



IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Football Memo #7

September 27, 2022

Good afternoon football coaches and athletic directors –

Fall is officially here, and we were greeted with much cooler temperatures last Friday night. With that being said, it is still important to stress hydration to your athletes as we still could get a warm day before the end of the season. Just a reminder that next Monday we will release the first district standings and RPI rankings for all seven classes.

1. Ineligible Down Field

7-5-12 states, “Ineligible A player may not advance beyond the expanded neutral zone on a legal forward pass play before a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone is in flight.” There are two key parts to this statement. First, ineligible A players (interior lineman) cannot advance more than two yards down the field prior to the ball crossing the neutral zone. The second is if the forward pass doesn’t cross the neutral zone (i.e. screen pass), interior linemen are not held to this same restriction.

2. Ineligible Down Field Part 2

Within the spread offense, there are times wide receivers do not line up the way they are coached to do so (i.e. outside receiver is supposed to be off the line as the inside receiver is on the line). While officials do offer assistance by indicating where the LOS is located, officials do not know your plays like your kids and as a result are not responsible for aligning your receivers to a specific formation. If a presumed eligible receiver is covered on the LOS, officials must do their due diligence and know who the player is and his number. We may have an ineligible man downfield and if he is the first to touch a pass we have had two fouls on the play: ineligible player downfield and illegal touching. There is no need to call both fouls as officials should just call illegal touching for 5 yards from the previous spot and loss of down. Officials if you have an eligible number player covered and the ball is caught by an eligible number the crew needs to ask what number caught the pass.

3. Kicks, Force and Touchbacks

R22 muffs the opening kickoff at the R’s 3-yard line and the ball rolls into the end zone. Do we have a touchback or a safety? Force is not a factor when the ball has the status of a kick and it enters R’s end zone. In the previous situation, we have a touchback.

4. Intentional Grounding and Iowa Experiment

I’ve received some questions on our experiment to 7-5-2. Again, the passer has the opportunity to throw the ball away as long as he is the individual who receives the snap, the individual moves outside the free blocking zone at the time the ball is thrown, and the ball reaches the line of scrimmage while in the air. For example, if the quarterback hands the ball to another back and receives the ball back again (flea flicker), the quarterback no longer has the opportunity to legally ground the football as he has given the football to another player. Also, if a team is in punt formation, the punter has the opportunity to ground the football, assuming other conditions are met, as he is the individual that receives the snap.

5. Unsportsmanlike Conduct Penalties

We’ve had a few officials that work other sports inquire about unsportsmanlike conduct penalties and whether non-player unsportsmanlike fouls are assessed to the head coach in terms of an individual being ejected for receiving two UNS fouls during a contest. Football is not like basketball with indirect technical fouls. All coaches, non-players, players get two unsportsmanlike fouls on their own merit. You could assess two unsportsmanlike fouls on an assistant coach, eject that individual from the contest, and the head coach remain in the ball game.

6. Ninth Regular Season Game – Non-Playoff Teams

For 8-player, Class A, 1A and 2A teams not qualifying for the postseason, those schools have the opportunity to schedule a ninth regular season game during week nine. Schools are on their own to find an opponent and officiating crew for the contest. We do ask that once plans are finalized that one of the schools completes this online form, so we have an idea as to who is playing during the week. <https://www.iahsaa.org/ninth-regular-season-football-game/>

Have a great Week 6. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions.

Jared