

March 2021 Study Guide

Welcome to 2021 (Finally!!) Let's plan for and hope this season has some resemblance of normal high school football. Since there were very few rule changes and one important clarification we will reserve those when applicable rules are reviewed. There are no changes to Rule 1 but a big clarification to an important definition in Rule 2. Mr. Giddens is formulating his desired teaching on this NFHS clarification and that will be presented at a later date. At the conclusion of each study guide will be sample questions very well adapted for crew study and suggestions for crew discussion. Crew discussion suggestions are also for association discussion and hopefully will produce consistency between crews.

Rule 1 Emphasis

- 1-4-2 The head coach during the pregame conference must declare an individual (often himself) who will be responsible for making decisions concerning penalty acceptance or decline. This designation exists throughout the game unless injury or ejection intervenes. This is along with his declaration that all players are legally equipped.
- 1-5-1d A list of required pads and protective equipment is outlined. Keep in mind that this is at times a contentious subject between coaches and players and can extend to coaches and officials. What players see on TV on Saturday and Sunday is often presumed to be acceptable at the high school level. A level temperament and consistency as the season progresses is essential. Safety should be a priority. The GHSA is capable of exerting clarification and enforcement in extreme cases.
- A. Hip and Tailbone protectors (the latter is often ignored).
 - B. Knee pads that are unaltered from the original manufacturer's design. Often they are cut to the size of a half-dollar or smaller. Many kickers prefer no knee pads at all.
 - C. Pants that completely cover the knees. Coaches will often complain they can only purchase "college cut" pants. There is merit to this. If a substantial number of players have this problem a cell phone picture with GHSA office involvement can be done. Most of the

time a thorough pregame search and asking to pull the pants over the knees is all that is necessary.

- D. **Volleyball knee pads under the pants are legal**
- E. Mouthpiece made preferably from an impression of the player's teeth. There are no color restrictions.

1-5-3 Examples of illegal equipment and what the procedure is once the problem is discovered (also covers faulty or damaged equipment)

- A. Play cards anywhere but wrist or arm
- B. Eye shade that is not a solid stroke or contains words, logos, numbers. When seen last year the eye shade was often a design covering most of the cheek below the eye.
- C. Eye shields that are not clear and not a molded rigid material. Tinted eye shields are not allowed regardless of a MD written prescription. Sun glasses are legal and can be substituted.
- D. Knee braces worn over the pants
- E. Sweat bands worn anywhere other than the wrist.
This is a common problem.

Discovery of illegal, improperly worn, absent required or damaged equipment. Procedure for officials:

This is described under Rule 1-5-5. This has changed in recent years and all crews should review this as part of any pregame. Does this ever become a penalty?

Rule 2 Emphasis

We are continuing to concentrate on illegal contact and catch definitions in Rule 2.

2-3-7 Block below the waist

2-3-8 Chop Block

2-3-10 Blindside Block

2-4-1 Components of a Catch

All crews should review this in pregame and actually demonstrate examples of catch or no catch. Associated Casebook examples are helpful.

- 2-5-1 Clipping
- 2-5-2 Block in the back

- 2-9-1 Fair Catch
 - Valid and Invalid Signals
 - Illegal Fair Catch Signal

When, if ever, do these come under Post Scrimmage Kick Enforcement?

- 2-12 First Touching There are different definitions for scrimmage and free kick first touching

2-13 Force. Perhaps no football fundamental is less understood. Force can come into play on any individual play in a game. Thorough pregame discussion is essential.

2-17 Free Blocking Zone. Dimensions, definition of offensive and defensive players on the line of scrimmage or in the zone at the snap have not changed.

The NFHS has written clarifying statement in an effort to get all states to enforce this the same. This will be discussed in depth when we review illegal blocking in Rule 9

- 2-20 Illegal helmet contact. Targeting

- 2-32 Player definitions. Statewide illegal formations were down on film review. 2-32-3 Back 2-32-9 Lineman

Sample Questions

First Touching

1. Team K opening kickoff bounces several times and is muffed by Team K player at the Team R 35-yard line. Team R runner retrieves the ball, has a short run and fumbles. Team K recovers. The officials offer Team R the spot of the Team K muff as a spot of first touching allowing Team R to have possession and a new series. The officials are correct.
 - A. True

B. False

Illegal Block

2. A back is within the free blocking zone at the snap but not on the line of scrimmage and crosses the line of scrimmage and blocks a linebacker below the waist from the front. The linebacker was in the free blocking zone at the snap but not on the line of scrimmage when contact made. The back is guilty of an illegal block below the waist.
- A. True
 - B. False

Force

3. The punter fumbles the snap and then kicks the ball off the ground downfield towards Team R goal line where it goes out of bounds. The punter has applied a new force.
- A. True
 - B. False

Force

4. The punter fumbles the snap and then kicks the ball off the ground downfield towards Team R goal line where it goes out of bounds. The punter has applied a new force.
- A. True
 - B. False

Fair Catch

5. A fair catch cannot be made of a free kick in the neutral zone
- A. True
 - B. False

Chop Block

6. A chop block involves action by two or more blockers, with or without a delay in their contact, and may involve a lineman and a back.
- A. True
 - B. False

Force

7. Team K punt is blocked at the K3 yard line and bounces into the Team K end zone. The force that took the ball into the end zone is the kick. If recovered there by the kicking team it is a safety.
- A. True

B. False

Fair Catch

8. Team K punts on fourth down. The receiver calls for a fair catch and muffs the kick three yards behind the line of scrimmage on a wind blown punt. Team K recovers. They will have a new series 1/10 at the spot of recovery.
- A. True
 - B. False

Force

9. Runner A35 takes a handoff in his end zone, runs forward out of the end zone and fumbles into the air when hit. Linebacker B60 muffs the airborne fumble from the field of play back into the end zone where offensive lineman A56 recovers. This is a safety.
- A. True
 - B. B False

Fair Catch

10. After a fair catch Team R may start a new series anywhere between the hash marks on the yard line the fair catch is made
- A. True
 - B. False

Force

11. QB throws a backward pass which is batted while in the air into the Team A end zone by a rushing defender. The ball bounces out the the end line. This is a touchback.
- A. True
 - B. False

Fair Catch

12. A receiver who has given a fair catch signal and then blocks has committed a foul. The penalty is ten yards for an illegal block.
- A. True
 - B. False

Post-Scrimmage Kick Enforcement

13. An illegal fair catch signal is flagged by the Field Judge. This may be enforced under Post-scrimmage Kick enforcement.

- A. True
- B. False

Fair Catch

14. Concerning the definition of a fair catch which statement is FALSE:
- A. An invalid fair catch signal by a receiver causes the ball to become dead when the scrimmage or free kick is caught by any member of the receiving team
 - B. Only the receiver who gives a valid signal is afforded protection
 - C. A fair catch may be made of a free kick anywhere within or beyond the neutral zone to the receiver's goal line
 - D. The penalty for blocking after giving a valid fair catch signal is ten yards for an illegal block
 - E. After making a fair catch the receiving team may elect to attempt a scoring free kick from the yard line of the fair catch

Force

15. Concerning force which statement is FALSE:
- A. A new force can be given to a fumble after it has touched the ground
 - B. A new force may be given to a grounded backward pass
 - C. R78 blocks a punt. The ball bounces into the Team K end zone. The force that took the ball into the end zone is the block of the kick.
 - D. A snap can be an initial force
 - E. Force is not a consideration on a free kick going into Team R end zone.

Fair Catch

16. An invalid fair catch signal foul comes under Post- scrimmage kick enforcement.
- A. True
 - B. False

Force

17. Concerning force which statement is FALSE:
- A. A snap is considered an initial force
 - B. A backward pass can be an initial force
 - C. Runner A10 fumbles near the sideline. While the ball is airborne a defender muffs the fumble back towards the

- runner's goal line. This is a new force.
D. The blocking of a punt is not a new force

Fair Catch

18. R34 makes a valid fair catch signal moving to make a catch of a free kick near the sideline and muffs the ball into the air. K45 tackles R34 preventing him from further attempt to catch the ball. Which statement is TRUE:
- A. This is legal contact
 - B. This is kick-catch interference and should be flagged
 - C. This is holding and should be flagged
 - D. This is a foul during a loose ball play and should be enforced from the previous spot
 - E. C and D are true

Fair Catch

19. R34 makes a valid fair catch signal moving to make a catch of a free kick near the sideline and muffs the ball into the air. K45 tackles R34 preventing him from further attempt to catch the ball. Which statement is TRUE:
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