



IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Football Memo #4

September 5, 2024

Good morning football coaches and athletic directors –

Week 1 is in the books. While many questions didn't come in over the holiday weekend, there are a few things to help clarify as we move into week 2.

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. While Class 3A and 4A adopted the 17-point tiebreaker for the district champion and runner-up positions, nothing changed from a year ago regarding playoff qualification in the other four classes with district football. Again, the +17 point tiebreaking average is used when head-to-head competition alone cannot determine the district finish in a three-way or more tie scenario. If a game goes to overtime, regardless of the final score, the tiebreaker is +1. 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 mind the IHSAA Board of Control policy that any school that forfeits any 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. Illegal Participation

With the complete rewrite and editing of Rule 10-4, there has been some confusion regarding the enforcement spot when illegal participation occurs on a pass play. For example, Team A has 2nd and 10 from the A20. Receiver A88 goes out of bounds on his own at the A27 and comes back inbounds at the A33. A88 catches A5's pass at the A47 and is tackled immediately. A88 is guilty of illegal participation and the penalty would be enforced from the previous spot using all the guidance related to Table 10-4.

4. Update from NAERA

We have received an email from NAERA addressing warning labels placed on helmets during the 2024 reconditioning process. Here is a link to what we received and instructions on how schools are to proceed: <https://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/2024-Football-Helmet-Warning-Label-NAERA-Letter-8-29-24.pdf>

5. Training Videos

For those who are unaware, we are in our second year of working with current IHSAA and Big Ten official Monte Tilgner in producing weekly training videos for our football officials. The weekly video cover a wide range of different plays and touches on a number topics including rules review, mechanics and philosophy. The weekly video is usually posted by early afternoon on Thursdays, and I would encourage you to take a look at what's being produced as they could also serve as a teaching tool for coaches and players. <https://www.iahsaa.org/officials/football-training-videos/>

Have a great Week 2. Do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.