line before the pass. **RULING:** Any replay is from the spot where the penalty leaves the ball. The privilege of replaying from any point between the inbounds lines applies only when a penalty is for a foul by Team B.



**Fouls During a Try After Team B Possession—ARTICLE 4****Approved Ruling 8-3-4**

- I. B15 intercepts Team A's legal forward pass (PAT attempt) and is running at midfield when tackled by A19, who grasps B15's face mask. **RULING:** The try is ended, and the penalty is declined by rule.
- II. B1 intercepts Team A's legal forward pass and runs it to midfield. During the run of the interception, B2 clips in Team B's end zone. **RULING:** The penalty is declined by rule.

**SECTION 4. Field Goal****Next Play—ARTICLE 2****Approved Ruling 8-4-2**

- I. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's attempted field goal is touched by B1 at Team B's 10-yard line and rolls out of the end zone. **RULING:** Touchback.
- II. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's attempted field goal is touched and downed by Team B at the five-yard line. **RULING:** Team B's ball at Team B's five-yard line.
- III. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's untouched field goal attempt rolls dead on Team B's seven-yard line. **RULING:** Team B's ball at Team B's 40-yard line.
- IV. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's untouched field goal attempt strikes the ground in the end zone and bounces out to the three-yard line, where it is touched by B1. **RULING:** Team B's ball at Team B's 40-yard line (Rule 6-3-9-a).
- V. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's attempted field goal touches B1 at the 10-yard line and goes out of bounds at the five-yard line. **RULING:** Team B's ball at Team B's five-yard line.
- VI. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's field goal attempt is blocked or touched at the line of scrimmage and goes out of bounds, untouched beyond the neutral zone, at Team B's 25-yard line. **RULING:** Team B's ball at Team B's 40-yard line.
- VII. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's attempted field goal strikes the ground at the three-yard line and bounces into the end zone, where it is received in the air and then downed by a Team B player. **RULING:** Team B's ball at the 20-yard line.
- VIII. Fourth and eight on Team B's 18-yard line. Team A's unsuccessful field goal attempt goes out of the end zone. **RULING:** Team B's ball at the 20-yard line.
- IX. Team A's unsuccessful field goal attempt strikes the ground beyond the neutral zone and bounces back across the neutral zone, where it is recovered by B1 and advanced into the end zone. **RULING:** Touchdown (Rule 6-3-5).
- X. Fourth and six on Team B's 18-yard line. Team A's unsuccessful field goal attempt strikes the ground beyond the neutral zone and bounces back across the neutral zone to Team B's 28-yard line, where it goes out of bounds or is recovered and downed by either team. The kick is untouched beyond the neutral zone. **RULING:** Team B's ball, first and 10 at Team B's 28-yard line (Rules 6-3-5 and 6-3-7).

## SECTION 5. Safety

### How Scored—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 8-5-1

- I. A10, after receiving the snap in his own end zone, is downed with the ball resting on his goal line, its forward point being in the field of play. **RULING:** Safety. A part of the dead ball is on the runner's goal line.
- II. The ball is snapped to a Team A player who punts from his own end zone. The ball goes out of bounds behind the kicker's goal line. **RULING:** Safety (Rule 8-7-1).
- III. A scrimmage kick fails to cross the neutral zone, or crosses the neutral zone and is first touched by Team B, or is untouched and then rebounds into the end zone, where it is declared dead in Team A's possession. **RULING:** Safety (Rule 8-7-2-a).
- IV. B1 intercepts a legal forward pass (not a try) deep in his end zone and advances but does not get out of the end zone, where he is downed. During the run, B2 clips A1 in the end zone. **RULING:** Safety. Enforce from the basic spot. The penalty leaves the ball in Team B's possession in the end zone.
- V. B1 intercepts a pass or fumble or catches a scrimmage or free kick between his five-yard line and the goal line, and his momentum carries him into the end zone. The ball is declared dead in Team B's possession in the end zone. **RULING:** Team B's ball at the spot where the pass or fumble was intercepted, or the kick was caught. The ruling is the same if B1 had recovered a fumble, a backward pass or a kick under similar circumstances.
- VI. B1 intercepts a pass or fumble or catches a scrimmage or free kick between his five-yard line and the goal line, and his momentum carries him into the end zone. B1 then advances into the field of play from the end zone. **RULING:** If the ball is declared dead in his possession, it is Team B's ball at the dead-ball spot.
- VII. B1 intercepts a pass or fumble or catches a scrimmage or free kick between his five-yard line and the goal line, and his momentum carries him into the end zone. Before the ball is declared dead, B2 clips in the end zone. B1 does not get out of the end zone, and the ball is declared dead. **RULING:** Safety. The basic spot of enforcement is from the end of the run where B1 gained possession between the five-yard line and the goal line.
- VIII. Team A's fumble or backward pass strikes the ground. Team B muffs the ball in an attempt to recover, but it crosses Team A's goal line, where Team A falls on the ball or the ball goes out of bounds from the end zone. **RULING:** Safety. The impetus came from the fumble or pass (Rule 8-7-2-a).
- IX. Team A's backward pass or fumble strikes the ground and is dead in Team A's end zone in possession of Team A, or is muffed out of bounds from Team A's end zone. **RULING:** Safety. Team A's impetus caused the ball to be behind Team A's goal line. However, if either team forces the ball out of bounds from the end zone by kicking or batting it, the penalty is from the basic spot (Rule 8-7-2-b-1).
- X. Team A intends to punt from behind its goal line, but A36 muffs the ball. After recovering, the runner strikes the pylon at the intersection of the sideline and goal line. **RULING:** Safety, unless the entire ball is beyond the goal line as the runner contacts the sideline or pylon. The ball is dead at its most forward point when the runner contacts the pylon or sideline (Rules 2-31-3 and 4-2-4-d and e).
- XI. B40 intercepts a pass on Team B's four-yard line. His momentum is taking him into the end zone when he fumbles the ball on the one-yard line and (a) B40, the fumbler,

recovers the fumble in the end zone, or (b) B45, a teammate of the fumbler, recovers the fumble in the end zone. **RULING:** Safety in both (a) and (b).

## **SECTION 6. Touchback**

### **When Declared—ARTICLE 1**

#### **Approved Ruling 8-6-1**

- I. Team A's fumble strikes the pylon at the intersection of Team B's goal line and sideline. **RULING:** Team B's ball at the 20-yard line (Rule 7-2-4-b).
- II. B1 intercepts Team A's legal forward pass in his own end zone, after which A1 snatches the ball from his hand while in Team B's end zone. **RULING:** Touchdown. The ball is not automatically dead when intercepted. However, if in the judgment of the official there is perceptible time during which the Team B player made no attempt to advance after the interception, declaring a touchback is justified.

## **SECTION 7. Responsibility and Impetus**

### **Initial Impetus—ARTICLE 2**

#### **Approved Ruling 8-7-2**

- I. A fumble occurring in the field of play crosses the goal line and is recovered in the end zone. **RULING:** The impetus is charged to the player who fumbled.
- II. A Team B player intercepts a legal forward pass in his own end zone, attempts to run it out, but is tackled and downed behind his goal line. **RULING:** Touchback (Rule 8-6-1-a).
- III. A Team B player catches a kick in his end zone, then fumbles and, in attempting to recover the ball, muffs it out of bounds behind his own goal line. **RULING:** Touchback (Rule 8-6-1-a).
- IV. Runner A1, advancing toward Team B's goal line, fumbles when B1 bats the ball from his hand or tackles him from the rear. In either case, A1 loses possession short of the goal line, and the ball goes into Team B's end zone, where Team B recovers. **RULING:** Touchback. Impetus is charged to the fumble by Team A (Rule 8-6-1-a).
- V. Any Team A kick strikes the ground and, after a Team B player bats the ball, it crosses Team B's goal line, where Team B recovers it or it goes out of bounds. **RULING:** Safety. Batting the kick is considered to have destroyed the impetus of the kick and imparted a new impetus. However, merely touching or deflecting the kick, or being struck by it, does not destroy the impetus of the kick (Rule 8-5-1-a).
- VI. Team A punts. The ball is touched by Team B (no impetus added) and crosses Team B's goal line. Then Team B falls on the ball or the ball goes out of bounds from the end zone. **RULING:** Touchback. The same ruling applies if a kick in flight strikes Team B or merely is deflected by an attempted catch. Team B may recover and advance, and it is a touchback if a Team B player is downed in the end zone or goes out of bounds behind the goal line (Rule 8-6-1-a).
- VII. Team A free kicks from its 35-yard line. The ball is rolling on the ground on Team B's three-yard line when B10 kicks the ball, forcing it out of bounds in the end zone. **RULING:** Safety or Team A's ball on the 50-yard line, where the free kick will be repeated (Rules 9-4-4 and 10-2-2-e).
- VIII. Fourth and five on Team B's 20-yard line. A30 fumbles at Team B's 16-yard line. The ball rolls to the 10-yard line where B40, attempting to recover the loose ball (either at rest or still rolling), muffs it out of bounds at (a) Team B's five-yard line or (b) Team B's 18-yard line. **RULING:** In either instance, it is a fumble out of bounds. Since Team A did not

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make the line to gain before the fumble, it is Team B's ball, first and 10, at (a) Team B's 16-yard line or (b) Team B's 18-yard line (Rules 5-1-4-f and 7-2-4-b).

IX. Fourth and five on Team B's 20-yard line. A30 fumbles at Team B's 16yard line. The ball rolls to the 10-yard line (either at rest or still rolling), where B40 bats the loose ball (a) backward and out of bounds at Team B's five-yard line or (b) forward and out of bounds at Team B's 18-yard line. **RULING:** In each instance, it is a fumble out of bounds. In (a), the bat is legal and it is Team B's ball, first and 10 at Team B's 16-yard line, since Team A did not make a first down. In (b), illegal batting, penalize Team B from the spot of the fumble, Team A's ball first and goal (Rules 5-1-4-f and 7-2-4-b). The clock starts on the snap in both situations.

# RULE 9. Conduct of Players and Others Subject to Rules

## SECTION 1. Contact and Interference Fouls

### Persons Subject to the Rules Restrictions—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 9-1-2

- I. A player (a) intentionally strikes an opponent with the knee or (b) projects the knee before contact with an opponent (most apt to occur when the player is meeting a blocker). **RULING:** (a) Personal foul, “kneeing.” Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot, or from the previous spot if foul by Team A occurs behind the neutral zone. First down if by Team B. Disqualify if flagrant. (b) Personal foul, “meeting with the knee.” Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot, or from the previous spot if foul by Team A occurs behind the neutral zone. First down if by Team B. Disqualify if flagrant. In both situations, safety if the foul by Team A occurs behind Team A’s goal line.
- II. A Team B player uses an extended forearm to strike a blow to the helmet of the runner while attempting to tackle. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot and first down. Disqualify if flagrant.
- III. When two players of opposing teams fall to the ground, the body of one lies across the back of the legs of the other. **RULING:** Not necessarily a violation of the clipping rule. No official should declare a clipping foul unless he observes the block from its inception.
- IV. A1, an end, is positioned 11 yards to the outside of the middle lineman of the offensive formation at the snap. B2 is between the original position of A1 and the sideline. A1 blocks B2 away from the position of the ball at the snap. The block by A1 is below the waist. **RULING:** Legal block (Rule 2-23-1-i).
- V. A1, a quarterback, at the snap is forced to run out of his protecting pocket and scramble back and forth across the field. A2, a wide receiver positioned 12 yards outside the middle lineman of the offensive formation, moves downfield and then returns toward the neutral zone. A2 then blocks B2 at the neutral zone and below the waist toward the ball at the snap. **RULING:** Illegal block. Penalty— 15 yards from the basic spot (Rule 2-23-1-i).
- VI. On a run or pass option play, A2, a wide receiver, at the snap is positioned 12 yards outside the middle lineman of the offensive formation. He moves downfield and then returns toward the neutral zone. A2 then blocks B2 eight yards beyond the neutral zone and below the waist toward the ball at the snap. **RULING:** Illegal block. Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot (Rule 2-23-1-i).
- VII. A1, a flanker positioned to the left side of a formation, runs a deep reverse to the right side after receiving the ball from a teammate. A2, a spread end, at the snap is positioned 10 yards outside the middle lineman of the offensive formation on the right side of the formation. A2 blocks B2, a defensive end. The block by A2 occurs behind the neutral zone. The block by A2 is below the waist and toward the ball at the snap. **RULING:** Illegal block. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot (Rule 2-23-1-i).
- VIII. A1, a flanker positioned to the left side of a formation, runs a deep reverse to the right side after receiving the ball from a teammate. A2, a spread end, at the snap is positioned 10 yards outside the middle lineman of the offensive formation on the right side of the formation. A2 blocks B2, a defensive end, toward the ball. The block by A2 occurs one

- yard beyond the neutral zone. The block by A2 is below the waist. **RULING:** Illegal block. Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot (Rule 2-23-1-i).
- IX. A1, a wing back positioned 10 yards outside the middle lineman of the offensive formation, goes in motion toward the ball before the snap. At the snap, his motion has carried him past the snapper. After the snap, A1 blocks B2. The block by A1 is below the waist away from the ball at the snap. **RULING:** Legal block (Rule 2-23-1-i).
- X. A2, a flanker, at the snap is positioned 10 yards outside the middle lineman of the offensive formation. He moves toward the sideline and blocks a defensive halfback below the waist. **RULING:** Legal block (Rule 2-23-1-i).
- XI. A1, a wing back, at the snap is positioned 10 yards outside the middle lineman of the offensive formation and five yards behind the neutral zone. After the snap, A1 blocks B2 toward the ball at the snap. The block by A1 is below the waist and behind the neutral zone. **RULING:** Illegal block. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot (Rule 2-23-1-i). Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line.
- XII. After the ball is dead, a player throws himself on a prostrate opponent who does not have the ball. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty—15 yards from the succeeding spot and first down if by a Team B player and not in conflict with other rules. "Piling on" applies to a runner or to any other opponent who is prostrate when the ball becomes dead.
- XIII. After the ball is dead, a player forces an obviously stopped runner or other opponent backward several yards and grounds him roughly. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty—15 yards from the succeeding spot and first down if by a Team B player and not in conflict with other rules.
- XIV. A defensive player charges into the passer, who is standing still or fading back after the ball obviously has been thrown. **RULING:** Roughing the passer. Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot and first down or the penalty will be added to the end of the last run under certain circumstances.
- XV. A defensive player, during a live ball, twists, turns or pulls the face mask or any opening of the opponent's helmet. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty—15 yards from the previous or basic spot and first down.
- XVI. A player, during a live ball, intentionally rams an opponent with his helmet or face mask. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot, or from the previous spot if foul by Team A occurs behind the neutral zone. First down if by Team B. Safety if the foul by Team A occurs behind Team A's goal line.
- XVII. B2, a defensive back, spears A1 while A2 is running with the ball. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot and first down.
- XVIII. A1, a runner, strikes tackler B6 with his extended forearm just before being tackled. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot, or from the previous spot if foul occurs behind the neutral zone. Disqualification if flagrant. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line.
- XIX. A21 catches a legal forward pass for a touchdown. Clearly after the score, A21 is tackled by B40. **RULING:** Dead-ball foul. Penalty enforced on the try down or the succeeding kickoff. No Team B player shall tackle or run into any player who has obviously scored (Rule 4-1-3-c).
- XX. On the return of a scrimmage kick, B2 is tackled and the ball becomes dead on Team B's 30-yard line. After the ball becomes dead, B6 vigorously pushes A2 in the back above the waist. **RULING:** Dead ball, personal foul. Penalty—15 yards from the succeeding spot. Team B's ball, first and 10 on Team B's 15-yard line.

- XXI. A6 is advancing the ball. During the run, A12 vigorously blocks B2 with a rough push in the back above the waist. **RULING:** Illegal block in the back. Penalty—10 yards from the basic spot.
- XXII. A10 is in a shotgun-type formation 7½ yards behind the snapper, who has his head down and is looking backward through his legs. Immediately after the snap, nose guard B55 charges directly at the snapper and contacts him by pushing him backward. **RULING:** Legal. The snapper is not afforded any special protection because it was not reasonably obvious that a kick might be attempted (Rule 2-15-10). The snapper does have the usual protection against any personal foul for unnecessary roughness.
- XXIII. Team A is in an obvious scrimmage kick formation. Immediately after the snap, nose guard B55 charges directly at the snapper, contacts him, and drives him backward. The ball is snapped to an upback three yards behind the scrimmage line or to the potential kicker, who instead runs with or passes the ball. **RULING:** Foul. The snapper may not be contacted until one second has elapsed after the snap when Team A is in a scrimmage kick formation and it is reasonably obvious that a kick might be attempted.
- XXIV. Immediately after the snap, with Team A in an obvious scrimmage kick formation, noseguard B71 attempts to “shoot the gap” between the snapper and the adjacent lineman. B71’s initial legal contact is with the lineman next to the snapper. **RULING:** Legal. Incidental contact with the snapper after this initial legal contact will not be a foul (Rule 2-15-10).
- XXV. The player in position to receive a backward pass during a down-the-line option play is blocked by B55. **RULING:** Legal. A block below the waist, a block in the back, holding, or any personal foul against this player is illegal.
- XXVI. Team A is in an unbalanced line scrimmage formation or any other unusual alignment at the snap. Back A27 is a potential blocker. **RULING:** If the frame of A27’s body is positioned completely outside the frame of the body of the second player from the snapper, he is prohibited from blocking below the waist toward the original position of the ball in or behind the neutral zone, and within 10 yards beyond the neutral zone. If there is no Team A player occupying the normal tackle position, the blocking status of A27 must be determined by approximating this distance from the snapper.
- XXVII. As passer A9 releases the ball, B73 has one foot on the ground before his momentum carries him into A9. **RULING:** This is not a foul, since B73 may make direct contact with the passer only through the defender’s first step after A9’s release of the ball. B73 must be making an attempt to avoid contact and must be ‘easing up’ or have been blocked into A9 to avoid a foul. This does not relieve B73 of responsibility to avoid helmet-to-helmet contact or any other foul listed in Rule 9-1-2-a.
- XXVIII. After passer A17 releases the ball, B68 takes two strides and charges into A17, showing no attempt to avoid contact. **RULING:** Roughing the passer. The passer is a defenseless player who is vulnerable to injury and must be fully protected. After taking two strides, B68 should be aware that A17 has released the ball and be able to avoid contacting him.

### **Roughing or Running Into Kicker or Holder—ARTICLE 3**

#### **Approved Ruling 9-1-3**

- I. A1 plans to punt from behind his line of scrimmage but misses the ball, after which he is contacted by B1. **RULING:** Team A fumble. There is no kicker until the ball is actually kicked, and B1 therefore is not guilty of roughing the kicker.
- II. A1 kicks the ball, after which B1, unable to stop his attempt to block the kick, runs into the kicker or holder. **RULING:** Penalty—Five yards from the previous spot. Roughing

and 15 yards and first down if in question as to whether the foul is “running into” or “roughing.”

- III. A1, from a nonscrimmage kick formation, makes a quick, unexpected kick so suddenly that B1 cannot avoid contact. **RULING:** This is not roughing or running into the kicker since the rule applies only when it is reasonably obvious that a kick will be made.
- IV. B1 runs into player A1, who has kicked the ball and has had a reasonable time to regain his balance. **RULING:** Not a foul by B1 unless ruled as running into or throwing himself against an opponent obviously out of the play (Rule 9-1-2-j).
- V. After B1 runs into the kicker, kicker A25 simulates being roughed. **RULING:** Offsetting fouls.
- VI. Kicker A1, in a scrimmage kick formation, moves laterally two or three steps to recover a faulty snap, or recovers a snap that went over his head and then kicks the ball. He is contacted by B2 in an unsuccessful attempt to block the kick. **RULING:** A1 does not automatically lose his protection in either case. A1 is entitled to protection as in any other kicking situation. When it becomes obvious that A1 intends to kick (in a normal punting position), defensive players must avoid him.

### **Illegal Interference—ARTICLE 4**

#### **Approved Ruling 9-1-4**

- I. Team A, with 12 men on the field of play, snaps at its 40-yard line and throws a complete or incomplete forward pass. **RULING:** Illegal participation. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot.
- II. Team A, with 12 men on the field of play, snaps at its 40-yard line and punts the ball, which goes out of bounds at Team B’s 10-yard line. **RULING:** Illegal participation. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot, with Team A retaining the ball.
- III. Team A, with 12 men on the field of play, snaps the ball at its 40-yard line. The play makes 10 yards to midfield. **RULING:** Illegal participation. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot.
- IV. Team B has 12 men on the field of play when Team A snaps at its 40yard line and punts the ball, which goes out of bounds at Team B’s 10-yard line. **RULING:** Illegal participation on Team B. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot.
- V. With fourth and 30 on Team A’s 40-yard line, A1’s scrimmage kick is out of bounds at Team B’s four-yard line. Team B has 12 players participating. **RULING:** Illegal participation on Team B. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot but it is not an automatic first down. Fourth and 15. The clock starts on the snap.
- VI. Team B, with 11 players on the field of play, is setting up its defense. The ball is ready for play, and A13 is about to start calling snap signals. Two seconds before the snap, B54 enters from the team area to play defensive linebacker. Team B’s coach has sent B54 into the game without realizing that he already has 11 players on the field. **RULING:** Allow the ball to be snapped. Illegal participation on Team B. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot. (*Note:* This is not a violation of Rule 3-5-2-c.)
- VII. At the end of third down, Team B sends in its kick-return team. The responsible officials count the Team B players and are positive that Team B has 12 players on the field of play. After approximately four seconds, the officials sound their whistles and drop their penalty markers. **RULING:** Dead-ball foul, substitution violation. Penalty— Five yards from the succeeding spot.
- VIII. At the end of third down, Team B sends in its kick-return team. The responsible officials count the Team B players and it appears that Team B has 12 players on the field



of play. While the officials are attempting to recount the players, the ball is snapped. At the end of the down, the officials recount the Team B players and are positive that Team B had 12 players participate during the down. **RULING:** Illegal participation on Team B. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot. (*Note:* If the officials are not positive that a team has violated Rule 3-5-2-c, they should not sound their whistles and penalize the team five yards for a substitution violation.)

## SECTION 2. Noncontact Fouls

### Unsportsmanlike Acts—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 9-2-1

- I. Team B scores a touchdown on a kickoff return, and substitutes from the Team B area, with no intention of entering the game, run to the end zone to congratulate the runner. **RULING:** Unsportsmanlike act. Penalty—15 yards, enforced on the try or the succeeding kickoff.

### Unfair Tactics—ARTICLE 2

#### Approved Ruling 9-2-2

- I. After the ball is declared ready for play, Team A goes into a formation with two players split wide on both sides of the snapper and two other Team A linemen adjacent to the snapper, with seven men all legally on the scrimmage line. All four backfield players are legally in the backfield. Team A sends in two substitutes, who take positions on the line of scrimmage adjacent to the two split offensive linemen on the opposite side of the field of play from their team bench. This leaves Team A with nine players on the line of scrimmage and four backfield players all legally in position. Immediately and before the snap, two Team A linemen nearest their team's bench leave the field of play and are off at the snap. Seven players are on the line of scrimmage, five of whom are Team A linemen numbered 50 to 79. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot. This is a simulated replacement of a player to confuse the opponents.
- II. On fourth down at Team B's 12-yard line, A1 enters the field of play with a kicking shoe while his 11 teammates are in the huddle. A1 kneels and measures the distance from the neutral zone to the kicking spot. While his teammates are leaving the huddle, A1 leaves the field of play with the shoe. Team A quickly runs a play from scrimmage. **RULING:** Team A foul. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot. There shall be no simulated replacement of a player to confuse the opponents, and a player who communicates must remain in the game for one down.
- III. A1 leaves the field of play during a down. Team A huddles with 10 players. Substitute A12 enters, and A2 simulates leaving the field but sets near the sideline for a "hide-out" pass. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot. This is a simulated replacement of a player to confuse opponents.
- IV. Between scrimmage downs, one or more Team B substitutes enter the field of play. Before the snap for the next down, more than 11 Team B players intentionally stay on the field of play as long as possible (over three seconds) to disguise the defensive personnel, the type of defense and the pass coverage. **RULING:** Dead-ball foul on Team B, illegal substitution. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot (Rule 3-5-2-c).
- V. While a team is legally set to attempt a field goal, the potential holder for the kick goes toward his team area asking for a shoe. A shoe is thrown on the field and the player, in motion toward his team area, turns toward the goal line. The ball is snapped to the player in the kicking position, who throws a pass to the player who had turned upfield after asking for a shoe. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot.

- VI. Team A, with 12 players in the vicinity of the huddle (within 10 yards), breaks the huddle and two players start toward the sideline and Team A's bench. **RULING:** Dead-ball foul. Penalty—Five yards from the succeeding spot.
- VII. Team A is lined up in scrimmage kick formation and has been set for one second. One of the offensive backs shouts to and motions to A40, the blocker on the right wing, to get off the field. At the snap, A40 is in legal motion toward his sideline. A40 turns downfield and becomes a pass receiver. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot. This is a tactic associated with the substitution process to deceive opponents.

## **SECTION 3. Blocking, Use of Hand and Arm**

### **Use of Hands or Arms by Offense—ARTICLE 3**

#### **Approved Ruling 9-3-3**

- I. While a legal forward pass is in flight, a Team A player behind his scrimmage line holds an opponent. **RULING:** If the pass is completed, incompleted or intercepted, the penalty is 10 yards from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line.
- II. A teammate of the passer or runner, while charging across the neutral zone, contacts an opponent with his hands and arms not parallel to the ground or his hands cupped or closed but with the palms not facing the opponent. **RULING:** Legal use of hands.
- III. A teammate of the passer or runner, behind the neutral zone, has his arms parallel to the ground and contacts an opponent above the shoulders. **RULING:** Illegal use of hands. Penalty—10 yards or 15 yards for personal foul, previous-spot enforcement. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line.
- IV. A teammate of the passer or runner delivers a blow with the hand(s) closed to an opponent below the shoulders. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty—15 yards, basic-spot enforcement, or previous-spot enforcement if foul occurs behind the neutral zone. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line.
- V. A2's hands contact defensive player B2 in a legal block. B2 spins to avoid blocker A2, whose hands then contact B2's back. **RULING:** Legal block.
- VI. A2's hands contact defensive player B2's back when B2 spins to avoid A2. A2 keeps his hands on B2's back while B2 advances toward the passer. **RULING:** Legal block.
- VII. A2's hands contact defensive player B2 when B2 spins to avoid blocker A2, whose hands then contact B2's back. After A2's hands lose contact with B2, A2 advances and pushes B2 in the back. **RULING:** Illegal block in the back. Penalty—10 yards, basic-spot enforcement, or previous-spot enforcement if foul occurs behind the neutral zone (Rule 2-3-4). Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line.
- VIII. A1 in, beyond or behind the neutral zone contacts an opponent with an open hand or with hands closed or cupped and palms not facing the opponent. **RULING:** Legal block.

### **Use of Hands or Arms by Defense—ARTICLE 4**

#### **Approved Ruling 9-3-4**

- I. During a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone, B1 holds eligible A1, who is beyond or behind the neutral zone. The pass is not catchable by A1. **RULING:** Team B foul, holding. Penalty—10 yards and first down, basic-spot enforcement.
- II. Before a legal forward pass, which crosses the neutral zone, is thrown, Team B holds eligible A1, who is beyond the neutral zone. **RULING:** Team B foul, holding. Penalty—10 yards and first down, basic-spot enforcement.
- III. B20 intercepts A10's legal forward pass on his 10-yard line. During the runback, B40 pushes A80 in the back above the waist at Team B's 24yard line. B20's run ends at the

50-yard line. **RULING:** Team B foul, illegal block in the back. Penalty—10 yards from the spot of the foul. Team B's ball, first and 10 from its 14-yard line.

- IV. B50, in an attempt to reach the kicker, pulls lineman A60 by the shoulders and (a) releases A60 as he goes by or (b) continues to hold A60. **RULING:** (a) Legal. (b) Holding. Penalty—10 yards, previous-spot enforcement.

## SECTION 4. Batting and Kicking

### Batting a Loose Ball—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 9-4-1

- I. Team A attempts a field goal from Team B's 30-yard line. A Team B player in the end zone leaps above the crossbar and bats the ball in flight. The ball goes out of bounds in the end zone. **RULING:** Foul, safety.
- II. Team A attempts a field goal from Team B's 30-yard line. A Team B player in the end zone leaps above the crossbar and bats the ball in flight. The ball goes into the end zone and is recovered by Team A. **RULING:** Foul, touchdown.
- III. Team A attempts a field goal from Team B's 30-yard line. A Team B player in the end zone leaps above the crossbar and bats the ball in flight. The ball goes into the end zone and is recovered by Team B. **RULING:** Foul, safety.
- IV. Team A attempts a field goal from Team B's 30-yard line. A Team B player in the end zone leaps above the crossbar and bats the ball in flight. The ball goes into the field of play. **RULING:** Foul, safety. The ball remains alive, and Team A may elect the result of the play. If Team A recovers, does not score and accepts the penalty, enforcement is at the previous spot.
- V. Team A attempts a conversion on the try with a kick from placement. A Team B player in the end zone leaps above the crossbar and bats the ball in flight. The ball goes out of bounds in the end zone. **RULING:** Foul, half the distance from the previous spot, PAT exception [Rule 10-2-2-e Exception 3-(a)].
- VI. Team A attempts a conversion on the try with a kick from placement. A Team B player in the end zone leaps above the crossbar and bats the ball in flight. The ball goes into the end zone and is recovered by Team A. **RULING:** Foul, award Team A two points.
- VII. Team A attempts a field goal, and B23, in the end zone, goes above the crossbar and catches the ball. **RULING:** Legal play.
- VIII. Team A's fumble in flight is batted forward by B1, and the ball goes out of bounds behind Team A's goal line. **RULING:** Batting a fumble in flight does not add a new impetus. Basic-spot enforcement.
- IX. Team A's backward pass in flight is batted by B1, and the ball goes out of bounds behind Team A's goal line. **RULING:** Safety. A pass may be batted in any direction and the impetus is charged to Team A's pass (Rule 8-5-1-a).
- X. A free kick is muffed in flight by a Team B player in his end zone. While the ball is loose in the end zone, a Team B player bats the ball out of the end zone. **RULING:** Illegally batting a kick in the end zone. Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot.
- XI. After intercepting Team A's legal forward pass on Team B's 20-yard line, B1 fumbles at Team B's 38-yard line and B2 illegally bats the loose ball at Team B's 30-yard line. The ball goes forward and out of bounds. **RULING:** Team B foul. Penalty—15 yards from the spot of the foul. Team B's ball, first and 10 at the 15-yard line. No loss of down is included in the penalty since Team B is awarded a new series after the penalty enforcement (Rule 5-1-1-e-1).

# RULE 10. Penalty Enforcement

## SECTION 1. Penalties Completed

### How and When Completed—ARTICLE 1

#### Approved Ruling 10-1-1

- I. B1 blocks below the waist while the ball is in the air during a free kick. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot. The penalty does not include a first down for Team B's foul since by rule Team A will kick again after the yardage enforcement.

### Live-Ball Fouls by the Same Team—ARTICLE 3

#### Approved Ruling 10-1-3

- I. Team A commits two or more live-ball fouls during a down. **RULING:** Team B may choose one of the penalties or decline all of them (*Exception:* Live-ball fouls penalized as dead-ball fouls may be penalized separately).

### Offsetting Fouls—ARTICLE 4

#### Approved Ruling 10-1-4

- I. Team A punts and is illegally in motion at the snap. The untouched ball goes out of bounds between the goal lines, after which Team B commits a personal foul. **RULING:** If Team B elects to replay the down, Team A will be penalized five yards at the previous spot followed by a 15-yard penalty against Team B. Team B's foul shall award an automatic first down. Team B could refuse the Team A illegal motion and receive the ball first and 10 after a 15-yard penalty from the out-of-bounds spot.
- II. On a Team A kickoff, Team B fouls before the untouched ball goes out of bounds between the goal lines. **RULING:** Offsetting fouls.
- III. On a Team A kickoff from its 35-yard line, Team B fouls after the untouched ball goes out of bounds between the goal lines. **RULING:** Team B may elect a replay with Team A free-kicking at Team A's 45yard line. If Team B retains the ball, it will be after a 15-yard penalty from its 35-yard line or from the out-of-bounds spot, first and 10 (Rule 10-1-6).
- IV. A1's forward pass is intercepted by B1, who advances and fumbles. B2 picks up the ball and advances five more yards. Team A fouls during or after the down, and Team B fouls during the advance by B1. **RULING:** If Team A's foul was a live-ball foul, Team B may select offsetting fouls and replay the down or select an option to retain the ball with Team B's foul enforced. If the Team A foul was a dead-ball foul, Team B must retain the ball after enforcement of both penalties.
- V. A1's forward pass is intercepted by B1, who advances and fumbles. B2 picks up the ball and advances five more yards. Team A fouls during or after the down, and Team B fouls during the fumble while the ball is loose. **RULING:** If Team A's foul was a live-ball foul, Team B may select offsetting fouls and replay the down or select an option to retain the ball with Team B's foul enforced. If the Team A foul was a dead-ball foul, Team B must retain the ball after enforcement of both penalties.
- VI. A1's forward pass is intercepted by B1, who advances and fumbles. B2 picks up the ball and advances five more yards. Team A fouls during or after the down, and Team B fouls during the advance by B2. **RULING:** If Team A's foul was a live-ball foul, Team B may select offsetting fouls and replay the down or select an option to retain the ball with Team B's foul enforced. If the Team A foul was a dead-ball foul, Team B must retain the ball after enforcement of both penalties.

- VII. During a fourth down, a Team A player is in motion illegally, and immediately after the ball is declared dead short of the distance to be gained for a first down, a Team B player fouls. **RULING:** If Team B declines the penalty for Team A's foul, it will be Team B's ball first and 10 after enforcement of the penalty for Team B's foul. If Team B accepts the penalty for Team A's foul, Team A would be penalized five yards, then Team B's foul would be penalized. Team B's foul results in a first down for Team A if it was a personal foul.
- VIII. Team A punts and commits a touching violation. B1 clips during the runback of the punt, which is fumbled by B2. A1 recovers the fumble, and A2 fouls after the ball is dead. **RULING:** Team A is the team last in possession and had not fouled before the change of possession. If Team A does not accept Team B's foul, Team B would have the ball at the point of the violation, along with the option of accepting enforcement of Team A's dead-ball foul. If Team A accepts the Team B foul, the ball will belong to Team B after enforcement of the live-ball foul followed by the dead-ball foul.
- IX. B1 holds eligible A1 beyond the neutral zone before or during the flight of Team A's legal forward pass. During the down, eligible A2 voluntarily goes out of bounds but returns and is the first inbounds player to touch the pass. **RULING:** Offsetting fouls.
- X. A1 receives the snap in his end zone. Team B was offside, and A1 stepped on the end line before the snap and received the ball when out of bounds. **RULING:** Team A's foul, out of bounds at the snap, offsets Team B's offside, and the down is repeated [*Note:* If Team B had not been offside, Team B could elect the penalty for Team A's foul or a safety (Rule 8-5-1-a)].

## Dead-Ball Fouls—ARTICLE 5

### Approved Ruling 10-1-5

- I. A1 is downed beyond the line to gain. B1 piles on. The referee checks for other fouls, and when he has completed the penalty, A2 slugs B2. **RULING:** Disqualify A2 for fighting. A2's foul does not offset B1's foul. Unless one enforcement is within 30 yards of a goal and toward that goal, the ball will be at the same point it would have been if the fouls had canceled each other. First and 10 for Team A (Rule 9-1-2-g).
- II. Fair-catcher B1 is tackled by A1 after B1 has taken more than two steps, and A2 piles on B1. **RULING:** Penalize Team B five yards at the spot of the catch and then Team A 15 yards in the opposite direction. First and 10 for Team B (Rule 6-5-2).
- III. With fourth and eight, Team A gains four yards and the ball is declared dead, after which B1 is called for piling on. **RULING:** Team B personal foul. Penalty—15 yards from the succeeding spot. First and 10 for Team B (Rule 5-1-1-c).
- IV. A1 is tackled on third down behind the neutral zone by B1. After the ball is dead, B2 piles on A1. **RULING:** Team B personal foul. Penalty—15 yards from the succeeding spot. First and 10 for Team A (Rule 9-1-2-g).
- V. On third down, A1 gains 20 yards, is downed, then deliberately continues to advance, and B1 piles on him. **RULING:** Penalize Team A five yards from the dead-ball spot, followed by a 15-yard penalty against Team B. First and 10 for Team A (Rule 9-1-2-g).
- VI. A personal or disqualifying personal foul occurs during action after a snap that was made before the ball was declared ready. **RULING:** Every effort should be made to prevent any such premature snap and resulting action; but if such a foul does occur, it is between downs. If by Team A, both dead-ball fouls will be enforced. If the second foul was by Team B, both fouls will be enforced, with a probable net of 10 yards for Team A. Team B's foul would be an automatic first down.

VII. Second and goal at the three-yard line. Runner A14 is downed at the one-yard line and then B67 piles on. A14 retaliates by slugging B67. **RULING:** The penalties cancel since neither has been completed. A14 is disqualified for fighting. Third and goal (Rule 10-1-1).

VIII. Runner B17 taunts pursuing A55 prior to scoring a touchdown on an intercepted pass. After B17 crosses the goal line, he is tackled by A55 five yards into the end zone.

**RULING:** The penalties cancel since neither has been completed. The try will be at the three-yard line (Rule 10-1-1).

## **Live-Ball—Dead-Ball Fouls—ARTICLE 6**

### **Approved Ruling 10-1-6**

- I. Team A fouls during a down and after the down ends. **RULING:** Team B may choose both penalties, choose one penalty or decline both.
- II. On fourth and two, A1 is illegally in motion at the snap, and runner A2 gains one yard and then deliberately continues to advance. **RULING:** If Team B accepts both penalties, it will be fourth and 12 for Team A. If Team B accepts only the delay penalty, it will be first and 10 for Team B since Team A failed in its bid for a first down (Rule 5-1-4-f).
- III. With second and five, Team A is illegally in motion at the snap. After the ball becomes dead, a Team B player is disqualified for fighting after striking an opponent. **RULING:** It is Team A's ball after a five-yard penalty against Team A from the previous spot and a 15-yard penalty against Team B from the succeeding spot. Team A will have a first down because of the disqualifying contact foul for fighting.
- IV. B1 fouls during a down before B2 intercepts a legal forward pass. After the ball is declared dead, A1 piles on. **RULING:** Team A retains the ball after penalizing Team B. Team A then will be penalized for the dead-ball foul (Rule 5-2-3).
- V. Offsetting fouls have been reported, and the ball is being taken to the spot of the ensuing down when a player fouls. **RULING:** Penalties for the offsetting fouls canceled each other when reported to the referee and were completed at that time (Rules 10-1-1 and 4). The subsequent foul is considered separately as in the case of any other single foul between downs (Rule 5-2-3).
- VI. Team B is offside on the snap at its three-yard line (not a try) and Team A throws a legal forward pass into Team B's end zone. Team B intercepts and runs 101 yards to Team A's end zone, after which Team A clips. **RULING:** Repeat the down with Team A putting the ball in play at the Team B 16½-yard line.
- VII. No fouls have occurred when Team B intercepts Team A's legal forward pass. On the runback, a Team B player clips. When the ball becomes dead, a Team A player piles on. **RULING:** Penalize Team B's clipping foul, followed by a penalty for Team A's piling foul. The yardages will cancel unless one enforcement spot was inside the 30yard line and enforcement was toward that goal.

## **Interval Fouls—ARTICLE 7**

### **Approved Ruling 10-1-7**

#### **Fouls during a touchdown or field goal by Team A:**

- I. Team B clips after the snap in the field of play or the end zone. **RULING:** Team A has the option of penalizing Team B on the try or the succeeding kickoff, if the foul occurs during the down ending in a touchdown (Rule 10-2-2-g).
- II. Team A commits a contact foul in the field of play. **RULING:** No score. Penalize Team A according to rule.

- III. Team A fouls in the end zone during the run. **RULING:** No score. Penalize Team A from the goal line (basic spot).
- IV. Team B commits a personal foul during a down when Team A scores a touchdown, and then Team A fouls after the score and before the ready-for-play signal on the try. **RULING:** Allow the score. Team A has the option of penalizing Team B on the try or the succeeding kickoff. Team B then also has the option of penalizing Team A on the try or the succeeding kickoff. The yardage assessed for the live-ball/dead-ball fouls may offset (Rule 10-2-2-g).
- V. Team B holds during Team A's touchdown run. Team A fouls after the score. **RULING:** Allow the score. Team B has the option of penalizing Team A on the try or the succeeding kickoff (Rule 10-2-2-g).
- VI. A Team B player slugs an opponent during or after Team A's touchdown run. Team B is offside on the successful try. **RULING:** Allow the touchdown. Disqualify the Team B player for fighting. Team A has the option of penalizing Team B on the try or the succeeding kickoff. After the successful try, Team A has the option of repeating the try with the offside penalty enforced on the try (Rules 10-2-2-g-1 and 3).
- VII. Team B commits a 15-yard face-mask foul during or after Team A's touchdown pass. Team B fouls on Team A's successful try. Team B fouls after the try. **RULING:** Allow the touchdown. Team A has the option of penalizing Team B on the try or the succeeding kickoff. After the successful try, Team A has the option of repeating the try with the penalty enforced on the try. Personal fouls against the snapper (in a scrimmage kick formation), holder, kicker or passer may be enforced on the subsequent kickoff or succeeding spot in extra periods. For Team B's foul after the try, the penalty may be enforced on the kickoff or succeeding spot in extra periods, unless the try is repeated, in which case it must be enforced on the repeated try (Rules 8-3-5, 10-1-6 and 10-2-2-g).
- VIII. Team B fouls against the passer during a completed touchdown pass play. **RULING:** Allow the touchdown. Team A has the option of penalizing Team B on the try or the succeeding kickoff.
- IX. Team B is offside during a successful field goal down. **RULING:** Team A has the option of declining the field goal with the penalty from the previous spot or accepting the points.

#### **Fouls after a touchdown by Team A:**

- X. Team A fouls after it scores a touchdown, and Team B fouls on the successful try. **RULING:** Allow the touchdown. Team B has the option of penalizing Team A on the try or the succeeding kickoff. Team A then has the option of penalizing Team B on a replay of the try. Personal fouls against the snapper (in a scrimmage kick formation), holder, kicker or passer may be enforced on the subsequent kickoff or succeeding spot in extra periods. Yardages assessed on the succeeding kickoff may offset.
- XI. Team A fouls after it scores a touchdown, and Team B fouls after a successful try. **RULING:** Allow the score. Team B has the option of penalizing Team A on the try or the succeeding kickoff. For the foul after the try, Team B is penalized on the kickoff or from the succeeding spot in extra periods. No option on the enforcement spot for a dead-ball foul after a try.

#### **Fouls during a try with no change of team possession (this does not include live-ball fouls enforced as dead-ball fouls or loss-of-down fouls):**

- XII. Team A fouls during a successful try. **RULING:** The penalty is enforced, and the try is repeated (Rule 8-3-3).

- XIII. Team A fouls during an unsuccessful try. **RULING:** The penalty is obviously declined (Rule 8-3-3).
- XIV. Team B fouls during an unsuccessful try. **RULING:** Team B is penalized, and the try is repeated. The PAT is exempt from Rule 10-2-2-e Exception 3.
- XV. Team B fouls during a successful try. **RULING:** Replay the down after enforcement or the penalty is declined by rule. Personal fouls against the snapper (in a scrimmage kick formation), holder, kicker or passer may be enforced on the subsequent kickoff or succeeding spot in extra periods (Rule 8-3-3).
- XVI. Both Team A and Team B foul during a try. **RULING:** The try is repeated at the previous spot (Rule 8-3-3).
- XVII. During a successful kick try from the three-yard line, Team B is offside. After the ball is dead, Team B commits a personal foul. **RULING:** Team A has the option of replaying the try with the Team B penalties enforced or declining the offside penalty and accepting the point (Rule 10-1-6). Team B's dead-ball foul is then penalized on the kickoff or from the succeeding spot in extra periods.
- XVIII. During an unsuccessful kick try from the three-yard line, Team A commits an illegal-motion foul. After the ball becomes dead, Team B fouls. **RULING:** Team B obviously will refuse the penalty for the Team A foul. Team B is penalized on the kickoff or from the succeeding spot in extra periods.

#### **Fouls after a try and before the succeeding kickoff:**

- XIX. Either team fouls. **RULING:** Enforce the penalty on the kickoff unless the try is the last down of the game.
- XX. Both teams foul before either foul is completed. **RULING:** The fouls cancel.
- XXI. The penalty for Team B's foul after a successful try is accepted and will be enforced on the free kick; then:
1. Team A fouls after the try. **RULING:** Penalize the fouls in the order of their occurrence on the kickoff.
  2. Team B fouls after the try. **RULING:** Penalize both Team B fouls in the order of their occurrence on the kickoff.
  3. Both teams foul before either foul is completed. **RULING:** These fouls cancel. Team B's original foul is penalized on the kickoff.

## **SECTION 2. Enforcement Procedures**

### **Procedures—ARTICLE 2**

#### **Approved Ruling 10-2-2**

- I. Team A's ball on Team B's three-yard line, fourth down, the line to gain is the one-half-yard line. Team A gains two yards, and Team B was offside. **RULING:** Fourth down for Team A on the 1½-yard line. Team A loses part of its advance but salvages the down.
- II. On a free kick that does not go out of bounds, either team commits a personal foul before the ball is legally touched. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the previous spot, repeat the kick.
- III. A kickoff untouched by Team B goes out of bounds after illegal touching by Team A. Team A commits a personal or holding foul during the kick. **RULING:** Team B may snap at the spot of the illegal touching violation; accept a five-, 10- or 15-yard penalty from the previous spot; or put the ball in play 30 yards beyond Team A's free kick line or at the inbounds spot where the ball went out of bounds.



- IV. A fumble or backward pass is loose in Team A's end zone, where the ball is kicked or batted illegally by Team A. **RULING:** Penalty—A safety if accepted (Rule 8-5-1-b).
- V. A Team A player clips behind Team B's goal line when a fumbled ball is in the end zone. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot.
- VI. A Team A player commits an illegal block in the back behind Team B's goal line when a fumbled ball is in the field of play. **RULING:** Penalty—10 yards from the basic spot.
- VII. A Team A player clips behind Team B's goal line before a fumbled ball in the field of play goes out of bounds between the goal lines. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot.
- VIII. A Team A player clips behind Team B's goal line when a Team A scrimmage kick has touched a Team B player in the field of play and is not in possession or dead. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot.
- IX. Either team fouls after the ball has been touched and before possession beyond the neutral zone during a scrimmage kick. The foul is more than three yards beyond the neutral zone, and Team A does not have possession when the down ends. **RULING:** Enforcement for Team B's foul will be at the postscrimmage kick enforcement spot. Team B's ball, first and 10. Enforcement for Team A's foul is at the previous spot.
- X. Team A's punt from its end zone is returned to Team A's 30-yard line. Team A clips Team B at a spot behind Team A's goal line while the punt receiver of Team B is still a runner. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot (Team A's 30-yard line).
- XI. Team A's punt from its end zone is returned to Team A's 30-yard line. Team A clips Team B at a spot behind Team A's goal line after the ball has become dead in Team B's possession. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the succeeding spot.
- XII. Team A's punt from its end zone is returned to Team A's 30-yard line. Team A clips Team B at a spot behind Team A's goal line after Team B has fumbled and the ball is loose. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot (the spot of the fumble), Team B's ball.
- XIII. Team A's untouched punt from its end zone goes out of bounds at Team A's 40-yard line. A2, in his end zone, clips Team B before the ball is kicked. **RULING:** Penalty—Safety (Rule 9-1-2 Penalty).
- XIV. Team A's untouched punt from its end zone goes out of bounds at Team A's 40-yard line. A2, in his end zone, clips Team B during the kick. **RULING:** Penalty—Safety (Rule 9-1-2 Penalty).
- XV. Team A's untouched punt from its end zone goes out of bounds at Team A's 40-yard line. A2, in his end zone, clips Team B after the ball is out of bounds. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the succeeding spot. First and 10 for Team B on Team A's 25-yard line.
- XVI. Team A snaps at its one-yard line, and A1 advances and is downed on his five-yard line. Team B commits a personal foul in the end zone while the ball is in play. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot (five-yard line).
- XVII. Team A snaps at its one-yard line, and A1 advances and is downed on his five-yard line. Team B fouls in the end zone after the ball is dead. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the succeeding spot.
- XVIII. A1, on his 40-yard line, punts from behind the neutral zone. B1 holds A2 behind the neutral zone before the kick has been made. **RULING:** Penalty—10 yards from the previous spot.

- XIX. A1, on his 40-yard line, punts from behind the neutral zone. B1 holds A2 behind the neutral zone after the kick crosses the neutral zone and before it has touched Team B. **RULING:** Penalty—10 yards from the previous spot. Team A's ball.
- XX. A1, on his 40-yard line, punts from behind his neutral zone. B1 holds A2 behind the neutral zone after the kick has been touched by Team B beyond the neutral zone and is still loose. **RULING:** Penalty—10 yards from the previous spot. Team A's ball.
- XXI. After Team A's free kick, the ball remains inbounds and Team B holds. **RULING:** Penalty—10 yards from the previous spot, and Team A repeats the free kick.
- XXII. Team A's kick from behind the neutral zone crosses the neutral zone (untouched by Team B after the ball is blocked or touched on or behind the line) and rebounds behind the neutral zone before clipping or holding by Team B occurs. The ball is loose at the time of the foul. **RULING:** If the holding or clipping occurred more than three yards beyond the neutral zone, Team B has possession when the down ends and the foul is accepted, enforcement will be at the postscrimmage kick enforcement spot with a first and 10 for Team B. If the holding or clipping occurred less than three yards beyond the neutral zone, Team A retains the ball after the penalty from the previous spot.
- XXIII. Team A's kick from behind its line is blocked behind the neutral zone before clipping or holding by Team B occurs beyond the neutral zone. The ball never crosses the neutral zone during the play. **RULING:** Rule 10-2-2-e Exception 3 applies only to a scrimmage kick that crosses the neutral zone. Team A's ball after the penalty from the previous spot.
- XXIV. Team A's successful field goal attempt is snapped from Team B's 30-yard line, and a Team B player fouls at the 20-yard line during the kick. **RULING:** The kick is successful. Team A does not have an option of accepting the penalty and replaying the down. The penalty is declined by rule (Rule 8-4-2-a).
- XXV. Team A's untouched, unsuccessful field goal attempt is snapped from Team B's 30-yard line, and a Team B player fouls at the 15-yard line during the kick. **RULING:** Team B's ball. The post-scrimmage kick spot is at the 30-yard line and the enforcement is from the 15-yard line, the spot of the foul, with no possible replay (Rules 2-25-9 Exception 2 and 8-4-2-b).
- XXVI. Second and goal. After A1 is downed on the three-yard line, a Team B player slugs a Team A player at a spot behind Team B's goal line. **RULING:** First down for Team A on Team B's 1½-yard line. The Team B player is disqualified for fighting.
- XXVII. Fourth and goal. B1 fouls eligible A3 in Team B's end zone while A1 attempts to locate a receiver, and A1 is then downed behind his line. **RULING:** Not interference since the ball was not thrown. Penalize B1's foul from the basic spot.
- XXVIII. While A1 advances the ball 30 yards beyond the neutral zone, a Team B player fouls 10 yards beyond the neutral zone. A1, after advancing 30 yards, fumbles the ball and it is recovered by a Team B player, who runs the ball across Team A's goal line. **RULING:** Penalize Team B from the basic spot, which is the spot of the fumble. Team A retains possession of the ball.
- XXIX. Team A puts the ball in play on Team A's 40-yard line, first and 10. A1 advances the ball to Team B's 40-yard line, where he is downed. On the advance by A1, B1 clips on Team A's 45-yard line. **RULING:** Penalty—Team A's ball, first and 10, on Team B's 25-yard line.
- XXX. Team A puts the ball in play on Team A's 40-yard line, first and 10. A1 runs the ball across Team B's goal line. On the advance by A1, B1 clips on Team B's 30-yard line. **RULING:** Penalty—Half the distance to the goal line on the try, or the 15-yard penalty on the succeeding kickoff.

- XXXI. On first and 10 from Team A's 40-yard line, A1 advances to Team B's 40-yard line, where he fumbles. B1 recovers and returns the ball across Team A's goal line. During A1's run from scrimmage, B2 commits a personal foul on the 50-yard line. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the basic spot (end of the related run, Team B's 40-yard line) and first down for Team A.
- XXXII. Team A puts the ball in play on Team A's 40-yard line, first and 10. A1 advances the ball to Team B's 40-yard line, where he is downed. On the advance of A1, B1 clips on Team A's 30-yard line. **RULING:** Penalty—Team A's ball, first and 10, on Team B's 25-yard line.
- XXXIII. A legal forward pass is completed behind the neutral zone, and the receiver avoids tacklers for a considerable time but finally is downed beyond the neutral zone. The player who passed the ball is roughed behind the neutral zone while the pass is in flight. **RULING:** Penalty—15 yards from the end of the run and a first down (Rule 2-27-5).
- XXXIV. After a scrimmage kick, during the runback B40 blocks A80 in the back above the waist at Team B's 25-yard line. Team B's runner is downed with the ball in his possession at Team B's 40-yard line. **RULING:** Team B foul, illegal block in the back. Penalty—10 yards from the spot of the foul. Team B's ball, first and 10, from its 15-yard line.
- XXXV. Team B intercepts, and the player who threw the legal forward pass is fouled before the interception. **RULING:** Team A's ball, first down after the penalty from the previous spot (Rules 2-27-5 and 9-1-2-o).
- XXXVI. Team B intercepts, and the player who threw the legal forward pass is fouled while Team B is advancing. **RULING:** Team B's ball, first down, after the penalty from the basic spot (Rules 2-27-5 and 9-1-2).
- XXXVII. On a legal forward pass behind the neutral zone, eligible A1 "has position" on B1 and is about to touch the pass when B1 pushes A1 and the pass is incomplete. **RULING:** Legal. Interference rules do not apply behind the neutral zone (Rules 7-3-9-d, 9-1-2-d Exception 4 and 9-3-3-c Exception 5).
- XXXVIII. B1 intercepts a legal forward pass (not a try) deep in his end zone and advances but does not get out of the end zone, where he is downed. During the run, B2 clips A1 on the 14-yard line. **RULING:** The 20-yard line is the basic spot. Penalize Team B from the 14-yard line to the seven-yard line. First and 10 (Rule 8-6-1-a).
- XXXIX. B1 intercepts a legal forward pass (not a try) deep in his end zone and advances but does not get out of the end zone, where he is downed. During the run, B2 clips A1 on the 25-yard line. **RULING:** The 20-yard line is the basic spot. Penalize Team B from the 20-yard line to the 10-yard line. First and 10 (Rule 8-6-1-a).
- XL. B1 intercepts a legal forward pass (not a try) deep in his end zone and advances but does not get out of the end zone, where he is downed. During the run, B2 clips A1 in the end zone. **RULING:** The 20-yard line is the basic spot—Safety.
- XLI. B17 intercepts a legal forward pass (not a try) deep in his end zone and, as he attempts to run the ball out of the end zone, A19 clips in the end zone. After the foul and before B17 leaves the end zone, B17 fumbles with A26 recovering on the two-yard line. **RULING:** Penalize from the goal line with Team B retaining possession of the ball.
- XLII. After a safety, Team A punts the ball at Team A's 20-yard line. The ball goes out of bounds untouched by Team B. **RULING:** Team B captain has the choice of Team A kicking again from Team A's 15-yard line or of putting the ball in play at the 50-yard line on the inbounds line or at the inbounds spot.

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XLIII. During A27's touchdown run, B19 incidentally grasps A27's facemask. **RULING:**  
The try will be from the three-yard line since "incidental grasping" does not qualify as a personal foul.