



# 2017 NFHS Rule Changes

Football Training Committee



# 2017 Rule Changes

- There were 11 rule changes recommended and approved by the NFHS for the 2017 season
- 3 of them are major changes
  - Blindside block
  - Pop-up kick
  - Defenseless player definition expanded



# Blindside Block

- A block against an opponent other than the runner, who does not see the blocker approaching, involves contact by a blocker against an opponent who, because of physical positioning and focus of concentration, is vulnerable to injury. Unless initiated with open hands, it is a foul for excessive and unnecessary contact when the block is forceful and outside of the free-blocking zone.
- Important to note: a block from the blindside of an opponent is not necessarily illegal; if not initiated with open hands, blockers can block an opponent if they don't see them coming
- This does not pertain to blocks inside the free blocking zone; only downfield blocks or those outside the zone
- An illegal blindside block is a 15 yard yard penalty



# Purpose of the BSB Rule

- 1.** Protects the defenseless player receiving a blindside block beyond those blocks determined as unnecessary or excessive
- 2.** Requires that any player receiving a blindside block may only be blocked with open hands
- 3.** Simplifies penalty enforcement for game officials by adding “open hands” when they must judge whether a blindside block was legal or not.
- 4.** Must be Forceful Contact

# Signal for BSB- Signal #48

First give personal foul, then new BSB signal





# Legal or Illegal?

<u>Legal Blindside Block</u>	<u>Illegal Blindside Block</u>
Stalk blocking technique	Shoulder dip, thrust, drive, launch
Initiate contact with open hands	Initiate contact to the head
Free blocking zone blocks	"Forceful Contact"



# What Do Officials Look for and What Do Coaches Teach?

2 Key Points:

- 1.** Blockers should keep their heads up
- 2.** Blockers should lead with open hands



# Pop Up Kick

The NFHS has added a new definition for a pop-up kick and specifies a penalty for a pop-up kick.

2-24-10 (NEW), 6-1-11 (NEW), 6-1 PENALTY

## DEFINITION

- A free kick in which the kicker drives the ball immediately to the ground, the ball strikes the ground once and goes into the air in the manner of a ball kicked directly off the tee.
- **THIS DOES NOT ELIMINATE THE ONSIDE KICK**



# Pop Up Kick

## Illegal:

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N\\_ObzQcra-w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_ObzQcra-w)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMYmDp5lVEU>

## Legal:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ca6GkOLKWPO>



# Defenseless Player Defined

- These are not new rules. They are simply codifying what we have been calling and considering defenseless players for the past few years.



# Defenseless Player

2-32-16: Expands the definition of a defenseless player by incorporating specific examples.

1. A player in the act of or just after throwing a pass.
2. A receiver attempting to catch a pass who has not had time to clearly become a runner;
3. The intended receiver of a pass in the action during and immediately following an interception or potential interception;
4. A runner already in the grasp of a tackler and whose forward progress has been stopped;
5. A kickoff or punt returner attempting to catch or recover a kick, or one who has completed a catch or recovery and has not had time to protect himself or has not clearly become a ball carrier;
6. A player on the ground including a ball carrier who has obviously given himself up and is sliding feet-first;
7. A player obviously out of the play or not in the immediate vicinity of the runner; and
8. A player who received a blindside block with forceful contact not initiated with open hands.



# Other Rule Changes

**1-3-1h (NEW):** Added that commercial advertising is not permitted on the ball.

**Rationale:** The ball cannot have commercial advertising added to the surface. The only permissible items on the ball are the ball manufacturer's

**1-5-1b(3):** Further clarifies that the jersey of the home team shall be a dark color clearly contrasting to the white jersey required for the visiting team.

**Rationale:** Home game jersey specifications were further revised to provide schools and manufacturers additional clarification regarding the current trend of utilizing lighter gray shades. The implementation date of 2021 affords schools and manufacturers the opportunity to ensure that newer dark jerseys will clearly contrast with white. The requirement for contrasting colors to white is not a new rule, and this new clarification will allow changes to be made during normal replacement cycles.



# Other Rule Changes

## **1-5-1a(2) NOTE, 1-5-4:**

**This change now permits any of the game officials to accompany the referee to meet with the head coach for equipment verification.**

**Rationale: Member state associations may determine the game official who is to accompany the referee during the required pre-game meeting with each head coach.**

## **2-16-2h:**

**Clarified that illegal participation fouls by R occurring during the kick are now enforced under post-scrimmage kick fouls.**

**Rationale: Illegal participation fouls by R occurring during the kick are now enforced under post-scrimmage kick fouls. Illegal substitution and illegal participation fouls by R occurring at the snap continue to be enforced from the previous spot.**



# Other Rule Changes

## **3-4-7 (NEW):**

Added a new option to the offended team to start the clock on the snap for an accepted penalty inside the last two minutes of either half.

**Rationale:** The committee added an option for the offended team on an accepted penalty inside the last two minutes of either half. The referee continues to have the authority to start or stop the clock if a team attempts to conserve or consume time illegally.

## **4-2-21 (NEW):**

Specifies that the ball is declared dead if a prosthetic limb comes completely off of the runner.

**Rationale:** With this change, the ball becomes dead when a prosthetic limb comes completely off of the runner.



# Other Rule Changes

## **7-1-6:**

**Now stipulates that it is encroachment to strike the ball or the snapper's hand/arm prior to the snapper releasing the ball.**

**Rationale: Defensive players are restricted from contacting the ball or the snapper's hand(s) or arm(s) until the snapper has released the ball.**

## **7-5-10:**

**Removes non-contact face guarding from the pass interference restrictions.**

**Rationale: This change eliminates the previous foul for non-contact face guarding forward-pass interference.**



# 2017 Points of Emphasis

1. Responsibility on Players to Avoid Illegal Contact
2. Illegal Helmet Contact
3. Sideline Management and Control, Professional Communication Between Coaches and Game Officials
4. Proper Enforcement of Penalties for Violations of the Equipment Rules



# New Mechanics 2017

1. Added an explicit requirement for the Referee to wave off the Umpire from the Umpire's coverage of a ball spotted for a spread or no huddle offense. (p. 31 & 33)
2. Changes to crew movements to pre-kick positions in the case of kick-offs to begin a half, or following a touchdown or successful field goal generally dictate movement directly to these positions rather than the coordinated movements of individuals to intermediate positions, first. The Referee is still responsible for declaring "obvious on-side kick" alignments, if any, prior to officials' movements directly to their pre-kick positions. (p. 39).

# DISCUSSION

