

RULE 9

Conduct of Players and Others Subject to the Rules

SECTION 1. Contact and Interference Fouls

Flagrant Fouls

ARTICLE 1. Before the game, during the game and between periods, all flagrant fouls require disqualification. Team B disqualification personal fouls require first downs if not in conflict with other rules.

Persons Subject to the Rules Restrictions

ARTICLE 2. No person subject to the rules shall commit a personal foul before the game, during the game or between the periods. Any act prohibited hereunder or any other act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul.

- a. No person subject to the rules shall strike an opponent with the knee; strike an opponent's helmet (including the face mask), neck, face or any other part of the body with an extended forearm, elbow, locked hands, palm, fist or the heel, back or side of the open hand, or gouge an opponent. **(A.R. 9-1-2:I and II)**
- b. No person subject to the rules shall strike an opponent with his foot or any part of his leg that is below the knee.
- c. There shall be no tripping (*Exception:* Tripping the ball carrier is not a foul).
- d. There shall be no clipping.

Exceptions:

1. Offensive players who are on the line of scrimmage at the snap within the blocking zone (Rule 2-3-6) legally may clip in the blocking zone, subject to the following restrictions:
 - (a) A player in the blocking zone may not block an opponent with the force of the initial contact from behind and at or below the knee (*Exception:* Against the runner).
 - (b) A player on the line of scrimmage within the blocking zone may not leave the zone and return and legally clip.
 - (c) The blocking zone exists until the ball is touched outside the zone or the ball is outside the zone after a fumble, backward pass or muff from inside the zone.
2. When a player turns his back on a potential blocker who has committed himself in intent and direction or movement.
3. When a player attempts to reach a runner or legally attempts to recover or catch a fumble, a muff, a backward pass, a kick or a touched forward pass, he may push an opponent below the waist at or to the buttocks. (*Exception:* Rule 9-3-3-c-3). **(A.R. 6-3-1:III)**
4. When an eligible player behind the neutral zone pushes an opponent below the waist at or to the buttocks to get to a forward pass. (*Exception:* Rule 9-3-3-c-5).

- e. Blocking below the waist is permitted except as follows: **(A.R. 9-1-2:III-IX)**
1. Offensive linemen at the snap positioned more than seven yards from the middle lineman of the offensive formation are prohibited from blocking below the waist toward the original position of the ball in or behind the neutral zone and within ten yards beyond the neutral zone.
 2. Backs at the snap positioned with the frame of their body completely outside the right or left side of the blocking zone or completely outside the frame of the body of the second lineman from the middle lineman of the offensive formation in either direction toward a sideline, or in motion at the snap, are prohibited from blocking below the waist toward the original position of the ball in or behind the neutral zone and within ten yards beyond the neutral zone. The frame of the body does not include arms or legs extended sideways. **(A.R. 9-1-2:XXI)**
 3. During a scrimmage down, defensive players are prohibited from blocking an eligible Team A receiver below the waist beyond the neutral zone unless attempting to get at the ball or ball carrier. A Team A receiver remains eligible until a legal forward pass is no longer possible by rule.
 4. During a down in which there is a scrimmage kick from a scrimmage kick formation or a free kick, all players are prohibited from blocking below the waist except against the ball carrier.
 5. After any change of team possession all players are prohibited from blocking below the waist except against the runner.
 6. A Team A player behind the neutral zone and in position to receive a backward pass shall not be blocked below the waist or contacted by way of a personal foul.
- f. No player shall tackle or run into a receiver when a forward pass to him obviously is not catchable. This is a personal foul and not pass interference.
- g. There shall be no piling on, falling on, or throwing the body on an opponent after the ball becomes dead. **(A.R. 9-1-2:X)**
- h. No opponent shall tackle or block the ball carrier when he is clearly out of bounds or throw him to the ground after the ball becomes dead.
- i. There shall be no hurdling. **(Exception:** The ball carrier may hurdle an opponent.)
- j. No player shall run into or throw himself against an opponent obviously out of the play either before or after the ball is dead **(A.R. 9-1-2:XVI)**.
- k. No player shall continuously contact an opponent's helmet (including the face mask) with hand(s) or arm(s) **(Exception:** by or against the ball carrier).
- l. No defensive player shall charge into a passer or throw him to the ground when it is obvious the ball has been thrown. This is roughing the passer. The penalty is added to the end of the last run when it ends beyond the neutral zone and there is no change of team possession during the down. **(Exception:** A defensive player who is blocked by a Team A player(s) with a force so that he has no opportunity to avoid contact with the passer. However, this does not relieve the defensive player of responsibility for personal fouls as described in Rule 9-1-2-a). **(A.R. 2-30-4:I and II) (A.R. 9-1-2:XI-XIII) (A.R. 10-2-1:I and II) (A.R. 10-2-2:XXIII)**
- m. There shall be no chop blocking. **(A.R. 2-3-3:III and IV) (A.R. 9-1-2:XXVI)**.
- n. No defensive player, in an attempt to gain an advantage, may step, jump or stand on an opponent (Rule 9-3-5-b). No defensive player who runs forward from beyond the neutral zone and leaps from beyond the neutral zone in an obvious attempt to block a field goal or try may land on any player(s). It is not a foul if the leaping player was aligned in a stationary position within one yard of the line of scrimmage when the ball was snapped.

- o. When a team is in scrimmage kick formation, a defensive player may not initiate contact with the snapper until one second has elapsed after the snap. **(A.R. 9-1-2:XVIII-XX)**
- p. All players are prohibited from grabbing the inside back collar of the shoulder pads or jersey, or the inside collar of the side of the shoulder pads or jersey, and immediately pulling the ball carrier down. This does not apply to a ball carrier, including a potential passer, who is inside the tackle box.
- q. No player shall twist, turn or pull the face mask, chin strap or any helmet opening of an opponent. It is not a foul if the face mask, chin strap or helmet opening is not twisted, turned or pulled. When in question, it is a foul. **(A.R. 9-1-2:XII)**

PENALTY – (a-q) — 15 yards. For dead-ball fouls, 15 yards from the succeeding spot. Automatic first down for Team B fouls if the first down is not in conflict with other rules (Exception: Penalties for Team A personal fouls behind the neutral zone are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A’s goal line) [S7, S24, S34, S38, S39, S40, S41 or S46]. Flagrant offenders shall be disqualified [S47].

For Team A fouls during free or scrimmage kick plays (field goal plays exempted): Enforcement may be at the previous spot or the spot where the subsequent dead ball belongs to Team B (Rules 6-1-8 and 6-3-13).

- **Approved Ruling 9-1-2**

- I. A player (a) 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) and (b) Personal foul, striking with the knee. Penalty — 15 yards. Enforce at the previous spot if foul by Team A occurs behind the neutral zone. Safety if the foul by Team A occurs behind Team A’s goal line. First down if foul is by Team B. Disqualify if flagrant. [Cited by 9-1-2-a]
- II. A Team B player uses an extended forearm to strike a blow to the helmet of the ball carrier while attempting to tackle. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty — 15-yards and automatic first down. Disqualify if flagrant. [Cited by 9-1-2-a]
- III. 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). [Cited by 2-23-1-i, 9-1-2-e]
- IV. Quarterback A1 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 (Rule 2-23-1-i). [Cited by 2-23-1-i, 9-1-2-e]
- V. On a run or pass option play, wide receiver A2 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 (Rule 2-23-1-i). [Cited by 2-23-1-i, 9-1-2-e]
- VI. 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 is below the waist and occurs behind or one yard beyond the neutral zone. **RULING:** Illegal block. Penalty — 15 yards. Enforce at previous spot if foul occurs behind the neutral zone (Rule 2-23-1-i). [Cited by 2-23-1-i, 9-1-2-e]
- VII. 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 below the waist away from the ball at the snap. **RULING:** Legal block (Rule 2-23-1-i). [Cited by 2-23-1-i, 9-1-2-e]

- VIII. At the snap, flanker A2 is positioned 10 yards outside the middle lineman of the offensive formation. As he moves toward the sideline he blocks a defensive halfback below the waist away from the ball. **RULING:** Legal block (Rule 2-23-1-i). [Cited by 2-23-1-i, 9-1-2-e]
- IX. At the snap, wing back A1 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 previous spot (Rule 2-23-1-i). Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line. [Cited by 2-23-1-i, 9-1-2-e]
- X. 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 succeeding spot and first down if by a Team B player and not in conflict with other rules. "Piling on" applies to a ball carrier or to any other opponent who is prostrate when the ball becomes dead. [Cited by 9-1-2-g]
- XI. A defensive player charges into the passer who is standing still or fading back after the ball has obviously been thrown. **RULING:** Roughing the passer. Penalty — First down. 15 yards from the previous spot or the penalty will be added to the end of the last run under certain circumstances (Rule 9-1-2-l). [Cited by 9-1-2-l]
- XII. A defensive player, during a live ball, (a) grabs and releases or (b) twists, turns or pulls the face mask, chin strap or any opening of the opponent's helmet. **RULING:** (a) No foul. (b) Personal foul. Penalty — 15 yards and first down. [Cited by 9-1-2-l, 9-1-2-q]
- XIII. A player, during a live ball, rams an opponent with his helmet or face mask. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty — 15 yards. Enforce 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. [Cited by 9-1-2-l]
- XIV. B2, a defensive back, slugs A1 while A2 is running with the ball. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty — 15 yards and first down. B2 is disqualified.
- XV. A1, a ball carrier, strikes tackler B6 with his extended forearm just before being tackled. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty — 15 yards. Enforce 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.
- XVI. A21 catches a legal forward pass for a touchdown. Clearly after the score, A21 is tackled by B40. **RULING:** Dead-ball foul. Penalty — 15 yards 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). [Cited by 9-1-2-j]
- XVII. 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. [Cited by 2-3-4-a, 9-3-3-c]
- XVIII. 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. [Cited by 2-15-10-a, 9-1-2-o]
- XIX. 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. Penalty — 15 yards and automatic first down. 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. [Cited by 2-15-10-a, 9-1-2-o]
- XX. Immediately after the snap, with Team A in an obvious scrimmage kick formation, nose guard 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 is not a foul (Rule 2-15-10).
[Cited by 2-15-10-a, 9-1-2-o]

- XXI. 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 tackle box, 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. [Cited by 9-1-2-e-2]
- XXII. 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 A9 and must be easing up or have been blocked into A9 to avoid a foul. This does not relieve B73 of responsibility to avoid contact with the helmet or any other foul listed in Rule 9-1-2 or 9-1-3.
- XXIII. 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.
- XXIV. As ball carrier A20 races down the field near the sideline, defender B56 grabs him from behind by the back of the jersey at the collar or by the collar of his shoulder pad and immediately pulls him to the ground. **RULING:** Personal foul (Rule 9-1-2-p). Penalty — 15 yards plus automatic first down.
- XXV. As ball carrier A20 races down the field near the sideline, defender B56 grabs him from behind by the back of the jersey at the collar or by the collar of his shoulder pad. B56 continues with this contact for several yards but A20 does not go to the ground until tackled by another defender. **RULING:** Legal play. B56 did not foul, because he did not immediately pull A20 down.
- XXVI. After snapping the ball, snapper A54 brushes by nose guard B62 on his way to block a linebacker. A54 makes slight contact with B62, or B62 reaches out and uses his arm to initiate contact with A54. While B62 and A54 are in contact, right guard A68 blocks B62 at the knee from the front. **RULING:** Legal. A54 is not blocking B62. The incidental contact or B62's initiating contact does not constitute part of a combination block, and hence there is no chop block. [Cited by 2-3-3, 9-1-2-m]

Initiating Contact/Targeting an Opponent

- ARTICLE 3. a. No player shall initiate contact and target an opponent with the crown (top) of his helmet. When in question, it is a foul.
- b. No player shall initiate contact and target a defenseless opponent above the shoulders. When in question, it is a foul. (Refer to Points of Emphasis for a description of "Defenseless Player".)

PENALTY – (a-b) — Personal foul, 15 yards. For dead-ball fouls, 15 yards from the succeeding spot. Also, automatic first down for Team B fouls if not in conflict with other rules. (Exception: Penalties for Team A personal fouls behind the neutral zone are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line) [S7, S24, S34, S38, S39, S40, S41, S45 or S46]. Flagrant offenders shall be disqualified [S47].

For Team A fouls during free or scrimmage kick plays (field goal plays exempted): Enforcement may be at the previous spot or the spot where the subsequent dead ball belongs to Team B (Rules 6-1-8 and 6-3-13).

NOTE: See Rule 9-6 for mandatory competition review procedures.

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

- I. Passer A12 inside the tackle box looking for an open receiver. Before or just as he releases the ball, A12 is hit from the side at the ribs, thigh or knee by B79, who leads with the crown (top) of his helmet. **RULING:** Foul by B79 for targeting his opponent and initiating contact with the top of his helmet. Ejection for a flagrant foul.
- II. Receiver A83 has just leaped and received a forward pass. As A83 is about to regain his balance, B45 launches and drives into A83 above the shoulder area with his helmet or shoulder. **RULING:** Foul by B45 for targeting and initiating contact with a defenseless opponent above the shoulders. Ejection for a flagrant foul.
- III. As ball carrier A20 sweeps around the end and heads upfield, he lowers his head and contacts defensive end B89 who is trying to tackle him. The players meet helmet to helmet. **RULING:** No foul. Neither A20 nor B89 is a defenseless player and neither has targeted his opponent in the sense of Rule 9-1-3.

Roughing or Running into Kicker or Holder

ARTICLE 4. a. When it is obvious that a scrimmage kick will be made, no opponent shall run into or rough the kicker, or holder of a place kick. (A.R. 5-2-2:I) (A.R. 9-1-4:I, III and VI)

1. Roughing is a personal foul that endangers the kicker or holder.
2. Running into the kicker or holder is a foul that occurs when the kicker or holder is displaced from his kicking or holding position but is not roughed. (A.R. 9-1-4:II)
3. Incidental contact with a kicker or holder is not a foul.
4. The kicker and holder must be protected from injury, but contact that occurs when or after a scrimmage kick has been touched is not roughing or running into the kicker or holder.
5. The kicker's protection under this rule ends:
 - (a) When he has had a reasonable time to regain his balance (A.R. 9-1-4:IV); or
 - (b) When he carries the ball outside the tackle box (Rule 2-34) before kicking.
6. A defensive player legally blocked into the kicker or holder by a member of the kicking team is not exempt from fouls for running into or roughing the kicker or holder. A defensive player illegally blocked into the kicker or holder by a member of the kicking team is exempt from fouls for running into or roughing the kicker or holder.
7. When a player, other than one who blocks a scrimmage kick, runs into or roughs the kicker or holder it is a foul.
8. When in question whether the foul is "running into" or "roughing", the foul is "roughing".

PENALTY – Five yards from the previous spot for running into the kicker or holder [S30]. 15 yards from the previous spot and a first down for roughing the kicker or holder if the first down is not in conflict with other rules [S38 and S30]. Flagrant offenders shall be disqualified [S47].

- b. A kicker or holder simulating being roughed or run into by a defensive player commits an unsportsmanlike act. (A.R. 9-1-4:V)

PENALTY – 15 yards from the previous spot [S27].

- c. The kicker of a free kick may not be blocked until he has advanced 5 yards beyond his restraining line or the kick has touched a player, an official or the ground.

PENALTY – 15 yards from the previous spot [S40].

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

- I. A1 catches a long snap and plans to punt from behind his line of scrimmage, but misses the ball, which falls to the ground. A1 is then contacted by B1. **RULING:** Team A fumble. There is no kicker until the ball is kicked, so B1 is not guilty of roughing the kicker. [Cited by 9-1-4-a]
- 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 whether the foul is “running into” or “roughing”. [Cited by 9-1-4-a-2]
- III. A1, from a non-scrimmage 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. [Cited by 9-1-4-a]
- 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 (9-1-2-j). [Cited by 9-1-4-a-5-a]
- V. After B1 runs into the kicker, kicker A25 simulates being roughed. **RULING:** Offsetting fouls. [Cited by 9-1-4-b]
- 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 unless he carries the ball outside the tackle box. While in the tackle box, 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. [Cited by 9-1-4-a]
- VII. Punter A22 is 15 yards behind the neutral zone when he catches the long snap, sprints to his right at an angle toward the line of scrimmage, and runs outside the tackle box. He then stops and punts the ball, and is immediately hit by a diving B89. **RULING:** Legal play, no foul by B89. A22 loses his roughing or running-into protection by carrying the ball outside the tackle box.

Illegal Interference

ARTICLE 5. a. No substitute, coach, authorised attendant or any person subject to the rules, other than a player or official, may interfere in any way with the ball, a player or an official while the ball is in play.

PENALTY – 15 yards. The referee may enforce any penalty he considers equitable, including awarding a score [S27].

b. Participation by 12 or more players is illegal participation. (A.R. 9-1-5:I-VII)

PENALTY – 15 yards from the previous spot [S28]. For fouls during scrimmage kick plays (other than field goal plays): 15 yards from the previous spot or 15 yards from the spot where the subsequent dead ball belongs to Team B [S28].

c. No person not subject to the rules may interfere in any way with the ball or a player while the ball is in play.

d. When anything other than persons subject to the rules and those not subject to the rules interferes in any way with a player or the ball in play, it is illegal interference.

PENALTY – The referee may replay the down or take any action he deems equitable, including awarding a score [S27].

- **Approved Ruling 9-1-5**

- I. Team A, with 12 men on the field, snaps at its own 40-yard line and throws a complete or incomplete forward pass. **RULING:** Illegal participation. Penalty — 15 yards from the previous spot. [Cited by 9-1-5-b]

- II. Team A, with 12 men on the field, snaps at its own 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. Enforce either at the previous spot and replay the down, or at the spot where the subsequent dead ball belongs to Team B. [Cited by 9-1-5-b]
- III. Team B has 12 men on the field when Team A snaps at its own 40-yard 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. [Cited by 9-1-5-b]
- IV. With fourth down and 30 yards to gain on Team A's 40-yard line, A1's scrimmage kick is out of bounds at the Team B 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. [Cited by 9-1-5-b]
- V. 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.) [Cited by 3-5-2-c, 9-1-5-b]
- VI. 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. [Cited by 3-5-2-c, 9-1-5-b]
- VII. 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.) [Cited by 3-5-2-c, 9-1-5-b]

Game Administration Interference

ARTICLE 6. While the ball is in play, coaches, substitutes and authorised attendants in the team area may not be between the sidelines and coaching line or on the field of play.

PENALTY – Administer as a dead-ball foul.

First and second infractions: Delay of game for sideline interference, five yards from the succeeding spot [S21 and S29].

Third and subsequent infractions: Unsportsmanlike conduct for sideline interference, 15 yards from the succeeding spot [S27 and S29].

SECTION 2. Unsportsmanlike Conduct Fouls

Unsportsmanlike Acts

ARTICLE 1. There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct or any act that interferes with orderly game administration on the part of players, substitutes, coaches, authorised attendants or any other persons subject to the rules, before the game, during the game or between periods.

a. **Specifically prohibited acts and conduct include:**

1. No player, substitute, coach or other person subject to the rules shall use abusive, threatening or obscene language or gestures, or engage in such acts that provoke ill

will or are demeaning to an opponent, to game officials or to the image of the game, including but not limited to:

- (a) Pointing the finger(s), hand(s), arm(s) or ball at an opponent, or imitating the slashing of the throat.
- (b) Taunting, baiting or ridiculing an opponent verbally.
- (c) Inciting an opponent or spectators in any other way, such as simulating the firing of a weapon or placing a hand by the ear to request recognition.
- (d) Any delayed, excessive, prolonged or choreographed act by which a player (or players) attempts to focus attention upon himself (or themselves).
- (e) An unopposed ball carrier obviously altering stride as he approaches the opponent's goal line, or diving into the end zone.
- (f) Removal of a player's helmet before he is in the team area (*Exceptions*: Team, media or injury timeouts; equipment adjustment; through play; between periods; and during a measurement for a first down).
- (g) Punching one's own chest or crossing one's arms in front of the chest while standing over a prone player.
- (h) Going into the stands to interact with spectators, or bowing at the waist after a good play.

If committed while the ball is alive, these fouls are treated as dead-ball fouls.

2. After a score or any other play the player in possession immediately must return the ball to an official or leave it near the dead-ball spot. This prohibits:
 - (a) Kicking, throwing, spinning or carrying (including off of the field) the ball any distance that requires an official to retrieve it.
 - (b) Spiking the ball to the ground (*Exception*: A forward pass to conserve time (Rule 7-3-2-d)).
 - (c) Throwing the ball high into the air.
 - (d) Any other unsportsmanlike act or actions that delay the game.

PENALTY – Dead-ball foul or live-ball foul treated as a dead-ball foul. 15 yards [S7 and S27] from the succeeding spot. Flagrant offenders, if players or substitutes, shall be disqualified [S47]. If a player or an identified squad member in uniform commits two unsportsmanlike fouls in the same game, he shall be disqualified.

b. Other prohibited acts include:

1. During the game, coaches, substitutes and authorised attendants in the team area shall not be on the field of play or outside the 25-yard lines without permission from the referee unless legally entering or leaving the field (*Exception*: Rules 1-2-4-h and 3-3-8-c).
2. Team area personnel who are outside the team area and who have involvement or impact on live-ball play are subject to penalty under Rule 9-1-5-a.
3. No disqualified player shall enter the field of play or end zones.
4. No person or mascot subject to the rules, except players, officials and eligible substitutes, shall be on the field of play or end zones during any period without permission from the referee. If a player is injured, attendants may come inbounds to attend him, but they must obtain recognition from an official.
5. No substitute(s) may enter the field of play or end zones for purposes other than replacing a player(s) or to fill a player vacancy(ies). This includes demonstrations after any play (**A.R. 9-2-1:I**).

6. Persons subject to the rules, including bands, shall not create any noise that prohibits a team from hearing its signals. (Rule 1-1-6)

PENALTY – Dead-ball foul. 15 yards [S7 and S27] from the succeeding spot. Flagrant offenders, if players or substitutes, shall be disqualified [S47].

• **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 ball carrier.
RULING: Unsportsmanlike act. Penalty — 15 yards, enforced on the try or the succeeding kick off. Officials should note the numbers of the offending players, for possible disqualification later in the game upon committing a second unsportsmanlike conduct foul (9-2-1-a-Penalty). [Cited by 9-2-1-b-5]

Unfair Tactics

ARTICLE 2. a. No player shall conceal the ball in or beneath his clothing or equipment or substitute any other article for the ball.

- b. No simulated replacements or substitutions may be used to confuse opponents. No tactic associated with substitutes or the substitution process may be used to confuse opponents (Rule 3-5-2-e). **(A.R. 9-2-2:I-VII)**

c. No equipment may be used to confuse opponents (Rule 1-4-2-e).

PENALTY – [a-c] — Live-ball foul. 15 yards from the previous spot [S27]. Flagrant offenders shall be disqualified [S47].

d. No player may play with cleats more than ½-inch in length (Rules 1-4-5-e and 1-4-5-f).

PENALTY – Disqualification for the remainder of the game and the team’s next game [S27 and S47]. Administer as a dead-ball foul; penalty enforced at the succeeding spot, and Team B fouls do not require a first down. Team timeout.

VIOLATION – Rules 3-3-6 and 3-4-2-b [S23, S3 or S21]. If the disqualification occurs during the last game of a season, players with eligibility remaining will serve the next-game disqualification during the first game of the next season for which they are eligible.

e. The referee will notify (in writing) his assigning agent of all disqualifications for illegal cleats. The assigning agency becomes responsible for implementation of the penalty.

• **Approved Ruling 9-2-2**

- I. After the ball is 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. No more than four 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 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 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. [Cited by 9-2-2-b]
- II. On fourth down at Team B’s 12-yard line, A1 enters the field 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 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. [Cited by 9-2-2-b]

- III. A1 leaves the field 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. [Cited by 9-2-2-b]
- 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 as long as possible (more than 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 — 5 yards from the succeeding spot. [Cited by 3-5-2-c, 9-2-2-b]
- 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. [Cited by 9-2-2-b]
- 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. [Cited by 9-2-2-b]
- 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. [Cited by 9-2-2-b]

Unfair Acts

ARTICLE 3. The following are unfair acts:

- a. A team refuses to play within two minutes after ordered to do so by the referee.
- b. A team repeatedly commits fouls for which penalties can be enforced only by halving the distance to its goal line.
- c. An obviously unfair act not specifically covered by the rules occurs during the game.
(A.R. 4-2-1:II)

PENALTY – The referee may take any action he considers equitable, including assessing a penalty, awarding a score, or suspending or forfeiting a game.

Contacting an Official

ARTICLE 4. Intentionally contacting a game official physically during the game by persons subject to the rules is a foul.

PENALTY – Administer as a dead-ball foul. 15 yards from the succeeding spot and disqualification [S7, S27 and S47].

SECTION 3. Blocking, Use of Hands or Arms

Who May Block

ARTICLE 1. Players of either team may block opponents, provided it is not forward-pass interference, interference with the opportunity to catch a kick, or a personal foul.
(*Exception:* Rules 6-1-2-g and 6-5-4).

Interfering for or Helping the Ball Carrier or Passer

- ARTICLE 2. a. The ball carrier or passer may use his hand or arm to ward off or push opponents.
- b. The ball carrier shall not grasp a teammate; and no other player of his team shall grasp, pull, push, lift or charge into him to assist him in forward progress.
- c. Teammates of the ball carrier or passer may interfere for him by blocking but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner while contacting an opponent.

PENALTY – Five yards [S44].

Use of Hands or Arms by Offense

ARTICLE 3. a. A teammate of a ball carrier or a passer legally may block with his shoulders, his hands, the outer surface of his arms or any other part of his body under the following provisions.

1. The hand(s) shall be:
 - (a) In advance of the elbow.
 - (b) Inside the frame of the opponent's body (*Exception:* When the opponent turns his back to the blocker). (**A.R. 9-3-3:VI and VII**)
 - (c) At or below the shoulder(s) of the blocker and the opponent (*Exception:* When the opponent squats, ducks or submarines).
 - (d) Apart and never in a locked position.
2. The hand(s) shall be open with the palm(s) facing the frame of the opponent or closed or cupped with the palms not facing the opponent. (**A.R. 9-3-3:I-IV, VI-VIII**)

PENALTY – 10 yards (*Exception:* Penalties for Team A fouls behind the neutral zone are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line) [S42].

- b. Holding or illegal obstruction by a teammate of the ball carrier or passer applies to Rule 9-3-3-a:
1. The hand(s) and arm(s) shall not be used to grasp, pull or encircle in any way that illegally impedes or illegally obstructs an opponent.
 2. The hand(s) or arm(s) shall not be used to hook, clamp or otherwise illegally impede or illegally obstruct an opponent. (**A.R. 9-3-3:I**)

PENALTY – 10 yards (*Exception:* Penalties for Team A fouls behind the neutral zone are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line) [S42].

- c. A block in the back is illegal (**A.R. 9-1-2:XVII**) (**A.R. 9-3-3:VII**) (**A.R. 9-3-4:III**) (**A.R. 10-2-2:XXII**)

Exceptions:

1. Offensive players who are on the line of scrimmage at the snap within the blocking zone (Rule 2-3-6) may legally block in the back in the blocking zone, subject to the following restrictions:
 - (a) A player on the line of scrimmage within this blocking zone may not leave the zone and return and legally block in the back.
 - (b) The blocking zone exists until the ball is touched outside the zone or the ball is outside the zone after a fumble or muff from inside the zone.

2. When a player turns his back to a potential blocker who has committed himself in intent and direction of movement.
3. When a player attempts to reach a runner or legally attempts to recover or catch a fumble, a muff, a backward pass, a kick or a touched forward pass, he may push an opponent in the back above the waist (Rule 9-1-2-d-3). (**A.R. 6-3-1:III**)
4. When the opponent turns his back to the blocker under Rule 9-3-3-a-1-b.
5. When an eligible player behind the neutral zone pushes an opponent in the back above the waist to get to a forward pass (Rule 9-1-2-d-4).

PENALTY – 10 yards (*Exception: Penalties for Team A fouls behind the neutral zone are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line*) [S43].

- d. The following acts by the teammate of the ball carrier or passer are illegal:
 1. The fist(s) and arm(s) shall not be used to deliver a blow (Rule 9-1-2-a). (**A.R. 9-3-3:IV**)
 2. Continuous contact to an opponent's helmet (including the face mask) with hand(s) or arm(s) (Rule 9-1-2-k).

PENALTY – 15 yards (*Exception: Penalties for Team A fouls behind the neutral zone are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line*) [S38]. **Disqualification if flagrant** [S47].

For Team A fouls during a free or scrimmage kick play (field-goal plays exempted): Enforcement may be at the previous spot or the spot where the subsequent dead ball belongs to Team B.

- e. A player on the kicking team may:
 1. During a scrimmage kick play, use his hand(s) and/or arm(s) to ward off an opponent attempting to block him when he is beyond the neutral zone.
 2. During a free kick play, use his hand(s) and/or arm(s) to ward off an opponent who is attempting to block him.
 3. During a scrimmage kick play or a free kick play, when he is eligible to touch the ball, legally use his hand(s) and/or arm(s) to push an opponent in an attempt to reach a loose ball.
- f. An eligible player of the passing team legally may use his hand(s) and/or arm(s) to ward off or push an opponent in an attempt to reach a loose ball after a legal forward pass has been touched by any player or official. (Rules 7-3-5, 7-3-8, 7-3-9 and 7-3-11).

• **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, incomplete or intercepted, the penalty is 10 yards from the previous spot. Safety if foul occurs behind Team A's goal line. [Cited by 9-3-3-a-2, 9-3-3-b-2]
- II. A teammate of the passer or ball carrier 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. [Cited by 9-3-3-a-2]
- III. A teammate of the passer or ball carrier, 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. [Cited by 9-3-3-a-2]

- IV. A teammate of the passer or ball carrier delivers a blow with the hand(s) closed to an opponent below the shoulders. **RULING:** Personal foul. Penalty — 15 yards. Enforce at the previous spot if foul occurs behind the neutral zone. Safety if foul occurs behind Team A's goal line. [Cited by 9-3-3-a-2, 9-3-3-d-1]
- 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. [Cited by 9-3-3-a-1-b, 9-3-3-a-2]
- 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. Enforce at the previous spot if foul occurs behind neutral zone (Rule 2-3-4). Safety if foul occurs behind Team A's goal line. [Cited by 2-3-4-a, 9-3-3-a-1-b, 9-3-3-a-2, 9-3-3-c]
- VIII. A1 in, beyond or behind the neutral zone contacts an opponent with open hand or hands closed or cupped and palms not facing the opponent. **RULING:** Legal block. [Cited by 9-3-3-a-2]

Use of Hands or Arms by Defense

ARTICLE 4. a. Defensive players may use hands and arms to push, pull, ward off or lift offensive players when attempting to reach the runner.

- b. Defensive players may not use hands and arms to tackle, hold or otherwise illegally obstruct an opponent other than a ball carrier.

PENALTY – 10 yards [S42].

- c. Defensive players may use hands and arms to push, pull, ward off or lift offensive players obviously attempting to block them. Defensive players may ward off or legally block an eligible pass receiver until that player occupies the same yard line as the defender or until the opponent could not possibly block him. Continuous contact is illegal. (**A.R. 9-3-4:I, II and IV**)

PENALTY – 10 or 15 yards [S38, S42, S43 or S45].

- d. When no attempt is being made to get at the ball or the runner, defensive players must comply with Rules 9-3-3-a, 9-3-3-b, 9-3-3-c and 9-3-3-d.

PENALTY – 10 or 15 yards [S38, S42, S43 or S45].

- e. When a legal forward pass crosses the neutral zone during a forward-pass play and a contact foul that is not pass interference is committed beyond the neutral zone, the enforcement spot is the previous spot. This includes Rule 9-3-4-c. (**A.R. 7-3-9:II**) (**A.R. 9-3-4:I and II**)

PENALTY – 10 or 15 yards from the previous spot, plus first down if the foul occurred against an eligible receiver before the pass was touched [S38, S42, S43 or S45].

- f. A defensive player legally may use his hands or arms to ward off or block an opponent in an attempt to reach a loose ball (Rule 9-1-2-d Exceptions 3 and 4 and Rule 9-3-3-c Exceptions 3 and 5):
 1. During a backward pass, fumble or kick that he is eligible to touch.
 2. During any forward pass that crossed the neutral zone and has been touched by any player or official.

- g. A defensive player may not continuously contact an opponent's helmet (including the face mask) with hand(s) or arm(s) (*Exception: Against the ball carrier*).

PENALTY – 15 yards and a first down for Team B fouls if the first down is not in conflict with other rules [S38].

• **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 at the previous spot and first down. [Cited by 9-3-4-c, 9-3-4-e]
- II. Before a legal forward pass that 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, previous-spot enforcement. [Cited by 9-3-4-c, 9-3-4-e]
- 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 24-yard 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. [Cited by 9-3-3-c]
- 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. [Cited by 9-3-4-c]

Player Restrictions

ARTICLE 5. a. No player may position himself with his feet on the back or shoulders of a teammate before the snap.

PENALTY – Dead-ball foul, 15 yards from the succeeding spot [S27].

- b. No defensive player, in an attempt to block, bat or catch a kick, may:
1. Step, jump or stand on a teammate (Rule 9-1-2-n).
 2. Place a hand(s) on a teammate to get leverage for additional height.
 3. Be picked up by a teammate, or be elevated, propelled or pushed.

PENALTY – 15 yards from the previous spot [S27].

When Ball is Loose

ARTICLE 6. When the ball is loose, no player shall hold an opponent; illegally block an opponent in the back; twist, turn or pull an opponent's face mask or any helmet opening; or illegally use his hands or commit a personal foul.

PENALTY – 10 or 15 yards (*Exception: Penalties for these Team A team fouls behind the neutral zone are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line*) (Rule 10-2) [S38, S42, S43 or S45].

SECTION 4. Batting and Kicking

Batting a Loose Ball

ARTICLE 1. a. While a pass is in flight, any player eligible to touch the ball may bat it in any direction (*Exception:* Rule 9-4-2).

- b. Any player may block a scrimmage kick in the field of play or the end zone.
- c. No player shall bat other loose balls forward in the field of play or in any direction if the ball is in the end zone. (Rule 2-2-3-a) (*Exception:* Rule 6-3-11). (**A.R. 6-3-11:I**) (**A.R. 9-4-1:I-XI**) (**A.R. 10-2-2:II**)

PENALTY – 15 yards and loss of down if the loss of down is not in conflict with other rules [S31 and S9]. [*Exception:* No loss of down if the foul occurs when a legal scrimmage kick is beyond the neutral zone].

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

- I. Team A attempts a field goal from the 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 for batting the ball in the end zone. During regulation play, postscrimmage kick enforcement gives a safety by penalty. In extra periods, enforcement of the 15-yard penalty is at the previous spot and Team A retains possession. [Cited by 9-4-1-c]
- II. Team A attempts a field goal from the 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 for batting the ball in the end zone. The result of the play is a touchdown. [Cited by 9-4-1-c]
- III. Team A attempts a field goal from the 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 for batting the ball in the end zone. The result of the play is a touchback, safety. [Cited by 9-4-1-c]
- IV. Team A attempts a field goal from the 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 for batting the ball in the end zone. During regulation play, postscrimmage kick enforcement gives a safety by penalty. 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, or if the play occurs in an extra period, enforcement is at the previous spot. [Cited by 9-4-1-c]
- V. Team A attempts a place kick on the try. 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 for batting the ball in the end zone. Penalty — Half the distance from the previous spot. Postscrimmage kick rules do not apply on the try (Rule 10-2-3). [Cited by 9-4-1-c]
- VI. Team A attempts a place kick on the try. 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 for batting the ball in the end zone. Team A may decline the penalty and scores two points. [Cited by 9-4-1-c]
- VII. Team A attempts a field goal, and B23, in the end zone, goes above the crossbar and catches the ball. **RULING:** Legal play. [Cited by 9-4-1-c]
- 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:** Safety. Batting a fumble in flight does not add a new impetus (Rule 8-7-2-b). Team B foul. Penalty — 15 yards. [Cited by 9-4-1-c]
- IX. Team A's backward pass in flight is batted forward 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 (8-5-1-a). [Cited by 8-5-1-a, 9-4-1-c]

- 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:** The result of the play is a touchback. Team B foul for illegally batting a ball in the end zone. Penalty — 15 yards from the previous spot. [Cited by 9-4-1-c]
- XI. After intercepting Team A's forward pass on Team B's 20-yard line, B1 fumbles at the Team B 38-yard line and B2 illegally bats the loose ball at the 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 (5-1-1-e-1). [Cited by 10-1-1-d, 9-4-1-c]

Batting a Backward Pass

ARTICLE 2. A backward pass in flight shall not be batted forward by the passing team.

PENALTY – 15 yards [S31].

Batting Ball in Possession

ARTICLE 3. A ball in player possession may not be batted forward by a player of that team.

PENALTY – 15 yards [S31].

Illegally Kicking a Ball

ARTICLE 4. A player shall not kick a loose ball, a forward pass or a ball being held for a place kick by an opponent. These illegal acts do not change the status of the loose ball or forward pass; but if the player holding the ball for a place kick loses possession during a scrimmage down, it is a fumble and a loose ball; if during a free kick, the ball remains dead. (A.R. 8-7-2:VII)

PENALTY – 15 yards, plus loss of down if the loss of down is not in conflict with other rules [S31 and S9] (Exception: No loss of down if the foul occurs when a legal scrimmage kick is beyond the neutral zone).

SECTION 5. Fighting

ARTICLE 1. a. Before the game, squad members in uniform and coaches shall not participate in a fight (Rule 2-32-1).

During the first half, players shall not participate in a fight.

PENALTY – 15 yards. For dead-ball fouls, 15 yards from the succeeding spot. Also, first down for Team B fouls if the first down is not in conflict with other rules. Disqualification for the remainder of the game [S7, S27 or S38, and S47].

b. During the half-time intermission, squad members in uniform or coaches shall not participate in a fight.

During the second half, players shall not participate in a fight.

PENALTY – 15 yards. For dead-ball fouls, 15 yards from the succeeding spot. Also, first down for Team B fouls if the first down is not in conflict with other rules. Disqualification for the remainder of the game and the first half of the next game [S7, S27 or S38, and S47]. For fights that occur in the last game of a season, squad members in uniform, coaches and players with eligibility remaining will serve fight-related suspensions during the first game of the next season for which they are eligible.

- c. During either half, coaches and substitutes shall not leave their team area to participate in a fight, nor shall they participate in a fight in their team area.

PENALTY – 15 yards from the succeeding spot, plus first down for Team B fouls if the first down is not in conflict with other rules. Disqualification for the remainder of the game and for the next game [S7, S27 or S38, and S47]. For fights that occur in the last game of a season, coaches and substitutes with eligibility remaining will serve fight-related suspensions during the first game of the next season for which they are eligible.

ARTICLE 2. a. If the squad member, coach or player is disqualified for fighting a second time during that season, he shall be disqualified for that game and suspended for the remainder of the season.

- b. If a second fighting suspension occurs in the final game of a season, he shall be suspended for the first game of the next season for which he is eligible. This suspension is considered to be his first fight of that season.

ARTICLE 3. The referee will notify (in writing) his assigning agent of all disqualifications for fighting. The assigning agency becomes responsible for implementation of the penalty.

SECTION 6. Flagrant Personal Fouls

Player Ejection

ARTICLE 1. When a player is disqualified from the game due to a flagrant personal foul, BAFA shall where possible initiate a video review for possible additional sanctions before the next scheduled game.

Initiating Contact/Targeting an Opponent

ARTICLE 2. When there is a foul called for initiating contact/targeting an opponent (Rule 9-1-3) that does not result in a player disqualification, there may be a video review by BAFA for possible additional sanctions before the next scheduled game.

Fouls Not Called

ARTICLE 3. If subsequent review of a game by BAFA reveals plays involving flagrant personal fouls that game officials did not call, BAFA may impose sanctions prior to the next scheduled game.