



COMMENTS ON THE 2012 FOOTBALL RULES CHANGES

RESTRICTIONS HAVE BEEN REMOVED FOR CORPORATE ADVERTISING AND MARKINGS ON THE FIELD OF PLAY (1-2-3h, 1-2-3l NEW): The committee cleared the way for State Associations and their member schools to place corporate advertising and/or commercial markings on the field of play. This advertising is not permitted to obstruct the yard lines, hash marks or nine-yard marks. If needed, shadow lines may be utilized to ensure the visibility of the required marks. Previously, advertising was only allowed in the end zones and outside the field.

FOOTBALL GLOVES MUST MEET THE NOCSAE TEST STANDARD STARTING IN 2013 (1-5-2b): The implementation date for the NOCSAE test standard on football gloves was delayed for one year. Beginning with the 2013 season, all football gloves must meet the NOCSAE test standard at the time of manufacture, unless made of unaltered plain cloth.

PLAY CARDS MUST BE WORN ON THE WRIST (1-5-3c(8) NEW): The committee expanded the list of illegal equipment to include play cards that are not worn on the wrist. The committee had received concerns about players wearing these cards in a location other than the wrist.

BLOCKING-BELOW-THE-WAIST RULES REVISED (2-3-7): Under a longstanding interpretation, it was not a foul for a player to block below the waist if the hand(s) of the opponent was first contacted below the waist. This revision changes that interpretation and stipulates that such action is a foul.

DEFINITION OF A CATCH REVISED (2-4-1): Previously, the covering official could have ruled that an airborne player attempting to catch the ball would have come down inbounds, but was prevented from doing so because of contact by an opponent. The revision stipulates that in order to be ruled a catch, a player is required to establish possession of the ball and contact the ground inbounds while maintaining possession, regardless of the opponent's action.

PLAYER REQUIRED TO BE REMOVED IF HELMET COMES OFF DURING THE DOWN (3-5-10d): The committee reviewed data gathered from multiple states regarding the frequency of helmets coming off during the down. Based on this review, the committee approved a rule change stipulating that if any player's helmet comes off during the down, and it is not due to a foul by the opponent, that player must leave the game for at least one down (unless halftime or an overtime intermission occurs). In such circumstances, an official's time-out occurs.

RESTRICTIONS ADDED TO BLOCKING ON FREE KICKS (9-3-8 NEW): The committee changed the rule to prohibit members of the kicking team from initiating contact (blocking) against members of the receiving team until the ball has broken the plane of the receiving team's restraining line, or until the kicking team is eligible to recover the free-kick. Kicking team members are permitted to block if blocked by members of the receiving team prior to either of these conditions being met.

ILLEGAL PERSONAL CONTACT PENALTY HAS BEEN REVISED (9-4-3h): With this change, the foul for grasping the face mask has been expanded to include grasping the tooth and mouth protector attached to the face mask.

HORSE-COLLAR RULE HAS BEEN MODIFIED (9-4-3k): The committee clarified the rule by adding the direction in which the opponent was pulled to give guidance to game officials.