

NCAA FOOTBALL RULES COMMITTEE
RULES CHANGES FOR 2008
As Approved by Playing Rules Oversight Panel

RULE 1

1-4-9-d (FR-38)

Microphones, provided by home management, are strongly recommended on referees.
[Note: Microphones for referees will be mandatory in 2010.] They may be used only on referees for penalty or other game announcements. **It is strongly recommended that they be lapel-type microphones. They must be controlled by the referee, and may not be open at other times. Microphones on other officials are prohibited.**

1-4-9-g (FR-38)

Any attempt to record, either through audio or video means, any signals given by an opposing player, coach, or other team personnel is prohibited.

RULE 2

2-3-3 (FR-42, 43)

A chop block is a high-low or low-high combination block by any two players against an opponent (not the runner) anywhere on the field, with or without a delay between contacts; the “low” component is at the opponent’s thigh or below. (A. R. 2-3-3-III and IV)

Delete rest of definition.

RULE 3

3-2-2-h (FR-65)

Delete paragraph (15-second clock)

3-2-2-i (FR-67)

Delete paragraph (Clock adjustment following inadvertent whistle)

3-2-4 (FR-67)

- b. 40-Second Clock. 1. When an official signals that the ball is dead, the play clock shall begin a 40-second count.**
- 2. If the 40-second count is interrupted for reasons beyond the control of the officials or the play-clock operator (e.g., clock malfunction), the referee shall stop the game clock and signal (both palms open in an over-the-head pumping motion) that the play clock should be re-set at 40 seconds and started immediately.**
- 3. In the event that the 40-second clock is running and the ball is not ready to be snapped after 20 seconds into the count, the referee shall stop the game clock and signal that the play clock be set at 25 seconds. When play is to be resumed, the referee will give the ready-for-play signal [S1] and the play clock shall begin the 25-second**

count. The game clock will start on the snap (Rule 3-2-5-b).

c. **25-Second Clock.** If the officials signal the game clock to be stopped for any of the following reasons, the referee shall signal (one open palm in an over-the-head pumping motion) that the clock should be set at 25 seconds:

1. Penalty administration.
2. Charged team timeout.
3. Media timeout.
4. Injury timeout.
5. Measurement.
6. Change of possession.
7. Team A possession following a kick down.
8. Score.
9. Start of each period.
10. Start of a team's series in extra period.
11. Instant replay review.
12. Other administrative stoppage.

When play is to be resumed, the referee will give the ready-for-play signal [S1] and the play clock will begin the 25-second count.

d. If a visual 40/25-second timing device becomes inoperative, both coaches shall be notified by the referee immediately and both clocks shall be turned off.

3-2-5-a-12 (FR-69)

12. When a ball carrier, a fumble or a backward pass goes out of bounds. (Exception: Within the last two minutes of each half the clock starts on the snap unless incidents 8 or 11 above occur.)

RULE 6

6-2-1-Penalty (FR-88)

PENALTY—“..... ball in play **30** yards...”

RULE 9

9-1-2-p (FR-119)

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 runner down. This does not apply to a runner who is inside the tackle box or to a quarterback who is in the pocket.

9-1-2-q (formerly s) (FR-119)

No player shall **twist, turn or pull** the face mask or any helmet opening of an opponent. It is not a foul if the face mask or helmet opening is not twisted, turned or pulled. When in question it is a foul. (A.R. 9-1-2-XV).

9-1-3 (FR-120) (Replaces 9-1-2-l, m, n)

Initiating Contact/Targeting an Opponent

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 basic spot, or 15 yards from the succeeding spot for dead-ball fouls. Also, automatic first down for fouls by Team B if not in conflict with other rules. (Exception: Penalties for offensive team 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 foul during free or scrimmage kick plays: Enforcement may be at the previous spot or the spot where the subsequent dead ball belongs to Team B (field goal plays exempted) (Rules 6-1-8, 6-3-13).

9-1-6-b (FR-122)

ARTICLE 6. While the ball is in play, coaches, substitutes and authorized attendants may not be in the restricted area between the sideline and the coaching box 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]

RULE 12

12-3-1-a (FR-145)

(add) This includes field goal attempts only if the ball is ruled (a) below or above the crossbar or (b) inside or outside the uprights when it is lower than the top of the uprights. If the ball is higher than the top of the uprights, the ruling may not be reviewed.

12-3-3-a (FR-146)

a. A runner judged to have been not down by rule. Delete “Note”

12-3-3-b (FR-146)

A ball carrier judged to have been down by rule when the recovery of a fumble by an opponent or teammate occurs in the immediate action following the fumble and is prior to any official signaling that the ball is dead.

Note 1: If the ball carrier is judged down by rule and the Instant Replay Official does not have indisputable video evidence as to which player recovers the fumble, the ruling of down-by-rule stands.

Note 2: If the ruling of down-by-rule is reversed, the ball belongs to the recovering player at the spot of the recovery and any advance is nullified.

12-3-3-c (FR-146)

A ball carrier judged to have been out of bounds when his immediate action takes him into the opponent's end zone and is prior to any official signaling that the ball is dead.

12-3-3-h (formerly f) (FR-146)

Add: The Instant Replay Official may correct an egregious game-clock error.

12-3-4 (FR-147)

Limitations on Reviewing Plays

Article 4. No other plays or officiating decisions are reviewable. However, the Instant Replay Official may correct egregious errors. This excludes fouls that are not specifically reviewable (Reviewable fouls: Rules 12-3-2-e, f and 12-3-3-f, g).

12-5-1-b-1 (FR-148)

(Replace second sentence with the following)

If a head coach's challenge is successful he retains the challenge, which he may use only once more during the game. Thus a coach may have a total of two challenges if and only if his initial challenge is successful.

NCAA FOOTBALL RULES COMMITTEE
SUMMARY: RULES CHANGES FOR 2008

- 1-4-9-d** Microphones on referee mandatory in 2010
- 1-4-9-g** Obtaining opponents' signals prohibited.
- 2-3-3** Chop block redefined.
- 3-2-2-h** Delete: 15-second play clock
- 3-2-2-i** Delete: clock adjustment following inadvertent whistle.
- 3-2-4** 40-second play clock
- 3-2-5-a-12** Clock stops when ball carrier, fumble or backward pass goes out of bounds and starts on the referee's signal, except that in the last two minutes of each half, the clock starts on the snap.
- 6-2-1** Free kick out of bounds: Option to put ball in play 30 yards downfield
- 9-1-2-p** "Horse-collar" tackle introduced as a personal foul
- 9-1-2-q** Five-yard face mask/helmet opening foul eliminated. Foul is only for twisting, turning or pulling the face mask or helmet opening—15 yards.
- 9-1-3** Initiating Contact/Crown of Helmet/Targeting an opponent
- 9-1-6** Sideline infractions (formerly warnings): First two—fouls for delay of game (5-yard penalty). Third and subsequent—foul for sideline interference (15-yard penalty)
- 12-3-1** Reviewable play: Field goal attempt above or below crossbar and lower than top of uprights.
- 12-3-3** Reviewable play: Ball carrier ruled down and fumble immediately recovered prior to dead-ball signal being given.
- 12-3-3** Reviewable play: Ball carrier ruled out of bounds and immediately carries ball into opponent's end zone prior to dead-ball signal being given.
- 12-3-3** Egregious game-clock error may be corrected by Instant Replay Official (IRO).

12-3-4 Egregious errors may be corrected by the IRO. However, this does not include reviewing fouls that are not specifically reviewable.

12-5-1 Coach may retain successful challenge only once.