



IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Football Memo #4

August 30, 2023

Good morning football coaches and athletic directors –

Week 1 is in the books. While we've had some nice days early this week, temperatures are forecasted to hover around 90 degrees again this Friday. In addition, the heat is scheduled to remain through most of next week as well. As coaches, you need to continue hydration with your athletes as we heard many athletes were cramping during games last week.

1. District Play – Point Margin/Forfeits

While four classes are still a few weeks away from district play, Class A and 8-player schools begin district play this Friday. Nothing has changed from a year ago regarding playoff qualification in all seven classes. With that being said, the +-17 point tiebreaking average is still in place for 8-Player, Class A, 1A and 2A when head-to-head competition alone cannot determine the district finish in a three-way or more tie scenario. Also, as with last year, the +-17-point average will be used to determine the six district runners-up that will host in the first round of the 8-player playoffs. Finally, all schools need to keep in the IHSAA Board of Control policy that any school that forfeits a district football contest due to low numbers will be ineligible for the postseason.

2. Contact on an Eligible Receiver

Rule 9-2-3d allows a defensive player to treat an eligible receiver as a potential blocker and ward him off before the pass is thrown. However, if the receiver is not attempting to block, the defender may not initiate the contact. A generally accepted guideline is to allow contact until the receiver occupies the same yard line as the defender. The idea is once the receiver gets even with or cuts away from the defender, he is no longer a potential blocker and is not a threat to the defensive player. DPI restrictions do not begin until the ball is thrown, so the penalty in the above situation prior to the ball being in flight would be illegal use of hands for a 10-yard penalty or defensive holding depending on the restriction. There is no, and never had been, a 5-yard bump and run in NFHS rules.

3. Numbering Requirements

Based on the number of calls and emails received over the last week, I know there is some confusion on jersey numbers as individuals are only looking at Figure 1-4-2 in the rule book. In 11-player football, there are numbering requirements. Any player can run the football; however, individuals numbered 50-79 are not eligible to go down field or catch a forward pass even if lined up as a back or end. At the snap, at least five players numbered 50-79 must be on the line of scrimmage. There are two exceptions to this rule, and both apply to scrimmage kick formations on a particular down. The rule and exceptions can be found under 7-2-5 on page 61 and 62 of the rule book. There are no numbering requirements in 8-player football.

4. Injured Player and Returning to Game

All are reminded that if an injured or bleeding player is sent off by an official, that player has to be replaced for one down, unless halftime or overtime intermission occurs. A coach cannot buy this injured/bleeding player back into the game by burning a timeout.

Have a great this week. Do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Jared