



VIA FACSIMILE AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

MEMORANDUM

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P.O. Box 6222

Indianapolis, Indiana

46206-6222

Telephone 317/917-6222

Shipping/Overnight Address:

1802 Alonzo Watford Sr. Drive

Indianapolis, Indiana 46202

[www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)

TO: Divisions I, II and III Supervisors of Football Officials, Conference  
Commissioners and Head Football Coaches.

FROM: Rogers Redding, secretary-rules editor  
NCAA Football Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: NCAA Football Clarification and Play Situations Bulletin No. 1.

Enclosed with this memorandum are the first set of play situations and several interpretations for the 2008 season. The committee hopes these examples assist in the understanding of NCAA Football rules. Each play includes the ruling and a rule reference to assist.

If you have any questions, please contact Rogers Redding, secretary-rules editor of the NCAA Football Rules Committee, via e-mail at ([footballrules@ncaa.org](mailto:footballrules@ncaa.org)).

RR:nkb

Enclosure

cc: NCAA Football Rules Committee  
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**PLAY SITUATIONS—BULLETIN NO. 1**

1. Quarterback A12 is roughed after he releases a legal forward pass. Eligible A88 catches the pass and runs to the B-4, where he fumbles. The ball strikes the goal-line pylon.

**RULING:** The result of the play is a touchback. The accepted penalty is enforced at the B-4, which is the end of the run. First and goal for Team A at the B-2. Note that Team B did not have possession at any time during the down. *(8-6-1-a, 2-31-3, 9-1-2-1)*

2. Fourth and 12 at the A-45. During a punt, B66 is flagged for holding at the B-48. Receiver B22 catches the kick at the B-26 and returns the ball to the A-3 where he fumbles. The ball strikes the goal-line pylon.

**RULING:** The result of the play is a touchback, giving Team A the ball, first and 10 at the A-20. The penalty is subject to post-scrimmage kick enforcement because Team B was in legal possession of the ball when it was declared dead. Therefore, the penalty (almost certainly to be declined) would be enforced at the end of the kick. *[8-6-1-a, 2-31-3, 10-2-2-e-Exc. 3(e)]*

3. Fourth and 12 at the A-45. During a punt, B66 is flagged for holding at the B-48. Receiver B22 catches the kick at the B-26 and returns the ball to the A-3 where he fumbles. The fumbled ball rolls out of bounds at the A-2.

**RULING:** Post-scrimmage kick rules apply. The penalty is enforced at the end of the kick: first and 10 for Team B at the B-16. *(10-2-2-e-Exc. 3)*

4. Fourth and 12 at the A-45. During a punt, B66 is flagged for holding at the B-48. Receiver B22 catches the kick at the B-26 and returns the ball to the A-3 where he fumbles. A15 recovers the fumble while grounded at the A-10.

**RULING:** Post-scrimmage kick rules do not apply because Team A was in legal possession of the ball when it was declared dead. If accepted, the penalty would be enforced at the previous spot, giving Team A fourth and two at the B-45. If Team A declines the penalty, it will have first and 10 at the A-10. *[10-2-2-e-Exc. 3(e)]*

5. Third and four at the B-40 late in the second quarter. At the snap B77 is in the neutral zone. B22 intercepts a legal forward pass and runs out of bounds at the B-25. When the ball is declared dead the game clock reads 1:46.

**RULING:** Team A will accept the five-yard penalty to retain the ball, first and 10 at the B-35. The game clock starts on the ready-for-play signal. The intent of Rule 3-2-5-a-12 is to apply to a Team A ball carrier going out of bounds. Because Team B will not next

snap the ball, the only remaining reason for stopping the game clock is to administer the penalty. (3-2-5-a-12, 3-2-5-e)

6. Third and four at the B-40 late in the second quarter. At the snap B77 is in the neutral zone. Ball carrier A22 gains two yards and runs out of bounds at the B-38. When the ball is declared dead the game clock reads 1:46.

**RULING:** Team A will accept the five-yard penalty to retain the ball, first and 10 at the B-35. The game clock starts on the snap, since one reason it was stopped was for the Team A ball carrier going out of bounds with less than two minutes in the half. (3-2-5-a-12, 3-2-5-c)

7. Third and four at the B-40. At the snap B77 is in the neutral zone. A12's legal forward pass is incomplete.

**RULING:** Team A will accept the five-yard penalty to retain the ball, first and 10 at the B-35. One of the reasons for stopping the game clock is the incomplete pass, so the game clock starts on the snap. (3-2-5-c)

8. Team A kicks off at its 30-yard line and A35 is clearly offside when the ball is kicked. A41 is the first to touch the ball, which he recovers at the A-37.

**RULING:** Illegal touching by A41. Due to the offside foul, Team B may have Team A re-kick the ball at the A-25 following a five-yard penalty at the previous spot, or it may elect to have the five-yard penalty enforced at the spot of A41's recovery. *NOTE:* The illegal-touching spot is not an enforcement spot unless, as in this case, is coincident with the dead-ball spot. (6-1-3, 10-2-2-e-Exc. 5)

9. Late in the second or fourth quarter ball carrier A22: (a) is tackled in the field of play beyond the line to gain; or (b) runs out of bounds, either beyond or short of the line to gain. In both (a) and (b) the game clock reads 2:35 when the ball is declared dead.

**RULING:** In both (a) and (b) the game clock is stopped and the 40-second clock begins its countdown when the ball is declared dead. When the officials have made the ball ready for play, the referee **blows his whistle** while giving the wind-the-clock signal. (3-2-5-a-1 and -12)

10. Late in a quarter, Team A has second and seven at the A-35. Ball carrier A28 is tackled in the field of play after a gain of three yards. With the game clock showing 35 seconds remaining in the quarter, the officials stop the game clock because of a Team B injured player.

**RULING:** Had the clock not been stopped for the injury, Team A could have let time expire in the quarter (unless Team B is granted a charged timeout). Although an injured player is one of the reasons that the play clock would be set at 25 seconds, in fairness Team A should not be forced to snap the ball again before the quarter ends. When the injured player has left the field, the play clock remains off or does not start and the referee blows his whistle while giving the wind-the-clock signal. Team A may choose to snap the ball but will not incur a delay-of-game foul by allowing the game clock to expire in the quarter. (3-2-4-c-4, 3-4-3) *NOTE:* By interpretation, the referee's discretion per Rule 3-4-3 extends to the play clock as well as the game clock.

11. Late in the fourth quarter, Team A has first and 10 at the A-35. Ball carrier A22 fumbles at the A-38 and the ball rolls out of bounds at the A-40. When the clock is stopped it reads 1:30.

**RULING:** Due to the fumble going forward and out of bounds, the ball will next be put in play at the A-38, second and seven. Clock starts on the referee's signal. Rule 3-2-5-a-11 here supersedes 3-2-5-c as a special rule for a forward fumble out of bounds.

12. B22 intercepts A12's legal forward pass and returns the ball to the A-30 where he fumbles. A27 recovers the fumble and is tackled at the A-40.

**RULING:** First and 10 for Team A at the A-40. The play clock is set at 25 seconds due to the change of possession during the down. The game clock and the play clock start when the referee blows his whistle while giving the wind-the-clock signal. (3-2-4-c-6, 3-2-5-a-1)