

2008

California Football  
Officials Association  
Officiating  
Philosophies

# Line of Scrimmage

# Line of Scrimmage

- Officials will work to keep offensive lineman legal and will call only when obvious or where repeated warnings are ignored. Don't wait till the 4<sup>th</sup> qtr to enforce rule.
- If the offensive player is lined up with his head clearly behind the rear end of snapper, a foul will be called without a warning.

# Line of Scrimmage

- Don't be technical on offensive player who is a wide receiver or slot back in determining if he is off the line of scrimmage. When in question, it is NOT a foul.
- Wide receivers or slot backs lined up at tight end will be ruled on the line of scrimmage and covering the tight end if there is no stagger between their alignments. If in question, he is covered up.

# Line of Scrimmage

- Formations during the execution of a trick play or unusual play have the highest degree of scrutiny and should be completely legal.

# Pass Interference

# Defensive Pass Interference

Actions that constitute defensive pass interference include but are not limited to the following seven categories:

# Defensive Pass Interference

- Early contact by a defender who is **Not Playing the Ball** is defensive pass interference provided the other requirements for DPI have been met, regardless of how deep the pass is to the receiver.
- **Playing Through the Back** of a receiver in an attempt to make a play on the ball.



# Defensive Pass Interference

- **Grabbing and Restricting** a receiver's arm(s) or body in such a manner that restricts his 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.

# Defensive Pass Interference

- **Cutting Off** or riding the receiver out of the path to the ball by making contact with him without playing the ball.
- A receiver in an attempt to get the ball in such a manner that is caused the receiver's **Hooking and Restricting** body to turn prior to the ball arriving.
- **Face Guarding** a receiver who is attempting to catch a forward pass.

# Offensive Pass Interference

Actions that constitute offensive pass interference include but are not limited to the following three categories:

# Offensive Pass Interference

- Initiating contact with a defender by shoving or pushing of thus **Creating Separation** in an attempt to catch a pass.
- **Drive Thru** a defender who has established a position on the field.
- OPI for **Blocking Downfield** can be called even if the passer is legally grounding the ball.

# Not Offensive Pass Interference

Actions that do not constitute offensive pass interference include but are not limited to:

# Not Offensive Pass Interference

- OPI will not be called on a screen pass where the ball is overthrown behind the LOS but subsequently lands beyond the LOS and lineman are blocking downfield, unless such blocking prevents a 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 play occurs.

# Passing Situations

- Neutral zone will be expanded 2 yards when determining ineligible receivers.
- When in question on action against a passer, it is roughing the passer if the defender's intent is to punish.
- If an interception is near the goal line (inside the 1-yard line) and there is a question as to whether possession is gained in the field of play or end zone, make the play a touchback.

# Blocking



# Blocking

- Takedowns at the POA, those in the open field, within the tackle box, and affecting the result of the play create special focus and should be called in these situations.
- If there is a potential offensive holding but action occurs clearly away from the point of attack and has no (or could have no) effect on the play, offensive holding should not be called.

# Blocking

- If there is a potential for defensive holding but action occurs clearly away from the point of attack and has no (or could have no) effect on the play, defensive holding should not be called.
- For blocks in the back, if one hand is on the number and the other hand on the side and the initial force is on the number, it is a block in the back. The force of the block could be slight and still a foul if the contact propels the player past the runner.

# Blocking

- A grab of the receiver's jersey that restricts the receiver and 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 quarterback is subsequently sacked as it may be the other half of an offset foul.

# Blocking

- Illegal block in the back can still be called on fair catches, but not if the illegal block occurs away from the play as the fair catch is being made.
- Blocks in the back that are personal foul in nature should be called regardless of their timing relative to a fair catch or runner being tackled.

# Blocking

- Rarely should you have a hold on a double team block unless there is a takedown or the defender breaks the double team and is pulled back.
- When in question if an illegal block occurs in the EZ or field of play, it occurs in the field of play.

Kicking

# Kicking

- The kicker's restraining line on onside and short pooch kick-offs should be officiated as a plane and any player (other than the kicker or holder) breaking the plane before the ball is kicked should be called for encroachment. For deep kick-offs, we will also use a plane, but do not be so technical.

# Kicking

- The goal line will serve as a hard plane for free kicks. Once the plane has been broken, the free kick will result in a touchback.



# Runner Down

# Runner Down

- When in question, the runner fumbled the ball and was NOT down.
- If legal contact occurs before the runner has a foot down out-of-bounds, legal hit.
- Runner continuing down sideline: If whistle has blown and a player has eased up then this is a foul. Be alert and be sure any action is not part of the initial play before calling a foul.

# Runner Down

- A non-airborne runner crossing the goal inside the pylon with the ball crossing the goal line extended is a touchdown.
- When in question, the runner did not step out of bounds.

# Miscellaneous

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- Do throw a flag for sideline warning. Call sideline warning at the end of a down without causing an interruption, but be sure the Head Coach has had prior verbal warning.
- 5-yard facemask fouls are rare but if it is a grasp and then let go, it can be called. When in question it is a 15-yard foul.

# Miscellaneous

- The ball can be placed on a yard line to begin the next possession. All other times, the ball is placed where it is. (Exception: If the change of possession occurs on a 4<sup>th</sup> down, running or passing play, the ball will be left at the dead ball spot to begin the next series.)

# Miscellaneous

- 5/5 axiom: In order to adjust the game clock when it has been running, there must be more than a 5 second differential if there is more than 5 minutes remaining in either half. Any time loss due to clock being started erroneously, such as when a dead ball foul is called, the clock must be adjusted.

# Personal Fouls



# Personal Fouls

- If action is deemed to be “fighting”, then the player must be disqualified. When in question of such actions, the player is not fighting.
- For late hits away from the ball near the end of the play, when in question lean towards dead-ball foul rather than live-ball foul.
- Spitting on an opponent requires disqualification.

**Thank You for  
Watching this  
Presentation**