



IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Football Memo #9

October 10, 2024

Good morning football coaches and athletic directors –

As we forge ahead to Week 7, here are a few concerns I received following games last weekend.

1. Numbering Rules

I received multiple emails and calls over the weekend from both coaches and officials regarding the numbering requirements in 11-player football (there are no numbering requirements in 8-player). In a regular offensive formation, the offense is required to have at least five individuals numbered 50-79. A back can be any number. Any number can run, throw or kick the football. An athlete wearing 50-79 cannot catch a forward pass even if the line up in the backfield or at the end of the line of scrimmage (7-5-6a). There are exceptions to this rule if a team lines up in scrimmage kick formation and those exceptions are different on 1st through 3rd down compared to 4th down and PATs. Rule 7-2-5b goes into specifics on the two exceptions.

2. Disconcerting Acts

Rule 7-1-9 is very clear that no defensive player shall use disconcerting acts or words prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with A's signals or movements. The defense may use verbal signals, but those signals need to be different than the signals used by the offense. In addition, the defense cannot clap to simulate the offensive cadence. The penalty is a dead-ball foul and marked off five yards.

3. Muffed Punts

We have had a few situations this fall where a muffed punt was advanced by the kicking team after recovery. By rule, a muff is not a fumble. If we have a muffed punt, the kicking team may recover the football but cannot advance the football. Under the same scenario, the receiving team may recover the football and advance. Now, if the returner secures possession and then fumbles the football, either team may recover and advance.

4. Basic Spot Enforcement

Again Rule 10 was revamped prior to the 2023 season regarding the basic spot for penalty enforcement. While there were many changes to the rule, the most significant change was having most fouls now enforced from the previous spot when either the offense or defense commits a foul behind the line of scrimmage. There are still a handful of fouls that are enforced from the spot of the foul behind the line of scrimmage (offensive foul in the end zone; illegal batting, kicking, forward pass; intentional grounding). What didn't change was the basic spot being the spot of the foul when the run or related run ends beyond the line of scrimmage and the foul occurs behind the end of the run or related run.

5. Reconditioning Standards

We have received correspondence from the National Athletic Equipment Reconditioners Association through the NFHS regarding the reconditioning of football helmets. The correspondence can be found here and the guidance within the letter needs to be followed as you look ahead to the 2025 football season: <https://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2024-25-NAERA-recommendations10.9.24.pdf>

As always, don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Jared