

### **Defensive Pass Interference Philosophies**

- Early contact by defender who is not playing the ball is DPI provided the other requirements for DPI have been met, regardless of how deep the pass is thrown to the receiver.
- Playing through the back of receiver in attempt to make a play on the ball.
- Grabbing & restricting a receiver's arm(s) or body in a manner that restricts receiver's opportunity to catch a pass.
- Extending an arm across the body (arm bar) of a receiver thus restricting his ability to catch a pass, regardless of the fact of whether or not the defender is looking for the ball.
- Cutting off or riding receiver out of the path to the ball by contacting him without playing the ball.
- Hooking & restricting a receiver in an attempt to get to the ball in such a manner that causes the receiver's body to turn prior to the ball arriving.

### **Offensive Pass Interference Philosophies**

- Initiating contact with defender by shoving or pushing off thus creating separation in an attempt to catch a pass.
- Driving through a defender who has established a position on the field.
- Blocking downfield during a pass that legally crosses the line of scrimmage.
- Picking off a defender who is attempting to cover a receiver.

### **Not Offensive Pass Interference Philosophies**

- OPI will not be called on a screen pass when the ball is overthrown behind the line of scrimmage but subsequently lands beyond the expanded line of scrimmage (up to 3 yards) & linemen are blocking downfield, unless such blocking prevents defensive player from catching the ball.
- It is not OPI on a pick play if the defensive player is blocking the offensive player when the pick occurs & the offensive player doesn't make a separate action, or if the blocker's entire body is clearly not beyond the neutral zone (contact occurs within 1 yard of the LOS).
- OPI will not be called for blocking downfield if the passer is "legally grounding" the ball out of bounds, near or beyond the sideline.

### **Other Passing Philosophies**

- When in question on action against passer, it is roughing the passer if defender attempts to punish.
- QB can throw the ball anywhere if he is not under duress, except spike the ball straight down (except as allowed by rule on hand-to-hand snap to stop the clock). The clock is not a factor.
- The neutral zone will be expanded 1 yard when determining if pass (untouched) is beyond the line.
- A pass not in the direction of receiver must be blatantly in direction away from the area of a receiver in order to disregard pass interference foul.
- Don't be technical on grounding by quarterback.

- If passer is contacted after he starts his passing motion, it may be ruled no intentional grounding due to this contact.
- If passer is contacted clearly before he starts his passing motion, there will be a foul for intentional grounding if no eligible receiver is in the vicinity or if the pass does not reach the line of scrimmage (especially after QB is scrambling).
- If interception is near the goal-line (inside the 1-yd line) & there is a question as to whether possession is gained in the field of play or end zone, make the play a touchback.
- If the passer is legally "throwing the ball away out of bounds", near the sidelines, do not penalize the offense for having ineligible players downfield.

### **Line of Scrimmage (LOS) Philosophies**

- When in question as to whether an action is a false start or illegal motion, it is a false start.
- When in question, a quick or abrupt movement by the center or QB is a false start.
- Anytime defensive player initially aligned tight to the neutral zone jumps toward neutral zone & when in question whether he was in the neutral zone & the appropriate offensive player(s) moves, shut the play down & penalize the defense.
- At beginning of game do not penalize for "minor" encroachment (lining up in neutral zone) - warn coach/player at least twice. After that, flag.
- Officials work to keep offensive linemen legal & call illegal formations only when it's obvious or after repeated warnings are ignored. Officials do not wait until 4th quarter to enforce the rule.
- If offensive player is lined up with his head clearly behind the rear end ("ass") of the snapper, a foul will be called without a warning.
- Don't be technical on offensive player who is a wide receiver or slot back in determining if he is off the LOS. If in question, it is not a foul.
- Wide receivers or slot backs lined up outside a tight end will be considered on the LOS & covering the tight end if there is no stagger between their alignments. If in question, the tight end is not covered up.
- Formations during the execution of a trick or unusual play have the highest degree of scrutiny and should be completely legal.

### **Fumbles Philosophies**

- If in question the runner was down & did not fumble.
- If in question regarding whether QB passed or fumbled, it will be ruled a pass.

### **Miscellaneous Philosophies**

- Consider ankle or wrist part of the foot or hand, respectively, & does not make a runner down.
- If in question, a charged team timeout precedes a foul that prevents the snap.
- Allow for brief, spontaneous, emotional reactions at the end of a play – Officials flag those acts that are clearly prolonged, self-congratulatory, & that make a mockery of the game.

### **Ball Spotting Philosophies**

- After change of possession, ball can be placed on a yard line to begin the next series. (Exception: If change of possession occurs on 4th-down running or passing play, the ball will be left at the dead-ball spot to begin the next series.) Ex: if punt return ends w/ ball between Team B's 33 & 34-yard lines, move the ball forward to Team B's 34 yard line. At all other times, ball is placed where it became dead.
- If a punt is downed on the ground inside team B's 5-yard line, the ball should be left & not moved to the next yard line.
- On plays to the goal-line, do not spot the ball on the 1" line, place 6" from goal-line ("6 inch or 6 points").

### **Kicking Plays Philosophies**

- The kicker's restraining line on onside & short pooch kickoffs should be officiated as a plane. Any player (other than the kicker or holder) breaking the plane before the ball is kicked should be called for offside. The same plane applies on normal kickoffs, but officials should not be too technical in regard to players breaking the plane.
- Illegal block in the back can be called on fair catches, but not if the illegal block occurs away from the play as the fair catch is being made, or the play results in a touchback & contact is slight. (Note: Personal fouls should always be called or there is forcible contact that involves player safety).
- Blocks in the back that are personal fouls must be called regardless of its timing relative to a fair catch.
- It shall always be roughing the kicker when there is forcible contact to the plant leg, whether or not that leg is on the ground. It shall be running into the kicker if defender simply "runs through" the kicking leg & there is no forcible contact. All other contact shall be based on severity & potential for injury to the kicker.
- On kicks, when momentum carries the receiver into the end zone, when in question, during the return the ball has not left the end zone.
- When in question, fouls by receiving team on scrimmage kick occur after ball is kicked (PSK).

### **Scoring Plays Philosophies**

- When in question, it is not a touchdown.
- When in question, it is not a safety.
- When in question, a non-airborne runner crossing the goal inside the pylon with the ball crossing the goal line extended is a touchdown.

### **Sideline Plays Philosophies**

- If legal contact occurs before the runner has a foot down out of bounds, consider it a legal hit unless the runner has obviously given up on the play very near the sideline & forcible contact is made attempting to punish.
- If whistle has blown & runner continuing to advance down the sideline has eased up, contact by the opponent against the runner is a foul. Officials should be alert & be sure any action is not part of the initial play before calling a foul.

- When in question as to whether the runner stepped out of bounds, officials should rule the runner did not step out of bounds.

### **Blocking (and Holding)**

- If a player is illegally blocked or held "into" making a tackle, no foul should be called unless the action is a personal foul or there is an element of time between the foul & the tackle.
- Obvious & intentional takedowns at the point of attack, those in the open field, within the tackle box & affecting the result of the play create special focus and should be called in those situations.
- If there is a potential offensive holding but the action occurs clearly away from the point of attack & has no (or could have no) effect on the play, offensive holding should not be called.
- If there is potential for defensive holding but action occurs clearly away from point of attack & has no (or could have no) effect on the play, defensive holding should not be called. (Ex: defensive back on opposite side of the field holding a wide receiver on a designed run play to the other side).
- For blocks in the back, if one hand is on the number & the other hand is on the side & the initial force is on the number, it is a block in the back. The force of the block could be slight & still a foul if the contact propels the player past the runner or prevents him from making the play. If the force is clearly from the side, it is not a foul. If the blocker is in a "chase mode" all the action must be from the side.
- Blocks that start on the side & subsequently end up in the back are not fouls as long as contact is maintained throughout the block.
- Blocks in the back that occur at or about the same time a runner is being tackled should not be called, unless they are in the nature of a personal foul or there is forcible contact that involves player safety.
- A grab of the receiver's jersey that materially restricts the receiver & takes away his feet should be defensive holding if other criteria are met, and could also be DPI.
- Holding can be called even if the QB is subsequently sacked & there is an element of time between the foul & the tackle.
- Blocks in the back that are personal fouls in nature should be called regardless of their timing relative to the runner being tackled.
- Rarely should you have a hold on a double team block unless there is a takedown or the defender breaks the double team & is pulled back.
- When in question if an illegal block occurs in the end zone or field of play, it occurs in field of play.
- Regarding blocking below the waist, when in question, the ball has not left the free blocking zone.

### **Game Clock Philosophies**

- 5/5 axiom: To adjust game clock errors, there must be more than a 5-second differential if there is more than 5 minutes remaining in half.
- Any time loss because clock started erroneously, the clock must be adjusted.