

# **NATIONAL FOOTBALL FEDERATION**

## **TOUCH FOOTBALL RULE BOOK 2004**

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## Forward

Appreciation is extended to the Canadian Football League (CFL) for permitting us to model our rules on the rules that govern their tackle game.

The preparation of this book was a collaborative project and additional thanks are extended to the Rule Book and Case Book review committee members, including Ron Sorrell, Larry Duchesne, Ed Laverty, Brent Rennick, John Dorego, and Jim Stitchman.

We wish to extend our appreciation to the many officials who submitted cases for inclusion in this book. Their efforts will allow us to expand the number of cases in future editions.

Additional copies of this rule book can be obtained by contacting **Touch Football Ontario** at 1- 866 -749-3721.  
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### Rule Changes - 2004

The following are the significant rule changes made since the 2003 Tournament of Champions.

1. The 20 second floating timeout will now also be 60 seconds.
2. Tournament game timing is now as follows: Elite Division championships are 72 minutes long (or 60 minutes if both teams agree) and all other games are 60 minutes long.
3. The snap definition as to when the ball is in play is now defined. If the ball is taken to the huddle or not left on the ground it will become in play as soon as the centre lifts it off the ground after placing it on the ground. If the ball is left on the ground the centre is permitted to lift it off the ground once and then it is in play as soon as the centre lifts it off the ground after having placed it back on the ground.
4. The defender/rusher will be called for a Personal Foul if they raise any or both arms and move or swing them towards the Quarterback making ANY kind of contact above the Quarterback's shoulders or with the Quarterback's Arm while the Quarterback is attempting to make a pass.

## TOUCH FOOTBALL

### Rules Summary

Touch Football is played with seven on-field players per team. The team that has possession of the ball is termed the offense and the team that doesn't is called the defense. The offense has three downs to obtain 10 yards, keep possession of the ball and attempt to score. If they fail to gain the ten yards and a first down, the ball goes to the defense and they, in turn, become the offense and have three downs to obtain 10 yards, keep possession of the ball and attempt to score.

To begin a game, a team will kick off from their own 45 yard line or, if it is a non-regulation field, 10 yards back from the centre line. The kicking team is determined by a coin toss conducted prior to the game. The winner of the coin toss can elect to have the first half or second half choice of options. The options are to receive the kick off, to kick off, or to defend an end of the field. The other team has a similar choice at the beginning of the other half.

To begin the series of three downs, the ball is placed on the ground at the point the ball carrier was touched on the kick off. This is called the line of scrimmage. All offensive players must take a position on or behind the line of scrimmage. All defensive players must take a position at least one yard from the line of scrimmage on the opposite side. A player designated as the centre will then begin the play by snapping the ball between the legs to the quarterback who must receive the ball at least five yards behind the line of scrimmage. All players on the offense, except the centre, are allowed to be in motion prior to the snap, but are not permitted to cross the line of scrimmage until after the snap. The game is mainly a passing game with all players on the offense being eligible receivers. There is no blocking permitted. The play is terminated when a defender touches the ball carrier with one hand. Two hand touches are permissible as long as there is no rough touch.

During scrimmage plays the defense will have one player, called the rusher, pursue the quarterback after the ball is snapped. The rusher has specific rules, which govern this position. They include being at least five yards away from the line of scrimmage at the time the ball is snapped and not lining up directly in front of the opposing centre. In turn, the rules grant the rusher a direct and unobstructed path to the quarterback after the ball is snapped. No one is permitted to block or obstruct the rusher in any way.

Teams may use more than one rusher on a play. All rushers have the right to a clear and direct path to the quarterback provided they adhere to the rusher rules stated above. The first player, on the defense, to cross the line of scrimmage must have started from a point at least five yards from the line of scrimmage.

Bean bags are used by the officials to mark the line of scrimmage, the rusher's starting point and the first down line. Officials will place these bags at the appropriate spot prior to the start of each play. A different coloured bag must be used to designate the first down mark.

Teams are permitted only one forward pass on each scrimmage play. There are no forward passes permitted on kick offs or after punts. Teams may lateral the ball among teammates as many times as they wish during a play. A lateral is a pass in which the ball travels parallel to or, in the direction of, the passer's dead ball line. An attempted lateral that results in the ball going forward to a teammate is illegal and is ruled an offside pass when caught by a teammate.

There are no fumbles in touch football. The ball is considered dead when it hits the ground during a scrimmage play, except on the initial centre - quarterback exchange during the snap and on a lateral to an offensive player that occurs behind the line of scrimmage and before a forward pass is thrown. In the latter case, in order for the ball to be considered live, it must touch the intended player first before hitting the ground.

### **Scoring**

Points are awarded for touchdowns, converts, safety touches and rouges.

A touchdown is scored when a team gets the ball into the opponent's end zone by running with the ball across the goal line or by gaining possession of the ball in the end zone through a completed pass from a teammate. Touchdowns count for six points.

After a touchdown, the scoring team has the choice of attempting a one point convert from the five yard line or a two point convert from the ten yard line. All converts must be passing or running plays. Kicking is not permitted on convert attempts.

A safety touch counts for two points and is awarded to a team when their opponents cause the ball to go into their own end zone and the play is ruled dead prior to the ball being brought out of the end zone.

Rouges count for one point and are scored when the ball is punted into the opposing team's end zone and they are unable to bring the ball out of the end zone.

### **Game Procedures**

A game is usually divided into four quarters of fifteen to eighteen minutes each. The clock runs continuously during the quarters except for time outs and special timing provisions in the last three minutes of the second and fourth quarters. During the last three minutes of these quarters, the clock will be stopped during certain circumstances

which are described in the rules. At the end of the first and third quarters, teams change ends and downs and yardage continue. At the end of the second quarter there is a rest period of an agreed upon length and the third quarter begins with a kick off.

Each team has one 60 second time out per half which, if not used, cannot be carried over to the next half. Each team also has one additional 60 second time out which can be used at any time during the game. Officials may call time outs to deal with measurements, rule explanations or injuries.

A team must have a minimum of five players on the field, at the designated starting time, to begin a game or it will forfeit the game.

### **Punts**

Teams may punt the ball on any play and in doing so they give up possession of the ball to the receiving team. When a ball is punted, members of the punting team must be at least five yards from the ball when it is first touched by a member of the receiving team. Failure to do so will result in a ten yard "no yards" penalty.

If the ball touches the punt receiver then goes forward and hits the ground, the play will be whistled dead. If the ball touches the punt receiver then hits the ground behind or lateral to the punt receiver, the ball is live to the receiving team only.

If a punt is blocked by the defensive team, the play is dead when the ball hits the ground or is caught by a member of the kicking team and the non-kicking team takes possession at the point the ball was blocked.

### **General Information**

Participants in the game of Touch Football must consider the safety of all players in the game. Aggressive play must be tempered with control in order to avoid unnecessary bodily contact and the potential of injury to opponents. Players who show no regard for this concept will be penalized for the unnecessary contact they cause. Sportsmanship and consideration for the well-being of others is an integral part of the game of Touch Football.

The rules of Touch Football exist to ensure that no team creates an unfair advantage over the other team. Therefore infractions such as interference, tripping, unnecessary roughness, contacting the passer or punter, obstruction, offside and objectionable conduct will be called by the officials when committed by players during a game. It is imperative that all participants display sportsmanship during a game. Persistent arguing, obscene language, threats to players, officials, or spectators bring disgrace to the sport and will not be tolerated.

## TOUCH FOOTBALL RULE BOOK

### Rule 1 - The Kick Off

1.1 To begin a game, a team will kick off from their own 45 yard line or, if it is a non-regulation field, 10 yards back from the centre line. When the official blows the whistle to signal the kick off, the kicking team has 20 seconds to kick the ball or be penalized 10 yards for delay of game. This procedure is also used following a touchdown if the non-scoring team elects to receive the kick off.

1.2 The ball is normally kicked off from a tee, which cannot raise the lowest part of the ball more than two inches off the ground. If a tee is not used, the ball can be held on the ground, by a member of the kicking team. The ball must be placed between the hash marks (24 yards in from the sidelines).

1.3 On a kick off all players of the receiving team must be at least 20 yards from the kick off line at the time the ball is kicked. Members of the kicking team must stay behind the kick off line until the ball is kicked. Failure to do so will result in a five-yard illegal procedure penalty.

1.4 To be a legal kick off the ball must travel 20 yards towards the receiving team's dead ball line before it is touched by a member of the kicking team. It is an illegal procedure penalty if the ball is touched by a member of the kicking team prior to traveling 20 yards downfield or if it does not travel the 20 yards downfield, unless it is touched first by a member of the receiving team.

1.5 Members of the kicking team can touch the ball, or down it, after it travels 20 yards and before it is touched by a member of the receiving team. The kicking team does not have to "give yards" on a kick off. The kicking team cannot normally recover their own kick unless it first touches a member of the receiving team, goes into the air and is caught by a member of the kicking team prior to the ball touching the ground.

1.6 If the ball goes out of bounds on a kick off, it is a five yard illegal procedure penalty against the kicking team. The receiving team has the option to have the ball re-kicked at a point five yards back from the point of the last kick, to take possession of the ball at the point it went out of bounds, or to take possession of the ball at their own 10 yard line.



### Cases on Rule 1 - The Kick Off

1. On a kick off, the ball travels 10 yards and goes out of bounds.

**Interpretation:** The receiving team has the option of taking the ball where it went out of bounds, having the kicking team re-kick 5 yards back from the point of kick off or scrimmage the ball on their own 10 yard line.

2. On a kick off, the ball does not travel 20 yards.

**Interpretation:** If the kicking team touches the ball before it travels 20 yards, they will be charged with illegal procedure. The receiving team can pick and advance the ball even though it has not traveled 20 yards.

3. On a kick off, the ball lands at the receiving team's 10-yard line, rolls into the end zone and goes out of bounds.

**Interpretation:** The kicking team scores 1 point and the receiving team scrimmages, first and ten, on its 35 yard line.

4. On a kick off, the ball travels over the receiving team's dead ball line in the air.

**Interpretation:** No point is awarded. Receiving team will scrimmage, first and ten from its own 10 yard line."

5. The kicking team is ready to kick off. As the kicker starts the approach to the ball, a receiving team player enters the field of play and is onside when the ball is kicked.

**Interpretation:** Once the kicker starts the approach to the ball, no player may enter the field. The infraction is illegal substitution and it is a 10-yard penalty, subject to options.

6. The kicking team kicks off and the ball strikes an official at the receiving team's 6-yard line, then hits the goal post.

**Interpretation:** The ball is dead as soon as it hits the goal post. The receiving team will scrimmage, first and ten, at their own 10-yard line. (The ball striking an official is the same as the ball hitting the ground.)

## Rule 2 - The Scrimmage

2.1 A huddle is not compulsory except in the following circumstances: after any time out; after a change in possession; after change of ends at the end of a period. The offensive team has 20 seconds to snap the ball after the referee has blown the play in. Failure to do so will result in a five yard time count penalty.

2.2 Teams are allowed to have a partial huddle where some players are huddled and others are not, however, "sleeper" plays are illegal and subject to an illegal procedure penalty. The officials will call a "sleeper" play when the offense deliberately attempts to deceive the defense as to which players are legally on the field.

2.3 To begin a play from scrimmage, the ball must be placed on the ground, between the hash marks, and then snapped through the legs of the centre to the quarterback, who is defined as the first player to touch the ball after it is snapped. **If the ball is taken to the huddle or not left on the ground it will become in play as soon as the centre lifts it off the ground after placing it on the ground. If the ball is left on the ground the centre is permitted to lift it off the ground once and then it is in play as soon as the centre lifts it off the ground after having placed it back on the ground.** The quarterback must receive the snap at least five yards behind the centre. Prior to the snap, the centre must position the ball between the legs next to the bag that marks the line of scrimmage. Failure to do so will result in a five yard illegal procedure penalty.

2.4 The first person to cross the line of scrimmage for the defense, usually referred to as the rusher, must be at least five yards away from the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. The rusher must be allowed a clear and direct path to the quarterback. Members of the opposing team are not allowed to block or interfere with the rusher. To maintain this clear and direct path, the rusher must line up outside the feet of the opposing centre, not directly in front of that player. Also the rusher must line up within five yards of either side of the centre's feet. Lining up outside of this area causes a loss in rusher privileges. These rules apply if more than one rusher is used. Blocking or interfering with the rusher results in a ten yard obstruction penalty against the offense.

2.5 Once the centre sets the ball on the ground for the snap, the rusher is not permitted to change sides and maintain rushing privileges with the centre; unless, the quarterback goes in motion prior to the snap of the ball.

2.6 To permit the centre to participate in the play, no opponent is permitted to line up within three yards directly in front of the centre and remain there after the snap. Players are not allowed to cross the line of scrimmage to listen to the opponent's huddle. These infractions would result in a five yard illegal procedure penalty.

2.7 If both teams go offside as the ball is snapped, the play is whistled dead and the down is replayed with no penalty.

### Cases on Rule 2 - The Scrimmage

1. The centre places the ball on the ground and then lifts it off the ground. The rusher runs in and just before the centre is touched, the centre snaps the ball.

**Interpretation:** There is no infraction; the play continues.

2. The centre places the ball on the ground and then lifts it off the ground. Prior to the ball leaving the centre's hand, the centre is touched by the rusher.

**Interpretation:** There is no infraction. Team O loses its down.

3. **Comment.** On a wet or muddy field, the centre does not have to actually place the ball on the ground prior to the snap.

4. An offensive player, in motion prior to the snap, is accidentally struck by the snap from the centre, 3 yards behind the line of scrimmage.

**Interpretation:** The play continues. This is an illegal procedure penalty against the offense.

5. The ball is snapped and hits an offensive player running between the centre and the quarterback, approximately 6 yards behind the line of scrimmage.

**Interpretation:** The ball is live to that same player and any onside offensive player.

6. Prior to the snap of the ball, O6 breaks the line of the scrimmage and makes contact with D4.

**Interpretation:** The play is whistled dead. This is an illegal procedure penalty against O6.

7. The quarterback goes in motion prior to the snap of the ball. The rusher changes sides after the ball has been set by the centre. The play carries on a) without interference between the centre and the rusher and b) with interference between the centre and the rusher.

**Interpretation:** In a) no foul has been committed. In b) the centre is called for obstruction.

### **Rule 3 - Passing**

3.1 All players are eligible to receive a forward pass. There can be only one forward pass on each scrimmage play. A forward pass is one in which the ball is intentionally thrown or handed towards the opponent's goal line. A forward pass is legal, if it is the first pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage. A forward pass cannot be thrown during a kick off or after the ball has been punted.

3.2 A pass is considered complete if the player has possession and control of the ball prior to going out of bounds. To be considered in bounds the receiver must touch the ground in bounds with some part of the body prior to any part of the body touching an out of bounds area. The boundary lines, which mark the outer limits of the field are considered to be out of bounds.

3.3 If a receiver could have landed in bounds but was pushed out of bounds by an opponent, the catch will be awarded to the receiver. It is the official's judgment as to whether the receiver could have landed in bounds.

3.4 A pass caught simultaneously by players on opposite teams will be awarded to the team that had possession prior to the pass.

3.5 A player who bobbles the ball and **is touched** while bobbling the ball will be considered to be touched if and when the player finally gains possession of the ball. The ball will come back to the point where the receiver was first touched by the opponent. The intent of this rule is to prevent players from **intentionally** bobbling the ball to avoid a touch.

3.6 Players can lateral the ball at any time during a play. A lateral pass is a pass that travels parallel to, or in the direction of, the passer's dead ball line. An attempted lateral that results in the ball going forward and being caught by a teammate is illegal and is ruled an offside pass. If a player makes an offside pass, the ball comes back to the point from where the pass was initiated.

3.7 When an offensive player touches a lateral pass behind the line of scrimmage before any forward pass is thrown and the ball then touches the ground, the ball is live to the offense only. The defense may touch the last offensive player that touched the ball or they may touch the loose ball and down it to end the play.

3.8 A pass is incomplete when the ball touches the ground, the goal post or an official or lands out of bounds.

3.9 When the passer deliberately throws a pass to an area where there is no receiver in an obvious attempt to avoid a loss of yards, the team will be penalized for grounding the ball. The penalty is a loss of down at the point the ball was thrown.

3.10 If a pass is intercepted in the end zone, no points are awarded and the team that intercepted the ball is awarded first down on their own 10 yard line.

### **Cases on Rule 3 - Passing**

1. After receiving the snap from centre, the quarterback hands off to a halfback in a forward direction.

**Interpretation:** The handoff in a forward direction, behind the line of scrimmage, is considered the offense's one legal forward pass that they are allowed on a play from scrimmage.

2. The quarterback throws a forward pass that is blocked by the rusher. The quarterback manages to catch the ball before it hits the ground and throws a completed forward pass to a receiver.

**Interpretation:** The second pass is considered to be an offside pass and the offense loses the down and the ball is spotted at the point of the offside pass.

3. Receiver O3 leaps high in the air to catch a pass. Both feet touch the ground simultaneously, one foot in bounds and one foot out of bounds.

**Interpretation:** Incomplete pass. The receiver must touch the ground in bounds first, prior to any part of the body touching an out of bounds area.

4. O1 throws a pass downfield to O7. O7 deflects the ball forward. D2 deflects the ball toward the Team D goal line and O5 catches the ball and runs for a touchdown.

**Interpretation:** An offside pass from O7 to O5 has occurred, regardless of the tip by D2. The ball is placed at the original point of deflection by O7.

5. Team O quarterback crosses the line of scrimmage and then returns behind the line and throws a completed forward pass, 15 yards downfield.

**Interpretation:** Illegal forward pass. Ball is dead at the point of the pass attempt.

6. Quarterback throws a pass to O7. O7 dives headlong to catch the ball, gains control of the ball, but as O7 lands the ball pops free and it makes contact with the ground.

**Interpretation:** This is considered a legal catch. The criteria of stopping the rotation and influencing its subsequent direction have been met. The ground cannot cause an incomplete pass.

#### **Rule 4 - Scoring**

4.1 A touchdown counts as 6 points; a convert from the five yard line is 1 point; a convert from the 10 yard line is 2 points; a safety touch is 2 points; and a rouge is 1 point.

4.2 A touchdown is scored by carrying the ball into the opponent's end zone or by catching the ball in the opponents' end zone prior to it touching the ground. The ball is considered to be in the end zone when any part of the ball touches or crosses the plane of the goal line.

4.3 After a touchdown is scored, the scoring team may try a convert attempt. The scoring team will choose to attempt a 1 point convert from the five yard line or 2 point convert from the ten yard line. Converts are pass or run attempts; no kicking is allowed. If there is a penalty on a convert attempt, the scoring team is not permitted to change its choice if there is a repeated attempt.

4.4 On a convert attempt, the ball is scrimmaged in the centre of the appropriate yard line. If there are goal posts on the field the scoring team has the right to move the ball to either hash mark (24 yards in from either sideline).

4.5 After a convert attempt, the non-scoring team may elect to have the scoring team kick off from their own 45 yard line or the non-scoring team may elect to kick off from their own 45 yard line.

4.6 A safety touch is awarded to a team when the offense causes the ball to go into their own end zone and the play is ruled dead prior to the ball being brought out of the end zone. A ball is considered to be in the end zone if any part of the ball is still in the end zone.

4.7 After a safety touch, the scoring team can choose one of three options: to have the non-scoring team kick off from the non-scoring team's 35 yard line, to scrimmage the ball, first and ten, from their own 35 yard line or to kick off from their own 35 yard line.

4.8 A rouge is scored when a team legally kicks the ball into the opponent's end zone and the ball is not brought out of the end zone. For a rouge to be scored on a kick off, the ball must land in the field of play or in the end zone prior to going out of bounds.

4.9 After a rouge is scored, the non-scoring team will scrimmage the ball, first and ten, from their own 35 yard line.

#### **Cases on Rule 4 - Scoring**

1. The offense punts the ball from the defensive's 30 yard line. The ball a) hits the goal post in flight; b) bounces first on the five yard line and then hits the goal post; c) bounces in the end zone and then hits the goal post; d) sails through the end zone without touching the ground and e) lands in the end zone and then dribbles out of bounds.

#### **Interpretation:**

a) b) c) no point is awarded, first down on non-punting team 10 yard line

d) point is awarded, first down on the 35 yard line and

e) point is awarded, first down on the 35 yard line.

2. The offense scores a touchdown. The offense declines the convert attempt.

**Interpretation:** This is a valid option for the scoring team.

3. After scoring a touchdown, the offense requests a two point convert. The Referee declares to the defense that the offense will attempt a two point convert. The captain of the offense then requests a one point convert attempt.

**Interpretation:** Once the referee has declared a one or two point attempt to the defense, it cannot be changed. In the above situation, the two point convert must be attempted.

4. Team O punts the ball into Team D end zone. Team D returns the kick but it hits the goal post.

**Interpretation:** Since this is a return punt, a single point is awarded to Team O.

5. O1 punts the ball to D3 on the one yard line. In trying to avoid a touch, D3 runs back into the end zone, where the touch is subsequently applied.

**Interpretation:** A safety touch is awarded to Team O.

6. **Comment.** If the player's momentum caused D3 to go into the end zone in the above situation, one point would be awarded.

7. Team O punts. The ball deflects off the receiver's hand on the two yard line and goes into the end zone, where it is downed.

**Interpretation:** One point is awarded. This is not safety touch as it was the momentum of the ball that carried it into the end zone.

### **Rule 5 - Punts**

5.1 For a ball to be considered a punt it must be deliberately dropped and then kicked with the foot or leg before the ball touches the ground.

5.2 Any player may punt the ball, even after catching a pass over the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is legally punted, the punting team gives up possession of the ball.

5.3 After a punt, players of the punting team cannot touch the ball or be touched by the ball until an opponent touches the ball. They must also be at least five yards away from the ball when it is first touched by an opposing player. Failure to do so will result in a ten yard "no yards" penalty from the point the ball was first touched.



5.4 Any player on the receiving team can catch a punt and advance it. There is no blocking permitted on a punt return. If a player attempts to catch a punt and the ball touches the player then hits the ground, the play will be live if the ball goes in the direction of, or parallel to, the receiver's dead ball line. If the receiver touches the ball and the ball goes forward and hits the ground, the play is dead when the ball hits the ground **and is brought back to where it was touched.**

5.5 A punt is considered blocked by the opposing team when a player of that team strikes the ball and the ball travels in the direction of, or parallel to, the punting team's dead ball line and hits the ground or is touched by a player of the punting team. The play is ruled dead and the non-punting team will take possession of the ball at the point the ball was blocked.

5.6 If a punt is deflected and the ball travels in the direction of the receiving team's dead ball line, the punt is legal and the play continues. The deflection is ignored and "yards" must be given by members of the kicking team.

5.7 When a punted ball hits the ground behind the line of scrimmage or behind the kicker's goal line, the play is dead. If this occurs in the field of play, the opposing team will take possession of the ball at the point the ball hits the ground. If this occurs in the end zone the opposing team will be awarded a safety touch if it is a scrimmage play or a single point, if it is a return punt from the end zone.

5.8 When a punt is blocked in the field of play, the non-punting team is considered to be in possession. If the punt is blocked in the end zone, the punting team is considered to be in possession.

5.9 If a player accidentally or deliberately kicks the ball with the foot or leg without having had control of the ball in the hand, the ball becomes an onside or offside pass depending on its direction and will remain live until it hits the ground.

### **Cases on Rule 5 - Punts**

1. Team O punts the ball into the Team D end zone. D2, without touching the ball, kicks the ball out of the air, back out of the end zone and out of bounds at the 15 yard line.

**Interpretation:** This is not a legal punt because D2 did not have possession prior to kicking it back. 1 point is awarded to Team O.

2. Team O punts. The ball strikes O2, who is behind the line of scrimmage. The ball then falls to the ground at this spot.

**Interpretation:** The ball is dead when it hits the ground behind the line of scrimmage. Team O is called for no yards. Team D will scrimmage, 10 yards ahead of the point where the ball hit the ground.

3. O7 attempts a punt from behind the line of scrimmage. D3 blocks the punt. O7 catches the ball in the air and throws a completed pass downfield.

**Interpretation:** When O7 touches the blocked punt, the play must be whistled dead. Team D takes possession at the point where the ball was blocked.

4. Team O attempts a punt from their end zone. Team D blocks the punt and the ball goes out of bounds in the end zone, without touching the ground.

**Interpretation:** A safety touch is awarded to Team D because Team O caused the ball to be in the end zone.

5. Team O punts from their end zone. The ball is deflected by D2. D3 attempts to catch the ball, in the O end zone, and drops it. O6 is 3 yards away when D3 touched the ball.

**Interpretation:** O6 is called for no yards. Team D's options are: to decline the penalty and be awarded a safety touch; to accept the penalty and the ball goes half the distance to the goal line from the point of last scrimmage; or accept the penalty and the ball goes half the distance from the O 10 yard line.

### **Rule 6 - Timing & Time outs**

6.1 The game usually consists of four **15 or 18-minute** quarters. At the end of the first and third quarters, teams switch ends but downs continue. A quarter will end when the referee has no time left on the clock. If, at the end of the previous play, the referee has at least some time left on the clock, there will be at least one more play in the quarter. If there is a touchdown scored on the last play of a quarter, the convert will be attempted but there will be no subsequent kick off.

6.2 At the end of the second quarter, there is an agreed upon rest period (half time) and the third quarter begins with a kick off.

6.3 Time runs continuously in the first and third quarters except for Referee approved time outs. In the second and fourth quarters, time runs continuously, except for time outs, for the first seventeen minutes. During the last three minutes of the second and fourth quarters, there are special timing rules which come into effect. The clock will be stopped in the following situations:

- a. **when an official calls a timeout** - clock starts on the snap on the subsequent play.
- b. **when a touchdown is scored** - clock starts when the receiving team touches the ball on the subsequent kick off.
- c. **when a safety touch is scored** - clock starts on the snap on the subsequent play or when the receiving team touches the ball on the kick off.
- d. **when a rouge is scored** - clock starts on the snap on the subsequent play.
- e. **on a change of possession** - clock starts when the official blows the play in on the subsequent scrimmage play.
- f. **on a penalty application** - clock starts when the official blows the play in on the subsequent scrimmage play or when the receiving team touches the ball on a kick off.
- g. **for a time count violation** - clock starts on the snap on the subsequent play.
- h. **team time out** - clock starts on the snap on the subsequent play.
- i. **injury** - the team with the injured player can use a team time out for the injury and the clock will start on the snap of the subsequent play. If it does not use a team time out, the non-injured team has the option to remove 10 seconds from the game clock prior to the start of the next play and the clock will start on the snap of the subsequent play.

6.4 Each team is allowed a maximum of three time outs per game. There is one 60-second time out per half, which, if not used in the first half, cannot be carried over to the second half and **an additional 60-second time out** to be used at any time during the game.

6.5 Any on field player can request the Referee to call a time out. Time outs can only be called during dead ball situations.

6.6 The referee will notify each team when there are 15 seconds left in the time out. A time out may be shortened if both teams agree.

6.7 All offensive players must huddle after a time out or be penalized five yards for illegal procedure.

6.8 After a time out, the clock will not start until the snap of the ball on the subsequent play. If the subsequent play is a kick off, the clock will not start until the ball is touched by a player on the receiving team. If the ball goes out of bounds on the kick off the clock will start on the snap of the ball on the subsequent play.

6.9 A team cannot call two consecutive time outs without a play occurring between the time outs.

6.10 The Referee may stop the clock when it is deemed necessary by any of the officials. The clock will start after the Referee whistles the next play in.

6.11 The clock is stopped when a ten yard delay of game penalty is applied. The clock will start when the ball is snapped or kicked off.

6.12 The clock is stopped when a safety touch is scored. The clock will start when the Referee whistles in the subsequent play.

6.13 If the Referee takes a time out for an injury to one of the players, the injured player must be removed for at least one play unless the team decides to use a time out.

6.14 If the game is tied after regulation time and a winner must be declared, overtime can be played. Options for conducting overtime include playing an overtime period of twenty minutes, divided into two ten minute halves. Overtime can also involve the use of converts to break the tie, with each team being given three convert attempts, alternating on offense then defense. League and tournament organizers are encouraged to clearly define their method of overtime prior to the league or tournament play.

### **Cases on Rule 6 - Timing & Time outs**

1. With 9 seconds remaining on the game clock at the end of a half, a player from Team O is injured and Team O has no more time outs. Team D wants 10 seconds run off the clock to end the game.

**Interpretation:** Even if an injury has occurred within the last 10 seconds and the non-injured team elects to run 10 seconds off the clock, one play will remain.

2. Team O, with no time outs remaining, asks for a time out. An official blows the whistle and motions to have the clock stopped.

**Interpretation:** A delay of game penalty is applied to the offending team.

3. **Comment.** If an official knows that the team has no time outs remaining, the captain should be informed of that and the game continues without stopping the clock.

4. After a convert attempt, 3:25 remains in the half.

**Interpretation:** The clock continues to run. If there are 3 minutes or less remaining in the half and the play has not been blown in, the clock will stop for the 3 minute warning.

5. After a scrimmage play, 3:05 remains in the half.

**Interpretation:** The clock continues to run. If there are 3 minutes or less remaining in the half and the play has not been blown in, the clock will stop for the 3 minute warning.

### **Rule 7 - Pass Interference**

7.1 Pass interference is defined as one player taking away the positional advantage of another player. This can occur:

a. through direct contact whereby one player makes contact with an opponent and causes the opponent to move off stride or away from the opponent's intended direction;

b. when a player steps into the intended and declared path of an opponent, causing the opponent to slow down or change direction;

c. during a deliberate attempt to block the opponent from reaching the arrival point of the ball.

7.2 Pass interference is considered to be in the target area when the interference occurs in close proximity to the intended arrival point of the ball and the receiver. All other pass interference will be assessed as remote area interference.

7.3 If a player is not playing the ball and extends the arms or waves a hand in an attempt to distract a receiver or block the vision of the receiver or to touch the ball that player is considered to have committed pass interference in the remote area. If the ball

is touched or if the receiver's direct line of vision is blocked, it is considered to be pass interference in the target area.

7.4 If pass interference occurs and the official rules that the ball would not have been caught without the interference then the pass interference is considered to be in the remote area rather than the target area.

7.5 Both offensive and defensive players can be called for pass interference. If the defense commits pass interference in the target area, the offense is awarded the ball at the point of the infraction or ten yards in advance of the point of last scrimmage. If the offense commits pass interference in the target area and the penalty is accepted, the defense is awarded the ball at the point of the foul. If either team commits remote area pass interference, the penalty is 10 yards from the point of last scrimmage.

### Cases on Rule 7 - Pass Interference

1. O6 tries to run an out and up pass pattern and is forced out of bounds by D7 prior to the ball being thrown by the quarterback.

**Interpretation:** This is remote area pass interference by D7.

2. O6 runs a pass pattern into the centre of the field with D6 in pursuit. O5 runs and out and up pass pattern with D5 in coverage. O6 obviously slows down and intentionally causes D5 to alter paths.

**Interpretation:** This is a "pick" play by the offense. Team O is penalized for remote area pass interference.

3. D4 is running right behind O5, down the field, covering on a pass pattern. As the ball comes toward them, O5 has a look to see where the ball is, while D4 does not. Neither player breaks stride. The ball hits D4 on the back of the head and lands on the ground.

**Interpretation:** This is a legal play. D4 has not screened O5. Screening involves extending the arms and hands, while not playing the ball, in an attempt to block the receiver's vision or knock down the ball.

4. O2 attempts to catch a pass and the ball goes off O2's body. While the ball is in the air, in close proximity to O2, D3 pushes O2 away from the ball and the ball hits the ground.

**Interpretation:** This is target area pass interference even though the contact is after O2 touched the ball. D3 has taken away O2's right to catch the ball.

5. O3 is running for a pass and D4 is running stride for stride in an equally favourable position to catch the ball. Their feet become entangled and one of them falls down.

**Interpretation:** There is no infraction here since no advantage was taken away by anyone.

### **Rule 8 - Equipment**

8.1 Teams may use their own football during the game or, if they agree, one game ball may be used by both teams. Each league or tournament can set its own specifications regarding the dimensions and type of football to be used based on the age and skill of the participants. No team or player is permitted to make alterations to the natural surface of the ball being used. Teams doing so will be penalized ten yards for objectionable conduct.

8.2 Players are not permitted to use paste stick 'em on their hands or uniforms. Players who do so will be penalized ten yards for objectionable conduct and will be removed from the game until it is removed.

8.3 If two teams are using similar sweaters, the winner of the coin toss has the option to change sweaters. Uniforms cannot contain any equipment that would cause injury to any player. The Referee will be the final authority on equipment that may be injurious to participants or on any equipment or devices that are not covered in the rules.

8.4 Jewelry must be removed prior to the start of the game. If it is not possible to remove the jewelry it must be covered up completely. Medical bracelets may be worn but they must be fastened securely so as not to cause injury. The Referee will have the final decision as to the acceptability of equipment.

8.5 It is not mandatory to wear cleated shoes but shoes with heels are not acceptable. Spikes or similar sharp pointed type shoes such as track spikes, metal baseball cleats or golf shoes are not permitted. If a cleated shoes are worn, there is no minimum or maximum number of cleats to be worn, but the cleats must be a part of the natural design of the shoe.

8.6 If a player is wearing unacceptable equipment or shoes, the player must leave the game for at least one play and remove the equipment before returning. If the player returns to the game with the unacceptable equipment, the team will be penalized for objectionable conduct and the player will be ejected.

8.7 If a participant has incurred a wound that is bleeding or if there is enough blood on a participant or on the participant's uniform to such an extent that it may be transferred to another individual, the participant must leave the playing field until the problem is resolved to the satisfaction of the Referee.

### Cases on Rule 8 - Equipment

1. The quarterback comes on the field and is wearing a flak jacket. The defense complains that the quarterback isn't allowed to wear one.

**Interpretation:** The quarterback is the only player allowed to wear a flak jacket during the game.

2. One team shows up to play and they have forgotten to bring the goal post pads. They wish to play the game, taping their own gym bags to the goal post assembly.

**Interpretation:** The game will not be played as this is a key safety issue.

3. A defensive player complains that the opposing quarterback is wearing a telecommunications device while on the field and the wiring from the device is exposed and could lead to an injury.

**Interpretation:** Telecommunication devices are permitted to be worn by on-field players but the devices must be worn in a way that will not constitute a safety hazard.



4. A player who was removed from the game because of illegal shoes, returns wearing the same shoes.

**Interpretation:** The player is ejected and the team is penalized 10 yards for objectionable conduct.

5. A player intends to participate in the game while wearing a cast on the arm.

**Interpretation:** Unacceptable or unsafe equipment must be covered or removed, as it is a safety issue. In the case of a cast, it must be covered or padded completely and approved by the Referee.

6. Team O applies spray stick 'em to their ball and uses it during the game.

**Interpretation:** No team is permitted to make alterations to the natural surface of the ball being used. The ball must be removed and an objectionable conduct penalty is called against Team O.

7. Both teams show up at the field of play wearing black jerseys. Neither team wishes to voluntarily change sweaters.

**Interpretation:** The winner of the coin toss decides who must change.

### **Rule 9 - Procedures**

9.1 The standard field is 110 yards long and 65 yards wide with 20 yard end zones at each end. Hash marks should be 24 yards in from each sideline. Centre field is at the 55 yard line. Boundary lines must be at least one yard inside obstructions or tracks.

9.2 Goal posts are not required for the game of touch football. If they are present, they must be padded to prevent injury. Goal posts are considered to be in the end zone.

9.3 The team benches should be on the same side of the field opposite the spectators. They should be a minimum of five yards back from the sideline and between the 25 and 45 yard lines. Players must stay in their bench area when off the field or be penalized ten yards for objectionable conduct.

9.4 Each team may have a maximum of seven players on the field during play although teams can play with less than seven players on the field during the game. If a team has more than seven players on the field during a play, the team will be penalized ten yards for illegal substitution.

9.5 Substitute players may enter the field only when the play is dead. Substitutes must enter from the bench side and players leaving the field must go directly to the bench area. Substitutes may not enter the field after the offense has broken its huddle or after the kicker has began the approach to the ball on a kick off. A player who enters the field to communicate a play to a teammate must remain on the field for the next play. The penalty for violating these rules is ten yards for illegal substitution.

9.6 Teams are permitted a maximum of four captains per game. Only the captains are permitted to discuss rule applications with the Referee, to request measurements, and to choose options on penalty applications.

9.7 Bean bags are used to mark the line of scrimmage, the rusher's line and the first down marker. Each bag should be at least 4" square. Two bags are of the same colour -one for the line of scrimmage and one for the rusher's position- and the third bag, indicating the first down marker, must be of a different colour.

9.8 If there is an inadvertent whistle by the officials on a play, the play will stand if the whistle did not affect the outcome of the play. If the outcome was affected by the whistle, the team that was affected can let the play stand as of the whistle or repeat the play from the point of last scrimmage. If it is not possible to determine who was adversely affected, the play will be repeated.

9.9 If the ball touches an official during a play, it will be treated as if the ball touched the ground during the play and the appropriate ruling will be made.

### Cases on Rule 9 - Procedures

1. On arriving at the football park, the officials discover the field is not lined.

**Interpretation:** There are two choices: 1) line the field with player bags or cones and conduct the game as a regular game or 2) ask both teams to re-schedule the game.

2. Arriving at the park, the Referee notices that one end zone is only 8 yards deep.

**Interpretation:** Prior to the game, a discussion on field conditions will be conducted with the captains and an arrangement must be made with both teams. At a reasonable distance from the goal line, the ball will be brought out.

3. **Comment.** Before the start of the season, league organizers should establish a standardized rule for short end zone situations and inform the officials' association of the policy.

4. One team shows up with six players and the other team with five players. Both teams want to wait until they have seven players before beginning the game.

**Interpretation:** The game shall start at the designated time as long as each team has a minimum of five players. If a team declines to begin play, they will forfeit the game.

5. The Referee wants to explain the penalty application on a given infraction but the non-penalized team does not have a captain on the field.

**Interpretation:** The Referee will take a time out and request that a captain come on the field. The options will be explained to the captain and a team time out will be charged to the non-offending team. If that team doesn't have a time out left, then a delay of game penalty will be applied.

6. During an injury time out, the coach of Team O comes onto the field to attend to an injured player. While on the field, the coach discusses strategy with the team captain.

**Interpretation:** A coach attending to an injured player cannot discuss strategy with on-field players. An objectionable conduct penalty will be applied to the offending team.

### **Rule 10 - Live Ball/Dead Ball**

10.1 If the ball hits the goal post the play is whistled dead.

a. If it is a kickoff and the ball hits the goal post in flight the ball is placed at the receiving team's 25 yard line. If it hit the goal post after striking the ground or a player of the receiving team, it will be placed on the receiving team's 10 yard line.

b. If it is a punt from the field of play, the ball is placed at the 10 yard line and no points are awarded. If it is the initial punt from the team's own end zone, it is a safety touch.

c. If it is a forward pass from behind the line of scrimmage, the play is dead and the ball comes back to the line of scrimmage and loss of down.

d. If it is a onside lateral by the offense and the ball hits goal post in flight, it is a safety touch.

10.2 If a ball lies motionless on the ground for three seconds and there is no attempt to play the ball, the play shall be whistled dead.

10.3 Players are not allowed to extend the ball using their arms, to gain additional yards while the play is live. There is a five yard penalty for doing so and the ball is considered dead at the point the extension began.

10.4 Players who have possession of the ball are not permitted to dive forward in an effort to gain additional yards. The penalty is 15 yards and the ball is considered dead at the point the dive began.

10.5 When the play is live and a member of the defensive team deliberately touches the ball carrier, the ball, or any part of the ball carrier's equipment, the play will be whistled dead. The official must see the touch for the whistle to be blown. The touch can be with one hand only, although a two handed touch is permissible provided it is not unduly harsh.

10.6 If a defender jumps over a fallen ball carrier in order to avoid a collision, a touch will be awarded to the defense and the play is whistled dead.

10.7 If the quarterback mishandles the snap or the snap travels over the quarterback's head without being touched, the ball is live to the offense only.

#### **Cases on Rule 10 - Live Ball/Dead Ball**

1. During a play from scrimmage, the quarterback loses balance and has the ball contact the ground while still firmly grasped in the hand.

**Interpretation:** Play continues as this is a live ball situation.

2. The centre snaps the ball over the quarterback who: a) does not touch the ball; b) tips the ball. The quarterback is then immediately touched by the rusher.

**Interpretation:** a) Since the quarterback has not touched the ball, a touch on this player cannot end the play. b) Since the quarterback was the last player to touch the ball and the ball is still loose, a touch on the quarterback will end the play.

3. During a play from scrimmage, a pass attempt is made. O2 and D4 leap into the air for the ball, making incidental body contact. O2 catches the ball as D4 falls to the ground.

**Interpretation:** No legal touch has been applied to O2, so this is a live ball situation and play continues.

4. During a kick off return, the ball carrier extends the ball to one side in an attempt to fake a lateral.

**Interpretation:** This is a legal play and is not considered extended in a forward direction to gain additional yards.

### **Rule 11 - Penalties** **(alpha listing)**

**Delay of Game** - This is a 10 yard penalty. It is called when the kicking team on a kick off does not kick the ball within the allotted twenty seconds, when a team does not have five players to begin the game or when a team is deliberately delaying the game.

**Deliberate Grounding of the Ball** - If a player deliberately grounds the ball to avoid being touched, the ball will be placed at the point the passer released the ball with the loss of that down.

**Diving** - The ball carrier is not allowed to dive with the ball in order to gain extra yards. This will be considered a 15 yard personal foul and is applied as a live or dead ball foul from the point where the dive began.

**Extension** - The ball carrier is not allowed to extend the ball with the arms in an effort to gain extra yards. This is applied as a dead ball foul from the point of the torso of the ball carrier when the extension took place. It is a five yard penalty.

**Illegal Participation** - If a defensive player illegally enters the field while a play is in progress and affects the outcome of the play, the opponents will be awarded a touchdown and the player is ejected from the game. If a fan illegally participates in the game and a touchdown would have been scored without the participation, then the touchdown must be awarded. If the fan did not affect the outcome of the play, the play stands. If the fan affected the outcome of the play, the team has the option to repeat the play from the point of last scrimmage.

**Illegal Re-Entry** - A player is not permitted to leave the field of play during a play, return to the field of play, and then participate in the play. The penalty is 10 yards for illegal re-entry.

a. by the offense on a kickoff - the penalty is applied at the spot the ball was held when the infraction took place.

b. by the offense on a scrimmage play - if a first down was not made, the penalty is applied at the point of last scrimmage, down repeated. If a first down was made prior to the infraction, the penalty is applied at the point of foul, down is not repeated.

c. by the offense on a convert - no score is allowed and no repeated attempt is given.

d. by the defense on a kick off - the penalty is applied at the spot the ball was held when the infraction took place.

e. by the defense on a scrimmage play - the offense has the option to apply the penalty at the point of last scrimmage with the down repeated or at the point the ball was held at the time of the infraction and downs continue.

f. by the defense on a convert attempt - if the foul occurred in the end zone, the point or points are awarded. If the foul occurred in the field of play, the penalty is applied at the point of last scrimmage and a repeat attempt is given.

g. if the foul occurs after a change of possession on a scrimmage play, the penalty is applied at the spot the ball was held at the time of the infraction.

h. on any play, if a score would have been made without the illegal re-entry, then the score is awarded.

**Illegal substitution** - This occurs when a player illegally enters the field. Players are not allowed to enter the field on a scrimmage play after the offense breaks its huddle or, if there is no huddle, after the official signals no more substitutions. On a kick off, players cannot legally enter the field after the kicker begins the approach to the ball. If a team has more than seven players on the field during a play, it is illegal substitution.

**Illegal Use of hands** - Players are not permitted to grab the goal posts in order to change direction or take an unfair advantage. Penalty is 10 yards for illegal use of hands.

**Major Foul** - These are acts which threaten the safety of participants and will result in the ejection of the player responsible. They include: deliberate tripping of an opponent; striking or attempting to strike an opponent; any attempt to injure a participant in the game. Major fouls are 25 yard fouls and are considered to be live or dead ball fouls at the option of the non-offending team.

**No Yards** - This occurs when the punting team encroaches within the five yard restraining zone on a punt. Members of the punting team must not come within a five yard radius of the punt receiver prior to the touching of the ball by the receiving team. This is a 10 yard penalty, to be applied from the point the ball was first touched by the receiving team.

**Objectionable conduct** - These penalties are applied as 10 yard dead ball fouls. The following actions are considered to be objectionable conduct fouls: the use of profane language, taunting opposing players, demeaning remarks made to opposing players, persistent arguments to officials, deliberately delaying the game, faking an injury or contact to draw a penalty or delay the game, or any action which brings disrepute to the game.

**Obstruction** - Players are not permitted to block or obstruct an opponent's direct path to the ball carrier. Contact does not have to occur for this penalty to be called. Penalty is 10 yards for obstruction.

Players are permitted to take a stationary position in order to avoid being called for a penalty, providing it is taken in sufficient time to allow the opponent to adjust to it. This is not the case for the rusher; all offensive players must provide for an unimpeded path for any legal rusher(s) or they will be penalized for obstruction.

**Offside** - If a player encroaches in the one yard neutral zone as the ball is snapped, it will result in a 5 yard offside penalty. The neutral zone extends one yard back from the line of scrimmage on the defensive side of the ball. If the first defensive player to cross the line of scrimmage did not rush from at least five yards away from the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap or after the snap, an offside penalty will be called.

**Offside Pass** - The ball is brought back to the point the pass originated and downs continue.

**Pass Interference** - If the defense commits it in the target area, the ball is awarded to the offense at the point of the foul or ten yards in advance of the point of last scrimmage and an automatic first down is awarded to the offense. If the offense commits it in the target area and the penalty is accepted, the defense is awarded the ball at the point of the foul. If it is in the remote area, by either team, the penalty is applied from the point of last scrimmage with the down repeated.

If the defense commits target area pass interference, in the end zone, on a convert attempt, the convert will be awarded. If it is target area interference in the field of play or if it is remote area interference, the convert attempt can be repeated after the penalty is applied. If the offense commits pass interference, target area or remote area, no repeat attempt is given.

**Personal fouls** - These are acts of roughness or unfair play. Players must control their momentum and try to avoid collisions with opponents. A shove, a heavy handed slap or a swinging arm slap when touching the ball carrier shall be considered a personal foul. Charging, elbowing or throwing the body into a group of defenders by the ball carrier is also considered to be a personal foul. **The defender/rusher will be called for a Personal Foul if they raise any or both arms and move or swing them towards the Quarterback making ANY kind of contact above the Quarterback's shoulders while the Quarterback is attempting to make a pass.** Personal fouls are 15 yard fouls and can be live or dead ball fouls at the option of the non-offending team.

**Time count violation** - the offensive team has 20 seconds after the play is blown in by the Referee to snap the ball. Failure to do so results in a five yard time count violation penalty which is applied from the point of last scrimmage with the down repeated.

### **Rule 12 - Application of Penalties**

12.1 A penalty can be refused by the non-offending team. However, if there is an ejection given by the Referee that player must leave the game.

12.2 If the non-offending team refuses a penalty, the play stands and downs continue. If the penalty is accepted, the Referee will explain the options to the non-offending team's captain. Once a team has given its choice to the Referee, it cannot change it. If they have been given the wrong options by the Referee, they must appeal to the Referee prior to the ball being put into play on the next down or kick off.

12.3 If a team commits two or more live ball fouls during the same play, the non-offending team can only accept to apply one of the fouls as a live ball foul. However, the non-offending team may have an option to apply one or more of the live ball fouls as a dead ball foul.

12.4 If there is more than one dead ball foul called against the same team during one play, all fouls can be applied. If each team commits a dead ball foul on the same play, only the difference in yardage will be applied.



12.5 The application of a penalty will not result in the ball being placed closer than the one yard line. When a single fixed distance penalty is applied inside the opposing team's thirty yard line, the ball cannot be brought more than half the distance to the goal line. If the fixed distance penalty is applied from outside the opposing team's thirty yard line, it cannot bring the ball closer than the fifteen yard line. If the normal penalty yardage were applied and the ball would have reached the goal line due to the penalty, a first down will be awarded to the offense.

12.6 On a third down play, the offense cannot be awarded a first down by the application of a dead ball foul. Possession changes to the defense and the penalty is then applied.

12.7 If the defense commits a live ball foul that results in a first down being awarded by the application of the penalty yardage, the first down cannot be taken away if the offense commits a dead ball foul on the play. The first down would be awarded and the penalty yardage for the dead ball foul would then be applied. It would be first down and ten after the application of the dead ball foul.

12.8 If a team commits a dead ball penalty on a play that results in a touchdown or on a convert attempt, the non-penalized team has the option to apply the penalty on the convert attempt or the repeated convert attempt, if there is one, or on the subsequent kick off.

12.9 If a team accepts a live ball foul that occurs on the last play of the quarter (other than an offside pass or obstruction after a first down is gained), there will be one more play given to the team that has possession. Dead ball fouls that occur on the last play of a quarter will be applied in the next quarter.

12.10 Fixed distance penalties are applied in the following manner unless a previous rule states otherwise:

a. If the foul occurs before the ball is put into play, as the ball is put into play or before a first down is gained, the penalty will be applied at the point the ball was last put into play and the down will be repeated.

b. If the foul occurs after a first down has been gained, the penalty will be applied from the spot the ball was held at the time of the infraction. The offense will be awarded a first down.

c. If a foul is committed after the offense loses possession of the ball, the penalty will be applied from the spot the ball was held at the time of the infraction. A first down will be awarded to the team that has possession of the ball. If the penalty was called when the ball was in the air as the result of a kick off or punt, the penalty will be applied at the point the ball is first touched by the receiving team.

### Cases on Rule 12 - Penalty Applications

1. Team O gains a first down and the play is whistled dead. Team O is then called for objectionable conduct a) before the referee whistles in the next play b) after the referee whistles the next play in.

**Interpretation:** The 10 yard objectionable conduct penalty will be applied from the point the ball became dead on the previous play and in a) Team O will have a first down and 10 yards to go and in b) Team O will have a first down and 20 yards to go.

2. Team O punts the ball into the Team D end zone where they are called for no yards. Team D fails to get the ball out of the end zone.

**Interpretation:** No point is awarded. Team D will scrimmage, first and ten, on their own 10 yard line. If Team D declines the penalty, one point will be awarded to Team O and Team D will scrimmage, first and ten, on their own 35 yard line.

3. Team O punts the ball. Team D rusher is called for offside and Team O is called for no yards downfield.

**Interpretation:** Because the second foul occurred after a change of possession, the penalty is ignored. Only the offside penalty is applied, if Team O accepts the penalty.

4. Team O punts the ball into the Team D end zone. O3 is called for no yards in the end zone. D2 return kicks the ball out of the end zone and D5 is called for no yards on the D 30 yard line.

**Interpretation:** Since the first no yards penalty occurred after a change of possession, the penalty is applied from the goal line and Team D will scrimmage, first and ten, at the D 10 yard line. No point is awarded. The second no yards penalty occurred after a second change of possession and is ignored if the first penalty is accepted.

### Rule 13 - General

13.1 If a team refuses to start or continue a game at the request of the referee, the referee can award the game to the non-offending team after two warnings to the captain of the offending team. If the game is tied or the offending team is leading at the time, the game will be forfeited by a score of 1-0. If the non-offending team is winning at the time, the score will count.

13.2 If there are goal posts on the field and the ball is scrimmaged within the offensive team's twenty yard line, the ball must be moved to the closest hash mark.

13.3 If a team scrimmages within five yards of the opposing team's goal line and there are goal posts on the field, the ball must be scrimmaged at the closest hash mark.

13.4 The referee will decide on any on-field ruling which is not covered by this Rule/Case book.

### Cases on Rule 13 - General

1. The ball is lined up in the middle of the field at the opponent's 7 yard line. An offside is called on the defense. The pass goes incomplete.

**Interpretation:** If the penalty is accepted, the ball will be marked at the 3 1/2 yard line and moved to the closest hash mark.

2. In the end zone, the Referee notices a cement circle (used as a shot put area) in one of the end zone.

**Interpretation:** The Referee shall rule on any on-field condition, not covered by the Rule/Case book, prior to the start of the game with the team captains.

## Additional Cases

### Cases on Rule 1 - The Kick Off

1. On the kick off, the receiver mishandles the ball and the ball goes forward.

**Interpretation:** The ball is live to the receiving team's players who were onside at the time the ball was mishandled.

2. On the kick off, the ball accidentally strikes the leg of a member of the receiving team. The ball bounces off the leg, into the air, and lands on the ground.

**Interpretation:** The play continues. The ball is live to the receiving team only. Any onside member of the receiving team may recover and advance the ball.

3. On the kick off, the ball is a) accidentally kicked forward by a member of the receiving team b) deliberately kicked forward by a member of the receiving team.

**Interpretation:** In a) the play continues but in b) the play is dead as soon as the ball hits the ground. The receiving team will scrimmage at the point the ball was kicked by the receiving team.

### Cases on Rule 2- The Scrimmage

1. After a scrimmage play, there is a partial huddle. One of the offensive players lines up on their bench side, next to the sideline without returning to the huddle.

**Interpretation:** This a deliberate deception play and the offense should be called for illegal procedure.

2. After the ball is set by the centre (O2), the rusher changes sides without the centre being aware of this change. Receiver O5 is lined up within 5 Yards of the centre and obstructs the rusher who took a direct line to the quarterback.

**Interpretation:** Obstruction is called on O5.

3. After a scrimmage play, there is a partial huddle. One of the offensive players lines up on their bench side, next to the sideline without returning to the huddle.

**Interpretation:** This a deliberate deception play and the offense should be called for illegal procedure.

### Cases on Rule 3 - Passing

1. On a play from scrimmage, the quarterback rolls left, raises the throwing arm, then has the ball slip from the hand and fall to the ground in a forward direction.

**Interpretation:** This is not an incomplete pass. This is a dropped ball. Team O will scrimmage at the point the ball was held when it was dropped.

2. On a play from scrimmage, the quarterback turns and throws a lateral to O2 who is in an onside position. The ball strikes the ground and is immediately caught by O2.

**Interpretation:** The ball is dead when it hits the ground in this situation. Team O will scrimmage at the point the ball hit the ground.

3. R2 catches a punted ball and makes a hand off to R3 in a forward direction.

**Interpretation:** This is an offside pass because a hand off in a forward direction is considered a forward pass and is illegal on a punt return.

### Cases on Rule 4 - Scoring

1. On a convert attempt, O2 is in the end zone and accidentally steps on the dead ball line before coming back into the field of play and making the catch in the end zone.

**Interpretation:** The convert is disallowed because O2 went out of bounds prior to the catch. There is no repeat attempt permitted.

2. On a convert attempt, O3 deflects the ball on the D 2 yard line and it goes into the end zone where it is caught by O4.

**Interpretation:** This is an offside pass from O3 to O4. The ball comes back to the point of deflection, which is outside the end zone, and the convert is unsuccessful. There is no repeat attempt.

3. While running a pass pattern near the opponent's goal line, O5 slips on a wet field. O5 manages to catch the forward pass while on the ground and is immediately touched at that point. O5's legs extend into the end zone but the ball is held in the arms, which are outside of the end zone.

**Interpretation:** In order for a touchdown to be awarded, the ball must break the plane of the goal, prior to the ball carrier being touched. The position of the feet or legs is irrelevant in this case. No touchdown is awarded.

### Cases on Rule 5 - Punts

1. Team O punts the ball. It is picked up by D3 who begins to run up-field towards a stationary teammate, D4, who has not moved since the ball was punted. O2 tries to touch D3 but is blocked from doing so by D4.

**Interpretation:** Team D cannot be called for obstruction since D4 remained stationary during the play.

2. The punter, O3, mishandles the snap and the ball bounces on the ground. On the bounce, O3 kicks the ball, from the ground, down-field.

**Interpretation:** For a punt to be legal, the ball must be deliberately dropped and kicked before it touches the ground. The kick is to be considered an offside pass.

3. With the ball scrimmaged on Team O's 3 yard line, O2, standing in the end zone, punts the ball. The rusher deflects the ball and it lands on the O 5 yard line and then rolls back towards the goal line and hits the goal post.

**Interpretation:** The ball is dead as soon as it hits the goal post. Team D will take possession of the ball, first and goal, on the O 1 yard line.

### Cases on Rule 6 - Timing & Time Outs

1. During a stoppage in play, an argument erupts between two teammates. A team time out is taken and the argument terminates with the manager of the team throwing O2 off the team. The team manager then turns to the referee and requests that the officials now have this non-participant removed from the field.

**Interpretation:** The officials advise the team manager that as a player, O2 was a member in good standing at the commencement of the game. It is the team's responsibility to have the player leave the field so that play can resume. If this cannot be accomplished, Team O will forfeit the game.

2. A scrimmage play ends with one second left on the clock.

**Interpretation:** The game cannot end if any time is left on the clock. There will be another play.

3. A score is made with 3 minutes and 16 seconds left on the clock.

**Interpretation:** The Referee will inform the teams that they are approaching three minutes and allow the clock to run during the convert, kick off, or placement of the bags following a rouge. When the clock reaches three minutes, it will be stopped.

### Cases on Rule 7 - Pass Interference

1. With arms up in the air, D3 is attempting to screen O4 on a forward pass play. The ball is overthrown and ruled uncatchable regardless of the attempted screening.

**Interpretation:** Remote zone pass interference is applied since the ball is considered as uncatchable. The foul cannot be ignored.

2. Player D3 commits target zone pass interference against O4. However, the referee had blown the whistle as the quarterback was touched just prior to releasing the ball.

**Interpretation:** Since the quarterback was touched, the play is ruled dead before the interference occurred. The pass interference is ignored.

### Cases on Rule 8 - Equipment

1. Team D complains to the Referee a) the ball is under-inflated b) the ball has a deformity.

**Interpretation:** Any ball that causes an unfair advantage to either team shall be deemed unplayable and cannot be used in the game.

2. Receiver, O2, is wearing sunglasses.

**Interpretation:** The wearing of sunglasses is allowed as long as, in the opinion of the referee, the glasses are not dangerous.

3. O5 is wearing a metal knee brace that is a potential safety hazard.

**Interpretation:** The Referee will ask the player to leave the field until such time as the brace is covered up. Players are permitted to wear braces provided that they are completely covered up in such a manner as to prevent a finger from fitting between the brace and the skin. Sharp edges must be padded in such a way as to ensure that they will not puncture a player's skin.

### Cases on Rule 9 - Procedures

1. During the game, lightening is in the area.

**Interpretation:** This is a safety issue. The game should be suspended until it is safe to resume.

2. On a rainy day, the quarterback asks the Referee to move the ball away from a puddle on the field.

**Interpretation:** The ball should be moved to the nearest place on the field, between the hash marks, where the rusher, centre, and quarterback have decent footing.

3. Team O overthrows receiver, O7, and the official blows the whistle. D4 then intercepts the pass.

**Interpretation:** This is an inadvertent whistle. The play stands as the whistle did not affect the outcome of the play. D4 cannot advance the ball. Team D will take possession of the ball at the point the ball was intercepted.

### Cases on Rule 10 - Live Ball/Dead Ball

1. On a scrimmage play, receiver O4 and defender D6, in equally favourable positions to play the ball, jump up to catch the ball. D6's arm makes incidental contact with O4 in the head area as they reach for the ball. The pass goes incomplete.

**Interpretation:** There is no penalty for incidental contact in the head area.

2. On a third down, O7 is running with the ball in an attempt to gain a first down. Just prior to the first down bag and sensing that the touch will be applied, O7 dives forward with the ball, past the first down bag, and lands on the ground where the touch is applied.

**Interpretation:** Diving with the ball to gain additional yards is a foul. The play is considered dead at the point the dive began and the 15 yard penalty will be applied from that spot. Since it was third down, Team O lose possession of the ball.



3. On a third down scrimmage punt, the ball is well kicked and goes over the punt returner's head and rolls into the end zone. The ball comes to rest and lies motionless in the end zone for three seconds. The punt returner is running into the end zone in an attempt to retrieve the ball.

**Interpretation:** The play continues. There should be no whistle, as yet, on this play. Since there is an attempt to play the ball by the receiving team, the three-second, motionless ball rule does not apply.

### Cases on Rule 12 - Application of Penalties

1. Team O is 2nd and 21 on the Team D 24 yard line. The Team D rusher is called for offside and D4 is called for unnecessary roughness, after an incomplete pass. The offense accepts the offside penalty.

**Interpretation:** The offside takes the ball to the 19 yard line. The 15 yard unnecessary roughness penalty is still not enough for a first down and is applied half the distance to the goal line. Therefore, Team O will get 2nd down and 6 1/2 on the Team D 9 1/2 yard line.

2. On a one point convert attempt from the five yard line, the rusher is called for a personal foul against the passer. the pass is incomplete.

**Interpretation:** This is a live or dead ball foul. Team O has the option to repeat the convert with half the distance to the goal line applied to bring the ball to the 2 1/2 yard line or they can decline the yardage on the repeat attempt and apply the penalty on the kick off.

3. O4 catches the ball and turns up-field. D5 dives to touch O4 but clearly misses. O4 ends up running into the end zone, however, an official had inadvertently blown the whistle when D5 dove to attempt the touch.

**Interpretation:** The Referee may award a touchdown if it is deemed that the whistle did not affect the play and O4 would have scored anyway.

4. On a punt, the ball goes over the punt returner's head and lands on the 15 yard line and rolls to the 10 yard line. Reaching to pick the ball up, the punt returner kicks the ball into the end zone, in the air. The ball hits the ground in the end zone.

**Interpretation:** The punt returner caused the ball to go into the end zone, therefore, a safety touch is awarded to the kicking team.

5. Prior to a play from scrimmage, the back umpire overhears the D2 tell the rusher, D1, to run over the quarterback. The play commences and D1 does, in fact, run into the quarterback.

**Interpretation:** D1 must be called for a major foul (deliberate attempt to injure) and is ejected from the game. Team D is assessed a twenty-five yard penalty.

6. On a play from scrimmage, O3 races down the side line closest to the Team O bench. O3's teammates on the sidelines surge forward to see if O3 will score and are on the edge of the playing field. The official pursuing the play makes contact with the Team O players on the sidelines and is unable to determine if a touch is made. O3 runs in for a touchdown.

**Interpretation:** A penalty for illegal substitution is called against Team O and the touchdown is nullified.

**See Next Page For Rule Change Proposals**

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**Proposal for Rule Book Change**

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C/O Rules Committee  
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Section 1 - New Rule Proposal (Use this form to propose a brand new rule)

Subject/ Area: \_\_\_\_\_

New Rule:

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Section 2 - Rule Change Proposal (Use this form to modify an existing rule)

Present Rule Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Rule Change

Suggested Wording for New Rule:

