

David Gore

New  
Information

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**Association Official**  
**(additional information that Mr. Gore has authored**  
**since original Hall of Fame form was submitted)**

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# LAST CALL

I would suspect that most folks now choose to look carefully at the caller ID when the phone rings. They may choose to respond to the call or choose to let it ring. For sports officials, it grabs our attention quickly when the caller is that assignor we are always ready to talk to hoping for a special assignment. I was thrilled to receive such a call toward the end of our recent football season and was assigned to work the game clock for the Big XII Championship Game.

Little did I know at the time that this same assignor would call again with a much more significant assignment! Although I was quick to accept the first assignment, it was the second call that almost left me speechless. Regardless of the sport(s) that we work and the specific role that is our responsibility, we always dream about the ultimate assignment. A crew of eight officials plus the alternate, the two replay officials and the two clock operators from the Big XII conference had been selected to work the CFP National Championship Game and that phone call to each of us was certainly the thrill of a lifetime as a sports official.

This incredible experience caused me to think about the entire journey that I have traveled up to this point since my first time to step on a Little League baseball diamond for my very first officiating assignment. I would encourage every sports official to take the time to think about their own journey and the numerous paths that you have traveled. I would suggest that many of you may discover, as I have, that you have traveled paths that you never had considered possible after that very first assignment. At a very young age, I was determined to be a professional athlete and was planning to be the next second baseman for the New York Yankees when Bobby Richardson retired. Along the way, I discovered a major problem. I was not very big, but at least I was slow, and that is not a good combination for a professional athlete. Therefore, it was time early on for me to consider a different path. I thoroughly enjoyed the game of baseball and decided to stay involved as an umpire during my college days. This turned out to be a much better decision for me as I began to enjoy some level of success and progressed beyond those early Little League assignments to the high school varsity level and ultimately to major college baseball. I did not realize at the time where this early officiating journey was headed.

One of the many memories that officials are quick to mention during their journey is the opportunity to meet and become very close friends with so many other officials. The doors that open and the friendships that develop can lead to other changes along your individual pathway. Naturally, we meet officials who are heavily involved in other sports that we may not have ever played or even considered as another sport to officiate. I was a public school educator and did some Jr. High coaching in football and basketball. I began to pay close attention to the officials in these other sports and realized the additional opportunities that were possible along the way. After my initial seven or eight years on a baseball diamond, several of my new friends recruited me to give football a try. I had coached some football and I was sure that I knew all of the rules so I decided to give it a try. I did quickly realize how much more there was to learn and I did go to my very first varsity assignment without my whistle. Those initial bumps in that additional journey path began to smooth out and more doors opened and more friendships developed.

I began to experience some level of success on the gridiron and was fortunate along the way to work some small college football. There are so many lessons that you learn along this journey and are passed along to your fellow officials. I did not work my very first football game until I was 34 and I quickly discovered that anyone who wishes to advance to major college football sure needs to start that journey much, much earlier. Although that goal was no longer realistic for me, I was enjoying football as much as my baseball. I then made two additional path decisions. My experience as a public school teacher lead me to the role of the technical advisor in our local association for football and baseball. I enjoy teaching and thoroughly enjoy my work with the young officials in our area. My other path decision was to become involved in the timers booth at our local university as a football clock operator. These new decisions led to more open doors and valuable friendships.

I sure hope every young official will realize the incredible opportunities that can come your way if you choose to stay involved even when your journey takes a different turn than you had not expected. My current path includes my work as a clock operator for Big XII football, my work at the basketball score table for the men and the women and my role as the NFHS football rules interpreter in my state. No, I never was the second baseman for the Yankees but I will always have many incredible memories, many incredible friendships and many open doors because I chose to stay involved. That phone call from the assignor to notify us about the CFP National Championship Game may turn out to be my ultimate officiating memory! We shall see what still lies ahead.

David Gore

## 2023 OSSAA Crew Test Instructions

**It is so very important that each crew read these instructions very carefully to take the 2023 crew test correctly!**

- 1.) Each crew who chooses to take the crew test must do so as a crew working together by yourselves at a time and place convenient for you during the window of opportunity. You **ARE NOT** to work with other crews or with your local association as a large group. Make absolutely certain that you turn in the single page **TEST ANSWER SHEET** by the deadline of **Wednesday, October 11**. That sheet is the very last page of this test document.
- 2.) The test contains 66 items and follows this page of instructions and you are welcome to print the entire test although that is not necessary or required. That is simply your decision to make. You will have to print the final page which is the **TEST ANSWER SHEET!**
- 3.) The test items are to be answered as TRUE or FALSE. You are to **PRINT** the entire word TRUE or FALSE on the Answer Sheet for each test item. Make certain to complete the entire TEST ANSWER SHEET as instructed prior to returning it to us.
- 4.) Please note that none of the test items deal with any COVID-19 adjustments. The test items are to be answered according to the NFHS Football Rules.
- 5.) You **will be** allowed to use your NFHS FB rule book and case book while you take the test.
- 6.) Each crew may choose to invite a new, young official who you may be mentoring to join you to experience the crew test process. You **ARE NOT** to include a veteran, retired official to take the test with your crew.
- 7.) You **MUST** return the completed single page **TEST ANSWER SHEET** to David Gore by **Wednesday, October 11**. You have 2 options for returning the answer sheet. You may mail it OR you may scan it and email it. We MUST be able to read the completed answer sheet! The address that you need is listed here.

David Gore  
2003 Martingale Drive  
Norman, OK 73072

[dgoreref910@hotmail.com](mailto:dgoreref910@hotmail.com)

Any crew is welcome to send a text or an email to David Gore if you have a question about these instructions. (405) 255-6959 or [dgoreref910@hotmail.com](mailto:dgoreref910@hotmail.com)

- 1.) At the snap, team A must have at least 5 linemen numbered 50-79 if they are not in a scrimmage kick formation and a player numbered 50-79 may not be on the end of their offensive line.
- 2.) It is not possible to legally execute a chop block against an opponent.
- 3.) A simultaneous recovery requires that both opposing players are inbounds. If one of the players is touching out of bounds, the ball is dead immediately and out of bounds by rule.
- 4.) There is nothing an offensive team player may do legally to participate after he has stepped out of bounds accidentally during the down unless there is a change of possession.
- 5.) The game clock will start on a ready-for-play wind if team K is awarded a new series following a legal kick.
- 6.) An entering substitute is still on the opponent's side of the neutral zone when the ball is snapped. This is a live ball foul for illegal substitution by rule.
- 7.) Handing the ball to an offensive teammate is legal prior to any change of possession if it occurs in or behind the neutral zone during a scrimmage down. It becomes an incomplete pass or a fumble determined by the direction of the handing if a muff occurs and the ball is grounded.
- 8.) An awarded fair catch foul does not require a fair catch signal or the touching of the kick in flight.
- 9.) The three-minute warm-up period that follows the halftime intermission is a mandatory warm-up time regardless of the length of the halftime.
- 10.) An assistant coach collides with an official in the restricted area during a down as the game clock goes to 0:00 at the end of the first quarter. The down counts, the penalty is enforced if accepted and there is an untimed down to follow.
- 11.) A QB who receives the snap scrambles from 1 hash mark to the other and then back to the first hash mark again before throwing a legal, forward pass that falls incomplete. This entire down is a loose-ball play by rule.
- 12.) With 1:50 remaining in the game, team A trails by 5 points and is guilty of holding during an incomplete forward pass. Team B may request and have the game clock start on the ready-for-play since it is in the final two minutes of the half.
- 13.) The ball becomes dead and the down has ended when an offensive tackle #78 catches a legal, forward pass.
- 14.) An offensive player numbered #66 may catch a pass and he may throw a forward pass during a down.

- 15.) Each team has only 1 team time-out to use at any point during an overtime period.
- 16.) In an 8-man football game, every offensive player may wear any number 0-99, but every player is not an eligible receiver at the snap.
- 17.) Team K free kicks from their own 40 with only 3 players to the left of the kicker. This is a live-ball foul and the down does continue.
- 18.) A new series must belong to team R if K legally kicks during a scrimmage down except for a try and opponents gain joint possession or the kick goes out of bounds or the ball becomes dead in the field of play with no player in possession.
- 19.) K punts on 4<sup>th</sup> down and the ball travels in flight will beyond the expanded neutral zone. R25 signals for a fair catch at his own 12 and muffs the kick which bounces into R's end zone. R25 blocks an opponent at his own 12 following his muff but prior to the end of the kick. This foul will be enforced from R's 20 if accepted.
- 20.) On a 4<sup>th</sup> down, team A chooses a scrimmage kick formation with no players numbered 50-79. The eligible pass receivers are determined by their position at the moment of the legal snap.
- 21.) Team A has an illegal formation at the snap and team B is guilty of a late hit on the downed runner. These 2 fouls do not offset and both can be accepted and enforced.
- 22.) A team K player starts at his own 32 for a free kick from K's 40. As he approaches the ball for the kick, a teammate kicks the ball instead. This results in an immediate whistle for a dead-ball foul.
- 23.) The ball becomes dead and the down has ended when any live ball that is loose touches a properly placed goal line pylon.
- 24.) A free kick following a touchdown and the try enters team R's end zone. The result of the play is a touchback or may be a touchdown if the kick is touched by R in the field of play and then recovered by K in the end zone.
- 25.) The foul for initiating contact with an opponent whose helmet has come completely off is illegal participation.
- 26.) A scrimmage kick formation at the snap is a requirement to be able to use the numbering exception on any down.
- 27.) Each of these situations is an example of an official's timeout and the game clock will start on the ready-for-play wind for each: team A makes a first down; a player is apparently injured during the down; team possession changed during the down; any player's helmet comes completely off during the down.

- 28.) Team B is granted a team time-out. Following this time-out, team A comes to the line-of-scrimmage in a completely different formation and team B may now request another time-out if they still have one.
- 29.) It is possible to legally bat a grounded, loose ball.
- 30.) K kicks off from their own 40 and their onside kick is first touched by K at their own 48. The ball then goes out of bounds at the 50 untouched by R. The best penalty option for R to accept for the best field position and to start a new series is to take the ball at the spot of first touching.
- 31.) If a nose guard slaps the ball during a snap in progress, the foul is a dead-ball foul for a disconcerting act.
- 32.) A field goal attempt is partially blocked in the neutral zone and travels in flight several more yards beyond the expanded neutral zone where R muffs the kick and the ball rebounds back behind the neutral zone. At the end of the down, the team in possession will start a new series.
- 33.) Helping the runner is a foul when a teammate behind the player with possession of the ball uses a hand(s) or arm(s) to push the runner forward.
- 34.) Running back A44 carries the ball into his own end zone where he is brought down when an opponent pulls him to the ground by grasping his face mask. This foul by B will be enforced from the previous spot if accepted.
- 35.) Offensive tackle #72 may catch and advance a legal, forward pass after it has been first touched by a rushing team B lineman.
- 36.) Team A scores a touchdown on a play in which an assistant coach for team A collides with an official in the restricted area during the down. The score does count, but the foul can only be enforced on the try.
- 37.) Eligible receiver #82 catches a pass and runs well beyond the neutral zone and beyond the line-to-gain down to B's 18 where he fumbles and the loose ball goes out of bounds at B's 12. If accepted, a penalty for roughing the passer against B will be enforced from B's 18.
- 38.) When a new series of downs is awarded, any accepted penalty for a foul committed prior to the ready-for-play must be enforced prior to the chain being set for the new series.
- 39.) During any legal kick in flight (except a try), any team R player may execute a fair catch anywhere in the field of play.

- 40.) Unused team time-outs do not carry over from the first half to the second half, from regulation play to an overtime period or from one overtime period to a subsequent overtime period.
- 41.) A backward pass is grounded and is a live ball beyond the neutral zone when an inadvertent whistle is sounded. The ball must be placed at the spot where it was when the whistle sounded.
- 42.) During a try for point(s) or during any overtime down, the ball becomes dead immediately and the down is ended if team B/R gains possession during the down.
- 43.) To begin a new series of downs in an overtime period, the ball must be placed in the center of the field laterally.
- 44.) Eligible team A receiver #82 runs his route down the sideline and accidentally steps out of bounds before returning to the field of play to catch a forward pass, but the team B opponent clearly knocks him down before the pass arrives. A double foul has occurred and the down will be replayed.
- 45.) On any down, any player in possession of a live ball may throw a backward pass from any place on the field of play or in his own end zone.
- 46.) One requirement of a legal block below the waist is that the block must be an immediate, initial action following the snap.
- 47.) The ball becomes dead and the down is ended when an offensive lineman #78 catches a legal, forward pass.
- 48.) It is possible to legally clip an opponent.
- 49.) If team K is in a scrimmage kick formation at the snap on a 4<sup>th</sup> down and they are using the numbering exception, #55 is an eligible pass receiver at the snap if and only if he is on the end of their line of scrimmage.
- 50.) Following an intercepted pass, the team B runner is about to be tackled and throws the ball forward to a teammate who muffs the pass. The grounded ball remains a live ball and the foul is enforced from the spot of the foul if accepted.
- 51.) Any team A player may throw a legal, forward pass.
- 52.) A player may wear glasses that have tinted lenses under their facemask.
- 53.) Following a fair catch of any legal kick except for a try, team R may have the ball placed anywhere between the hash marks for their new series if the request is prior to the ready-for-play signal.

- 54.) The play clock must be set to 40 seconds when the game clock is stopped for a defensive player's injury or equipment issue or foul.
- 55.) Following the snap, the QB tosses the ball back to a running back who ends up outside the lateral boundary of the free-blocking zone and throws the ball forward well beyond the neutral zone and out of bounds. This foul will be enforced from the previous spot if accepted.
- 56.) In order for team K to initiate a block on their opponent during a free kick, the kick must have gone beyond R's free-kick line or team R has touched the kicked ball or team R has first initiated a block inside the 10-yard neutral zone.
- 57.) A pop-up kick is illegal on a free kick and the ball must be blown dead immediately.
- 58.) Team B intercepts a legal, forward pass inside their own end zone and the down is ended as a result of this change of possession and results in a touchback.
- 59.) The ball becomes dead and the down is ended when any team R player catches or recovers any legal kick except a try in the field of play following a valid or invalid fair-catch signal by any team R player.
- 60.) 4<sup>th</sup> and 10 for team K at R's 25. A field goal attempt is partially blocked behind the neutral zone and travels to R's goal line where it touches the pylon. The ball is dead and is returned to the previous spot for a new series for team R.
- 61.) 4<sup>th</sup> and 10 for K on R's 30. K lines up to try a field goal but the holder muffs the snap and the player in position to kick the ball steps forward and kicks the muffed snap off of the ground down to R's 5 where it goes out-of-bounds. If the foul is accepted, the penalty is enforced from the previous spot.
- 62.) Following their touchdown, team A kicks a successful try for point and their holder is roughed by team B. Team A tied the score with their kick try and the game clock in the 4th quarter went to 0:00 during the touchdown play. There is no subsequent kickoff so team A must enforce the foul and replay the try or decline the foul and go to overtime.
- 63.) The ball becomes dead and the down is ended when a team K player catches or recovers any free kick anywhere in the field of play.
- 64.) Eligible receiver #38 runs his route well beyond the neutral zone and as a legal, forward pass arrives, he jumps and bats the pass to a teammate. This is a legal bat if and only if the batted ball goes backward.
- 65.) If an overtime game results in multiple overtime periods, the referee will only toss the coin 1 time to begin the initial overtime period and the first choice of options then alternates between teams for additional overtime periods.

66.) Following their touchdown, team A lines up in a swinging gate for the try. #80 takes the position of a snapper with his hand(s) on the ball in the center of the field while #5 and #10 take the normal position of a holder and a kicker establishing a scrimmage kick formation. There are 5 offensive teammates numbered 50-79 lined up to #80's left near the numbers on the field and legally on their line of scrimmage plus #85 on the left end of the line of scrimmage. #22 and #25 are lined up as backs also to the left near the field numbers. Following the ready, the 8 offensive players near the field numbers legally shift much closer to the center of the field but all 8 are still to the left of #80, #5 and #10 and legally set. Holder #5 has his knee(s) on the ground and #10 is in position to kick. Prior to the snap, #10 goes in legal motion straight to his right away from the rest of his teammates and after several steps, the ball is snapped directly to the holder. #80, #22, #25 and #10 then go directly into B's end zone as #5 rises and reverses out to his right looking for 1 of these 4 eligible receivers. He does throw a legal, forward pass to #80 who catches the pass for a successful 2 point try. This is in fact a legal and successful try. True or False???

**Make certain that you have followed the Answer Sheet instructions correctly!**

# 2023 OSSAA Crew Test Answer Sheet

**PRINT** your answer (True or False) in each blank.  
**Do not use just the first letter!!!**

**PRINT** the name of each person  
who participated in taking this test  
**plus** their OSSAA ID#.

- |           |           |                |
|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| 1. _____  | 26. _____ | 51. _____      |
| 2. _____  | 27. _____ | 52. _____      |
| 3. _____  | 28. _____ | 53. _____      |
| 4. _____  | 29. _____ | 54. _____      |
| 5. _____  | 30. _____ | 55. _____      |
| 6. _____  | 31. _____ | 56. _____      |
| 7. _____  | 32. _____ | 57. _____      |
| 8. _____  | 33. _____ | 58. _____      |
| 9. _____  | 34. _____ | 59. _____      |
| 10. _____ | 35. _____ | 60. _____      |
| 11. _____ | 36. _____ | 61. _____      |
| 12. _____ | 37. _____ | 62. _____      |
| 13. _____ | 38. _____ | 63. _____      |
| 14. _____ | 39. _____ | 64. _____      |
| 15. _____ | 40. _____ | 65. _____      |
| 16. _____ | 41. _____ | 66. _____      |
| 17. _____ | 42. _____ |                |
| 18. _____ | 43. _____ | Make sure you  |
| 19. _____ | 44. _____ | answered every |
| 20. _____ | 45. _____ | question!      |
| 21. _____ | 46. _____ |                |
| 22. _____ | 47. _____ |                |
| 23. _____ | 48. _____ |                |
| 24. _____ | 49. _____ |                |
| 25. _____ | 50. _____ |                |

Ref \_\_\_\_\_

Ump \_\_\_\_\_

HL \_\_\_\_\_

LJ \_\_\_\_\_

BJ \_\_\_\_\_

Extra \_\_\_\_\_

**Did your crew take this test alone?  
(No other crew was involved in  
taking this test with you!)**

**Circle      YES   or   NO**

**You must mail or email this answer  
sheet to the address listed on the  
instruction sheet. (Please note the  
deadline!)**

## 2023 BASIC SCRIMMAGE REQUIREMENTS

**Prior to the snap** – the ready-for-play now involves a whistle (and physical chop) if the next down is a 25 second play clock situation (or is one of the 3 exceptions where the play clock is set to 40 instead of 25). When there is no natural interruption in the flow of play resulting in a normal 40 second play clock, the ball is ready-for-play as soon as the official (usually the umpire) places the ball on the ground and moves away to his/her position. In either case, remember that each of the 11 offensive players who will participate in the next down must momentarily be between the numbers (9-yard marks) at any point after the “ready” and before the snap. The **Referee** and the **Umpire** are responsible for counting the offensive players and for confirming at least 5 offensive linemen numbered 50-79 (unless there is a numbering exception situation). The 2 **wing officials** are responsible for checking the offensive formation to make certain there are not more than 4 players lined up as backs and that there are no players on either team threatening the neutral zone. It is appropriate to **verbally communicate** with players lined up wide of the formation to assist them in getting on or off the line of scrimmage legally (preventive officiating!). We have had more issues recently with offensive tackles who do not break the plane of the snapper’s waistline because they are not far enough forward. If this becomes a problem, communicate early with the player(s) or the appropriate coaches to have the linemen align themselves correctly. Avoid using a flag unless the situation is obvious and you are getting no cooperation from the player(s) or the coaches! The **wing officials plus the referee and the umpire** must also watch carefully for illegal motion, illegal shift or false starts by the offensive players. The **Back Judge** is primarily responsible for counting the defensive players. **All officials** must make a mental note of the down and the line-to-gain prior to the snap. **When the ball is legally snapped and the play is now in progress, you are strongly encouraged to limit any movement from your initial position until the game action dictates otherwise!** Know your play action responsibilities and **avoid being a ball-watcher** until it is absolutely necessary to focus on the runner. There are 21 other players doing something that may be legal or illegal!

**Live ball becomes dead** – be patient with your whistle, but it is critical to know if and when the play is over and the ball is dead! These situations are the more common plays that create a dead ball: \* the **ball goes out-of-bounds** in a runner’s possession or as a loose ball; \* **forward progress is clearly stopped** in the field of play; \* a **score**, a **touchback**, or **simultaneous possession** occurs; \* a legal kick becomes a **touchback** or scores a **field goal**; \* a legal scrimmage kick is **caught or recovered** by team K **beyond** the neutral zone; \* a legal free kick is **caught or recovered** by team K **anywhere** during the kick; \* team R **gains possession** of any legal kick following a valid or invalid signal by any R player; \* any forward pass (**legal or illegal**) becomes incomplete; \* team B/R **gains possession** during a try or during OT or any **kick try** fails; \* the helmet of the player in possession of a live ball **comes completely off**.

**The ball remains alive** – naturally, it is critical to be totally aware of the situations where a live ball does not become dead and the play continues. **Inadvertent whistles must be avoided** at all times and a slow whistle is clearly a better result when it is not a crystal clear dead ball situation! A very common situation that requires extreme patience with your whistle is the catch, interception or recovery of any fumble or backward pass in the field of play. We must remember that **all 22 players** may gain possession and advance in this situation. The difference between a fumble and a muff can become a critical decision when determining a live ball versus a dead ball.

**Forward progress** – it is also very important that a runner in possession of the ball **receives every inch of forward progress** that is gained during the down! The 2 wing officials are almost always the covering officials in position to determine the forward progress and **must remain at the forward progress spot** throughout the completion of the play if the runner is pushed backwards following legal contact by the opponent(s). The issue of forward progress also becomes critical when the **line-to-gain** is a possibility. This is an important reason why we stress the need to be aware of the line-to-gain prior to each down. It is important to grant every inch of the forward progress that a runner earns prior to the ball becoming dead!

**Ball placement prior to a new series** – even though many teams/coaches do not take advantage of this rule, there are multiple situations that allow a team to request where the football will be placed between the hash marks prior to the beginning of a new series. By rule, the request must be made **prior to the ready-for-play** for the first down of the new series. The following situations are those that allow this request to be made: \* **a try for point(s) or a free kick**; \* a **touchback** has occurred; \* a **fair catch or an awarded fair catch**. When the request is honored and the ready-for-play is sounded, the offensive team **may not** call a time-out to change their request. If a dead-ball foul occurs prior to the snap or the down is replayed as the result of a foul, the offensive team may make a subsequent request.

## 2023 Game and Play Clock Notes

Our current 40 / 25 second play clock was a 2019 NFHS rule change. It is important to remember as you review for the upcoming season that there have been no changes to the **game clock** rules while there have been some minor changes to the **play clock** rules as we adjust to the 40 / 25 play clock and its impact on our NFHS game. This document reviews the game clock rules and the play clock rules and you are encouraged to utilize this document as you prepare for the football season and include this conversation throughout the season. You are encouraged to make copies of this and share it with each press box.

**GAME CLOCK REMINDERS** – It is important that crews practice strong physical signals throughout the contest that develop good habits. This will prepare you for dealing with late game timing issues at the end of either half that could become a game deciding situation. This first section details the reasons for the **game clock** to stop at the end of a down or between downs and it will not restart again until the next legal snap (except a try) or the legal touching of a free kick.

- \* Forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete
- \* Live ball goes out of bounds (in player possession or loose)
- \* Change of team possession occurs during or after the down
- \* Any legal kick down results in a new series for either team
- \* Delay of game penalty is accepted
- \* Charged time out is granted
- \* Any score occurs
- \* Fair catch is made
- \* Touchback occurs
- \* A period ends
- \* Rule 3-4-6 is enforced

There are others reasons to stop the clock, but if one of these occur, do not wind the game clock!

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This next list details the reasons for the **game clock** to stop at the end of a down or between downs and **it will** start again on the ready-for-play **if and only if** none of the reasons from the list above has occurred. It is possible for the game clock to stop for multiple reasons, but the only time it remains stopped is when one of the reasons from the list above has occurred.

- Temporary stoppages**
- \* A foul has occurred
  - \* An inadvertent whistle occurred
  - \* A measurement
  - \* Team A earns a first down and their possession continues
  - \* The game is stopped to correct any equipment issue
  - \* The game is stopped to attend to any medical/injury issue
  - \* A weather delay or some other unusual delay occurs
- .....

We do have game action that does **not involve** the game clock (**try for point(s); untimed down; overtime period**).

\*\* It is important to remember the timing rule that allows the offended team to have the **game clock** started on the snap rather than the ready-for-play **if and only if** the foul occurred inside the final 2 minutes of either half and the clock was supposed to start on the ready. **A request to have the game clock start on the ready-for-play instead of the snap is NOT an option.**

**PLAY CLOCK INSTRUCTIONS** – a **40 second play clock** will start “immediately” following a physical signal from the covering official(s) to indicate that the down has ended using signal #3 (time-out) or signal #7 (dead ball) or signal #10 (incomplete pass). These are the 3 most common signals that should occur at the end of the down for the 40 second play clock. Each of the following play situations require the 40 second play clock option.

- \* The team A (offense) runner is stopped in bounds **short** of a first down. The **game clock** continues to run and the **40 second play clock** is started immediately unless it was a 4<sup>th</sup> down.
- \* The team A (offense) runner is stopped in bounds **beyond** the line-to-gain (first down). The **game clock** is stopped for the first down and the **40 second play clock** is started immediately. The Referee will then restart (wind) the **game clock** with no whistle sounded as quickly as the football is in place on the ground and ready for play.
- \* The team A (offense) runner **or** a team A fumble **or** a team A backward pass goes out of bounds. The **game clock** is stopped and the **40 second play clock** is started immediately. The **game clock** will not start again until the next legal snap.
- \* A team A (offense) legal, forward pass is incomplete. The **game clock** is stopped and the **40 second play clock** is started immediately. The **game clock** will not start again until the next legal snap.

In each of these situations, an official (likely the umpire) will place the ball on the ground and move quickly to their next position and the ball is now ready-for-play if there is no unusual reason for a delay.

**ADMINISTRATIVE STOPPAGES / INTERRUPTIONS** – it is always possible for the situations that are listed below to occur throughout the game that are normal reasons to stop the natural flow of play. Each of these with **3 exceptions** that are duly noted will result in a **25 second play clock** that is **NOT** started immediately, but will be started by the Referee after the situation has been addressed by using the standard ready-for-play signal #1 or the standard #2 wind of the game clock signal.

**Game Situations** -

- \* any **score** occurs
- \* any **foul** occurs
- \* a **time-out** is granted
- \* an **inadvertent whistle**
- \* an **untimed** down
- \* a **measurement**

- \* play is stopped to address a **medical issue / injury** (**40 second play clock** if it involves a defensive player only)
- \* play is stopped to address an **equipment issue** (**40 second play clock** if it involves a defensive player only)
- \* play is stopped as the result of a **defensive foul** (**40 second play clock** if the defense was the only team to foul)
- \* any **legal kick down** that results in a **new series** for either team
- \* a **change of team possession** during or after the down
- \* the **beginning** of any period

Note that any really unusual situation is also a possibility such as the lights go out or there is a weather delay.

**A pumping motion with 1 hand calls for a 25 second play clock and with both hands calls for a 40 second play clock.**

## 2023 - Kicking Notes

**Legal Kicks** – A punt, a place kick or a drop kick are each methods for a legal kick and a legal kick also depends on where and when and how the kick is executed. Illegal kicks are extremely rare, but an official must be prepared to drop their flag at the spot of the illegal kick and allow the play to continue. Examples of an illegal kick could include a muffed snap that is grounded and a player kicks the ball similar to a soccer player kicking a grounded ball or a player who has gone beyond the line of scrimmage and then kicks the ball.

**'In Kick Status'** – it is most important that officials understand this concept as the rules of the kicking game are so critical when the ball is 'in kick status'! A ball that has been legally kicked and is in flight or is grounded remains a kick until any of the following occur: 1.) the loose ball goes out of bounds; 2.) **any** player gains possession of the ball; 3.) the loose ball breaks the plane of team R's goal line; 4.) the loose ball rolls to a dead stop in the field of play with no one in possession. Always remember that it is possible for the kick to end and the down continues!

**Touchback** – the result of a legal kick that breaks the plane of team R's goal line is a touchback and **the play is over** and **the ball is dead**! Note here that the kick may have been touched but not possessed by multiple players in the field of play, but it was 'in kick status' when it broke the plane of team R's goal line. **Do not let a team R player advance a kick out of his own end zone**! This is probably the most common mistake we make in the kicking game! (Exception: a successful field goal is not dead until it passes through the goal post.)

**Fair Catch** – a valid or an invalid fair catch signal that is made by any team R player causes the **down to end** and the **ball is dead** when any team R player gains possession of the kick anywhere in the field of play. It is also critical to remember that any team R player must be given an unhindered opportunity to catch a legal kick whether or not they have given a valid fair catch signal.

**First Touching** – a team K player is not to be the first player to touch a legal kick prior to the point where he may legally possess the ball. This is a violation and can occur in the 10-yard neutral zone on a free kick or it can occur anywhere beyond the expanded neutral zone on a scrimmage kick. It is critical that the covering official mark the spot of any first touching violation with a bean bag.

**Free Kicks** – A free kick (kickoff) is used to start each half in addition to the kick that follows a touchdown and the try or a successful field goal and the kick that follows a safety. The free kick down does not involve a legal snap and each of the legal methods may be used for a free kick with one exception (a punt may **not** be used for the kickoff that follows a touchdown and the try or a successful field goal). Unless a penalty has moved the spot of a free kick, kickoffs occur on team K's 40 yard line following the try or the field goal and occur on team K's 20 yard line following a safety. A free kick down includes a 10 yard neutral zone between the free kick lines for each team. It is critical to remember that team K **cannot** ever gain possession of a free kick **and** advance if the loose ball is **'in kick status'**! It may be team K's ball, but they cannot advance the free kick. It is also critical to know that team K cannot touch a free kick that is in flight even if there is no team R player in position to attempt a catch of the free kick. A free kick that goes out of bounds untouched by team R results in a foul by team K. This foul involves 4 options for team R to consider: 1.) a 5-yard penalty and replay the free kick; 2.) team R may take the ball 25 yards beyond team K's free kick line; 3.) refuse the penalty and take the ball at the out of bounds spot; 4.) a 5-yard penalty from the spot where the ball went out of bounds (team R's ball). Note here that a fifth option is possible if team K is also guilty of a "first-touching" violation. PSK fouls do not exist during a free kick. Therefore, expect a foul that occurs during a free kick in progress to be enforced from the previous spot or the succeeding spot (except for kick-catch interference which can be a spot foul). The free kick rules call for very specific alignment requirements prior to a free kick and any official may verbally correct any alignment issues prior to the ready-for-play.

**Scrimmage Kicks** – a scrimmage kick must follow a legal snap and is a legal kick that is made from in or behind the neutral zone. A scrimmage kick formation at the snap is **not** required to execute a scrimmage kick, but is certainly quite common and it requires that the snapper be protected from a roughing foul. Punts and field goals are scrimmage kicks and it is important to note that an unsuccessful field goal is treated the same as a punt by rule. **Any** team R player may gain possession of **any** scrimmage kick in the field of play and advance unless **any** team R player has made a valid or invalid fair catch signal. As is stated above, any legal kick that breaks the plane of team R's goal line is a touchback and **the play is over** and **the ball is dead!** Therefore, **do not let a team R player advance a kick out of his own end zone even if the kick has been touched by any player(s) in the field of play.** One significant difference from the free kick rules is that it is possible for a team K player to gain possession and advance a scrimmage kick **if and only if** the team K player gained possession of the kick in or behind the neutral zone. If this occurs, the down will count and it is critical for team K to reach the line-to-gain to retain possession if it was a 4<sup>th</sup> down. Another significant difference from the free kick rules is that there is no foul for a scrimmage kick that goes out of bounds untouched by team R. It is important to note that any scrimmage kick that goes out of bounds **'in kick status'** will belong to team R regardless of any touching of the kick by any player(s) and regardless of the location of the line-to-gain or the number of the down. The ball simply belongs to team R!

**Blow your whistle and stop the game clock** – the following situations cause the down to end and the game clock to stop immediately when a legal kick occurs.

- 1.) **The kick breaks the plane of R's goal line except for a successful field goal.**
- 2.) **The kick goes out of bounds.**
- 3.) **Any team R player gains possession of any legal kick following a valid or invalid signal by any team R player.**
- 4.) **Any team K player gains possession of a free kick anywhere or gains possession of a scrimmage kick beyond the neutral zone.**
- 5.) **Any legal kick rolls dead with no one in possession.**
- 6.) **The simultaneous possession of a kick between 2 opponents who are both in bounds.**

**Momentum Exception** – if any team R player gains possession of any legal kick inside their own 5 yard line **and** their original momentum takes them into their own end zone where they are downed or they go out the side or back of the end zone, it will be team R's ball at the spot where the possession occurred. The team R player **may** choose to advance out of the end zone in this situation just like a recovered fumble or intercepted pass.

## 2023 Overtime Notes

The method to determine a winner in Oklahoma when the score is tied at the end of regulation is to allow each team an offensive possession that begins at their opponent's 10 yard line (unless moved by a penalty) and the line-to-gain is **always** the goal line even if an accepted penalty caused the possession to begin at a spot other than the 10 yard line. An overtime **period** consists of an offensive series of 4 downs for each team at the same end of the field. The series of downs ends when the offensive team scores (including a try) **or** the defensive team gains possession at any time during the offensive series **or** the offense fails to score or to gain a new series as the result of a penalty (automatic first down).

Following the end of regulation play, each team will go to their respective team box for a 3-minute intermission. At the end of this intermission, the Referee will conduct a coin toss to determine which team will go on offense first and which end of the field will be used for the first overtime period. That coin toss to begin the first overtime period **is the only time** that there will be a coin toss regardless of how many overtime periods may occur. The first choice for any additional overtime periods will alternate between teams. The team who did not win the first overtime coin toss has their choice for the second overtime period and it continues to alternate if multiple overtime periods become necessary. The options are **always** to play offense, defense or select the end of the field.

Each team may use **only 1 time-out** during an overtime period and any unused time-outs **do not** carry over from regulation or from a previous overtime period (use them or lose them).

It must be noted that **the ball becomes dead immediately** and the offensive series is over at any time that the defense gains possession of the ball!

Each subsequent intermission is only for 2 minutes if multiple overtime periods become necessary.

When a touchdown is scored during overtime, the scoring team is entitled to a try **unless** the winner has been determined as a result of the touchdown. The winner of an overtime game will only receive **1 point** for playoff qualifying points regardless of the actual final score.

It is also important to remember that there is no game clock during any overtime period, but the play clock continues to operate normally!

**If an accepted penalty results in a series beginning at a spot other than the 10 yard line, make certain to let both coaches know this information prior to the option decision for that overtime period. It will likely influence their choice!**

## 2023 Passing Notes

**Legal Pass** – a legal pass may be thrown using any method (overhand, underhand, 2-handed chest pass, etc.). The first key that must be determined is the **initial direction** of the release of the pass. A legal pass is forward or backward and the rules are much different for each. A team A player becomes a **passer** by definition if he throws **a legal, forward pass** and is therefore afforded protection against roughing. A **catch** of the pass must include clear possession of the ball in flight and the player's first contact with the ground must be any body part inbounds. It is also a requirement that the player maintain possession when he returns to the ground or falls to the ground. Yes, **the ground can cause an incomplete pass**. Any player who catches any pass may advance. A very important difference in a forward vs a backward pass is that an incomplete forward pass ends the down and the unsuccessful backward pass remains alive if it is inbounds whether grounded or in flight. A simultaneous catch of any pass involves clear possession by 2 opponents who are both inbounds and the down is ended. The simultaneous catch is awarded to the passing team.

**Illegal Pass** – each of the following becomes an illegal forward pass that is a foul: 1.) A forward pass that is released when the team A player has either foot beyond the neutral zone; 2.) Any forward pass that is thrown by any player following a change of possession during the down; 3.) Any team A player throws a second forward pass during the down; 4.) Intentional grounding of a forward pass involves a forward pass that is thrown into an area with no eligible receiver or is thrown to save time or to save lost yardage. It must be noted that an illegal forward pass that is caught by any player remains alive and may be advanced (yes, the foul for the illegal pass will still have to be addressed). A spike to conserve time becomes illegal if it is not released immediately following a direct hand-to-hand snap or from a shotgun position. This direct snap must not be muffed or touch the ground prior to the immediate release. As the result of a **2022 & 2023 rule change**, a team A passer may now **throw the ball away legally** if he/she is or has been in possession of the ball outside of the lateral boundary of the free-blocking zone, the pass reaches the neutral zone or beyond including the out of bounds area **and this passer is the player who received the original snap!**

**Eligible Receivers** – a team A player must satisfy 2 conditions to become an eligible receiver of a legal, forward pass. His jersey number cannot be 50 through 79 **and** his position at the snap must be the end player on his offensive line or as a back not on his offensive line. All team B players are eligible receivers at the snap and these eligible receiver requirements only apply when a legal, forward pass is thrown. It must also be noted here that if a team B player touches a legal, forward pass then all players become eligible to catch the pass. Any player that is an eligible receiver at the snap remains an eligible receiver throughout the down and must also satisfy other requirements that include staying inbounds (unless blocked/pushed out and returns inbounds immediately). Team A players who are **ineligible receivers** at the snap must remain in or behind the expanded

neutral zone until the legal, forward pass is released. This requirement does not exist if the pass does not cross the neutral zone. These ineligible receivers at the snap may not attempt to catch, bat or muff a legal, forward pass unless it has been touched by any team B player. This illegal touching of a forward pass can occur behind, in or beyond the neutral zone and is a foul.

**Pass Interference** – pass interference is defined as “**interfering with an eligible opponent’s opportunity to move toward, catch or bat the ball**”. It is critical to note here that pass interference simply does not exist in or behind the neutral zone, when the legal forward pass does not cross the neutral zone and when the forward pass is illegal. Physical contact is required to consider pass interference, but it is clearly possible for 2 opponents to collide while each is making a bona fide effort to catch the forward pass and this would not be pass interference. Defensive pass interference cannot occur in an area that is clearly away from the direction of the forward pass. It is also important to remember that the NFHS rules do not consider ‘a non-catchable pass’ when pass interference is a possibility. Offensive pass interference can occur at any time following the time of the snap (unless B touches the pass) and defensive pass interference can occur at any time following the release of the legal, forward pass.

**Backward passes** – as was stated earlier, it is important to determine the initial direction of any pass because the rules are quite different for a backward pass. It is pretty easy to remember that **any player** in possession of the ball can throw a backward pass at **any time** and at **any spot** on the field of play or inside their own end zone. Any of the 22 players may **touch/catch** a backward pass and advance and it is extremely important to stay off of any whistle when a backward pass hits the ground and is inbounds. A grounded backward pass inbounds remains a live ball and is treated just like a fumble. A backward pass in flight may be batted by any player with one exception (the team that threw the backward pass may not bat it forward). No player may ever bat a grounded loose ball that would include a grounded backward pass. It is also important to remember that any legal snap is a backward pass until it is possessed by any player.

**Momentum Exception** – if any opponent gains possession of any legal pass inside their own 5 yard line **and** their original momentum takes them into their own end zone where they are downed or they go out the side or back of the end zone, it will be their ball at the spot where the possession occurred. This player **may** choose to advance the intercepted/recovered pass out of his/her own end zone in this situation.

## **REVISED DOCUMENT 7/17/23**

### **PENALTY ENFORCEMENT SPOT DETAILS/EXAMPLES**

This first section includes the Rule 10-4 statements that **did not change for 2023** regarding the enforcement spot for accepted fouls.

- 10-4-2-a **Previous Spot Enforcement** for a foul that occurs simultaneously with a legal snap. (Illegal shift; illegal motion; illegal formation; illegal numbering; illegal substitution; illegal participation).
- 10-4-2-b **Previous Spot Enforcement** for a foul that occurs during a 10-3-1 loose ball play. (legal kick in kick status; legal, forward pass during the pass; a backward pass by A or a fumble by A or an illegal kick by A that occurs in or behind the neutral zone prior to any change of possession)
- 10-4-2-c **Previous Spot Enforcement** for a foul that occurs during a legal kick down and an inadvertent whistle ends the down during the kick.
- 10-4-2 Exception: Team R may choose **Succeeding Spot Enforcement** for a foul by team K that occurs during a legal kick down (other than kick-catch interference) prior to the end of the kick when team K will not be next to put the ball in play.
- 10-4-3 **End of the Kick Enforcement** if team R commits a PSK foul unless the foul occurs behind the End of the Kick which becomes **Spot of the Foul Enforcement**.
- 10-4-5-a **Succeeding Spot Enforcement** for an Unsportsmanlike Foul.
- 10-4-5-b **Succeeding Spot Enforcement** for a Dead-Ball Foul.
- 10-4-5-c **Succeeding Spot Enforcement** for a Non-Player Foul.
- 10-4-5-d **Succeeding Spot Enforcement** when the final result is a touchback.

This next section includes the Rule 10-4 statements that **involve a change in the 2023 wording**, but you will discover that the resulting enforcement spot still remains the same as before.

- 10-4-4-a **Spot of the Foul Enforcement** for Illegal Batting or Illegal Kicking when the foul occurs BEHIND the end of the run or the related run.
- 10-4-4-b **Spot of the Foul Enforcement** for Illegal Participation (see 9-6-4-a or 9-6-4-g).
- 10-4-4-c **Spot of the Foul Enforcement** for an Illegal Forward Pass (see 7-5-2-c) or for Intentional Grounding (see 7-5-2-d).
- 10-4-4-d **Spot of the Foul Enforcement** for a foul by the team in possession that occurs BEHIND the end of the run or the related run following a change of possession.

- 10-4-4-e **Spot of the Foul Enforcement** for any foul by team A INSIDE team A's End Zone and the foul is accepted. (**SAFETY**)
- 10-4-4-f **Spot of the Foul Enforcement** for a foul by team A that occurs BEYOND the line of scrimmage during a running play and the foul occurs BEHIND the end of the run or the related run.
- Revised>** 10-4-5-e **End of the run or related run Enforcement** for a foul by team B when the run or the related run ends BEYOND the line of scrimmage.
- Revised>** 10-4-5-f **End of the run or related run Enforcement** for a foul that occurs BEYOND the end of the run or the related run following a change of possession.
- Revised>** 10-4-5-g **End of the run or related run Enforcement** for a foul by team A that occurs BEYOND the line of scrimmage during a running play when the run or related run ends BEYOND the line of scrimmage and the foul occurs BEYOND the end of the run or the related run.

**You must be aware that 10-4-5-e, f, & g in the 2023 rule book must now have a separate category for 'End of the run or related run Enforcement' instead of the Succeeding Spot Enforcement (pages 81 & 82).**

10-4-5 NOTE: There is **no change at all** in 2023 that allows either team to enforce a foul by their opponent as stated in rules 8-2, 8-3, 8-4 and 8-5!

10-5 There is **no change at all** in 2023 in the 10-5 statements that address the Special Enforcement Rules.

**\*\*\* This final section includes the Rule 10-4 statements that are the major focus of the 2023 rule change that addresses the different enforcement spots from our previous 10-4 statements! It is critical to study and understand these carefully!**

10-4-2-d **Previous Spot Enforcement** for a foul by team A or by team B when the run or the related run ends BEHIND the line of scrimmage and there is no change of possession.

Example: Team A 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3 on their own 40 – QB A15 turns and hands the ball to a wide receiver in motion across the backfield – A75 pulls to block but holds his opponent at A's 37 and the runner is tackled at A's 35 – if accepted, A75's foul is enforced from the previous spot (A's 40) and the down is repeated.

Example: Team A 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8 on the 50 yard line – QB A10 drops back to pass and is under a heavy rush when he is pulled to the ground by his face mask by B88 at A's 40 – if accepted, B88's foul is enforced from the previous spot (50) and

results in a new series for A at B's 35. (not an automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down, but the penalty moves the ball well beyond the line-to-gain!)

10-4-2-e **Previous Spot Enforcement** for a foul by team A BEHIND the line of scrimmage when the run or the related run ends BEYOND the line of scrimmage.

Example: Team A 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6 on B's 45 – A25 receives a handoff and carries the ball to B's 38, but A66 pulls to block and holds his opponent at B's 49 – if accepted, A66's foul is enforced from the previous spot (B's 45) and the down is repeated.

10-4-2-f **Previous Spot Enforcement** for a foul by team A BEYOND the line of scrimmage when the run or the related run ends BEHIND the line of scrimmage.

Example: Team A 1<sup>st</sup> and 10 on their own 30 – A35 receives a handoff and runs around the right end but is tackled at A's 28 – A86 is blocking downfield, but blocks his opponent below the waist at A's 40 – if accepted, A86's foul is enforced from the previous spot (A's 30) and the down is repeated.

10-4-2-g **Previous Spot Enforcement** for a foul by team A or by team B when the run or the related run ends BEHIND the line of scrimmage before a change of possession that does occur.

Example: Team A 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6 on their own 46 – A28 receives a handoff on a draw play and is pulled down by the face mask by B44 at A's 42 causing a fumble that is recovered by B28 and advanced to A's 10 – if accepted, B44's foul is enforced from the previous spot (A's 46) and results in a new series for A at B's 41. (not an automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down, but the penalty moves the ball well beyond the line-to-gain!)

**It is important to note here that rule 10-6 will no longer exist at this time. It explained the all-but-one principle and that language had been removed from the NFHS Football Rules although many of the penalty enforcements still apply the philosophy of the all-but-one principle. You will discover this to be true except for fouls by A or by B behind the neutral zone or the run or related run ends behind the neutral zone prior to any possible change of possession. It is critical to remember that EVERY FOUL behind the neutral zone is NOT always a previous spot enforcement!**

If you have any question at all concerning this document, send an email my way for a quick reply.

D. Gore

dgoreref910@hotmail.com

Prior  
Information

# Nomination Form



## HALL OF FAME NOMINEE

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Name of Nominee: David Linden Gore  
*(first, middle, last)*

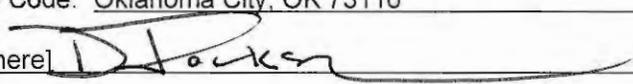
### ***Individual Submitting Nomination:***

Name: David Jackson

Phone: (405) 840-1116

Street Address: 7300 N. Broadway Extension

City, State, Zip Code: Oklahoma City, OK 73116

Signed: [Tab here] 

Date: 11/11/2021

Email: djackson@ossaa.com

# NOMINEE INFORMATION SHEET

**Please Check Appropriate Nomination Category:**

Athlete     Coach     Official     Administrator     Performing Arts     Others

Name of Nominee: David Linden Gore  
*(first, middle, last)*

Current Address: 2003 Martingale Drive  
*(street address)*

Norman, OK 73072  
*(city, state, zip)*

Email: dgoreref910@hotmail.com

Phone: (405) 329-7191      Date of Birth: 9/10/1947

School Affiliation (if any) Retired Norman Public Schools - June 30, 2007 (Classroom Teacher - 17 years, Building Administrator - 13 years, District Athletic Director - 8 years)

City: Norman      State: OK

Place of Birth: Wichita Falls, TX      Date of Retirement: June 30, 2007

Is the nominee still active in any area of athletics or performing arts other than the category for which he/she is being nominated?     Yes     No

If yes, please explain:  
 [Tab here]

If deceased, date of death:  
 [Tab here]

Name of Spouse or Closest Living Relative: [Tab here]

Address: [Tab here]

Phone: [Tab here]

**Schools Attended:**

Name of School	City and State	Year Graduated	Degree
High School: Tipton High School	Tipton, OK	1965	High School Diploma
College/University: University of Oklahoma	Norman, OK	1969	Bachelor's Degree
Post Graduate School: University of Oklahoma	Norman, OK	1973	Master's Degree

- Small Portrait-type Photograph of Nominee Attached (to be used for news release, etc.)
- Letters of Recommendation Attached
- Newspaper and/or Other Supportive Material Attached

# CONTEST OFFICIAL

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Career Description as High School Official (give complete background and information pertaining to involvement in high school officiating, i.e., sports, number of years, etc.)

Football Official: 1981-2015

593 games + 69 playoff assignments

9 State Championship Games (1985, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1995, 2004, 2007, 2013, 2015)

Baseball Official: 1977-2014

1031 games + 49 playoff tournament assignments + 29 State Tournament assignments. Have also worked 594 summer games at the high school level.

Slow-Pitch Softball Official: 2008-2013

70 games + 1 State Tournament

## Special Honors and Achievements

- \* 1986 All State Baseball Game Plate Umpire
- \* 1997 O.I.A.A.A. State "Newcomer of the Year"
- \* 2000 O.I.A.A.A. State "Athletic Director of the Year"
- \* 2004 All State Football Game Referee

Professional Affiliations and Achievements (i.e., involvement in local, state and national officiating associations and other related professional organizations)

\* New appointment as a member of the NFHS Football Game Officials Manual Committee 2018-2021

\* Currently serve as State Football Rules Interpreter for Oklahoma (2007-Present) - Conduct rule change presentations for coaches and for officials statewide each year.

\* Previously served as the technical advisor for the OKC Metro Officials Association (200+ FB members). Conduct weekly meetings (July, August and September) to discuss rules and mechanics.

\* Currently serve as a State area coordinator for the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. The seventeen area coordinators communicate with our State Supervisor of Officials concerning current issues, playoff assignment recommendations, and local association concerns.

\* Currently serve 8 local school districts as football official assignor during the fall season.

\* Served OKC Metro Officials Association as technical advisor in baseball for 3 years. Conduct weekly meetings (February and March) to discuss rules and mechanics.

\* Previously served 7 local high schools as umpire assignor during the spring and summer seasons. (2008-2014)

\* 4-year term on the Oklahoma Officials Association Executive Committee (2005-2008)

\* 1-year term as Vice President of the O.O.A. Executive Committee (2008)

\* President of the OKC Metro Officials Association - 300+ members in Football, Basketball, Baseball and Softball (1990-1993)

\* Membership in the National Association of Sports Officials from the beginning to the present.

Other information (*not previously listed*)

- \* Currently work University of Oklahoma Basketball Score Table for both the men and women. Official Scorer for the women (1998-Present). Official Scorer for the men (2020-Present)
- \* Currently work as a Big 12 Conference Football Clock Operator (2008-Present)
- \* Currently serve as the official clock/scorebook operator for the Class 6A-5A High School Basketball State Tournament. (2007-Present)
- \* Official scorer for the Big 12 Womens Basketball Tournament (2013, 2014, 2016, 2017)
- \* Small College Football Official - 50 games + 3 playoff assignments (1990-1997)
- \* College Baseball Umpire - 408 games + 30 playoff assignments (1977-2001)
- \* Member of the Big 8 Baseball Umpiring Staff (1989-2005)
- \* Worked the Big 8 Baseball Post Season Tournament (1995)

# Letters of Recommendation



# OKLAHOMA SECONDARY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

DAVID JACKSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MIKE WHALEY, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Assistants : Amy Cassell - Mike Plunkett - David Glover - Todd Goolsby - Grant Gower



November 11, 2021

Hall of Fame Selection Committee

National Federation of State High School Associations

PO Box 690

Indianapolis, IN 46206

Hall of Fame Selection Committee,

It is with great pleasure I add my recommendation to your consideration of Mr. David Gore of Oklahoma for selection to the NFHS Hall of Fame in the Officiating Category.

I have had the pleasure of knowing David over the last several decades during my career as a teacher, coach and official. He officiated football games that I coached and I observed him as a baseball umpire in games that were played at the schools where I was employed. In all my years as a football coach, I did not work with any "white hat" that approached the games as professionally as David Gore. His knowledge of the NFHS Football Rule book exceeds every official I have known. *(He has served the state association in Oklahoma for the last several years as the state rules interpreter.)* As a school administrator in Oklahoma, he served many years as an Athletic Director in one of our state's largest districts, he had the demeanor and people skills to work easily with coaches. He communicated professionally and treated me as a coach as a professional manner during our games together. David's experiences as a "school person" made his relationships with the coaches and the players education driven. He has always recognized the game he was working as an education-based tool for the players and the coaches.

David continues to share his knowledge and experience in the officiating world with the officials in our state after his retirement from active officiating on the field. He is deeply involved in mentoring young officials and speaks to athletic directors and coaching groups on a regular basis about officials.

David Gore has been a professional educator his entire adult life. As a lifetime educator, he has used the world of officiating to educate players, coaches and other officials. His love for officiating and the promotion of the officiating world makes him an excellent candidate for Hall of Fame consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Whaley



**THE  
OKLAHOMAN**

November 12, 2021

To the NFHS Hall of Fame Selection Committee:

It is my honor and privilege to recommend David Gore for induction into the NFHS Hall of Fame. Since coming to Oklahoma two decades ago, I have gotten to know David in my capacities. School administrator. On-field official. Official scorer. But best of all, I've gotten to know him as a friend.

Here's what I can tell you about David: you won't find anyone who cares more about people. He always has a smile on his face, and no matter how busy he is, he always takes time to stop and chat. I have no doubt that genuine kindness and care permeates all that he does.

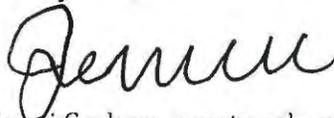
It is one of the things that made him such a great official. He wanted to do right by the players and coaches in the games that he worked. The same goes for the other officials with whom he is working. To that end, he was meticulous in his preparation before games, staying up on rules, going to clinics and studying his craft. Then once the games started, he was fair and methodical. He didn't want anything compromised, most notably the experiences of the teams that were competing.

And what's more, David has always been willing to be a voice for the officiating community. Any time that I have had a question or an issue that I need to know more about for a story or column, he has been willing to share his insight and knowledge. He has been an invaluable resource to me – and so many others.

There are literally tens of thousands of officials who make high school sports function. I know this first-hand – my dad worked as a high school basketball official for decades. High School sports would cease to exist without all the men and women who work the games. But I guarantee that honoring David Gore would also be honoring them. He is an example of all that is good and right in all of them.

Please let me know if I can provide any further assistance. On David's behalf, I am always at the ready.

All my best,



Jenni Carlson, sports columnist, The Oklahoman

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# How Gore is like a 'Yoda' for HS refs across state

NORMAN — Retirement has kept David Gore busy.

Sure, the former Norman Public Schools employee is no longer strolling halls or planning sporting events, but his involvement in high school football hasn't stopped.

During the summer, he travels across the country going to different workshops and meetings to learn about the newest officiating techniques, rules and trends. Come the fall, he's mostly known in Oklahoma as the state's rules interpreter, helping new officials learn the proper way to call games and sharing his knowledge.

In the offseason, he tries to find ways to grow officiating across the state.

Gore, 74, is a bonafide legend within the high school sports world in Oklahoma, but especially in the officiating realm. He called high school games for 35 years and also officiated small-college football as well as major-college basketball and baseball. Yet Gore never turned his back on his roots, the Friday nights at stadiums scattered across the central plains.

His passion for the folks in black and white has transcended generations and shaped how games are officiated for decades to come.

"I want to do it as long as I'm able to," Gore said. "Right now, I'm enjoying it and plan to do it a few more years."

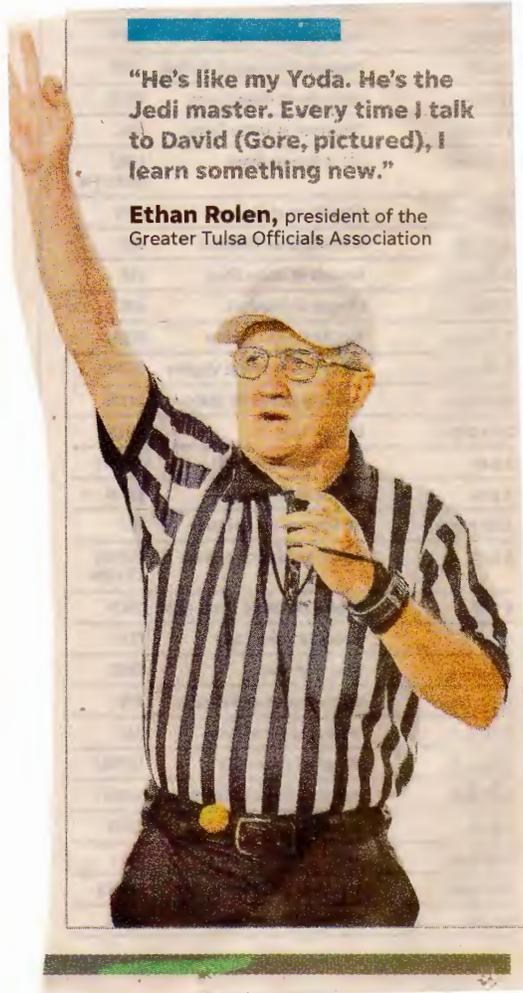
At a time officials are in short sup-

**See GORE, Page 4B**

"He's like my Yoda. He's the Jedi master. Every time I talk

**"He's like my Yoda. He's the Jedi master. Every time I talk to David (Gore, pictured), I learn something new."**

**Ethan Rolen**, president of the Greater Tulsa Officials Association



# Gore

Continued from Page 1B

ply and schools fear larger impacts in years to come, the state of high school officiating in Oklahoma is better because of Gore.

He's a walking encyclopedia of knowledge when it comes to officiating, and people around the state know it. During football season, his phone is constantly ringing. Folks asking about specific rules and how to handle situations, there's hardly a question asked that Gore doesn't have an answer to.

If there's an officiating mystery, Gore is the detective to call.

"He's like my Yoda. He's the Jedi master," said Ethan Rolan, the state's mechanics coordinator and president of the Greater Tulsa Officials Association. "Every time I talk to David, I learn something new."

Rolan has known Gore for more than two decades, and Rolan emphasized how fortunate Oklahoma is to have someone like Gore as an officiating advocate.

Because of Gore's expertise, he's often asked to be on national committees discussing rule changes and ways to im-

prove officiating techniques. His voice carries not only across Oklahoma but also the entire country.

When Gore returns to the state from the national meetings, he shares information. He talks to officiating associations. He calls on the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association. It gives them ideas of how to improve.

That knowledge and expertise gets everyone in the state on the same page, which improves the level of officiating.

"That's an invaluable thing to have," Rolan said. "Lots of states struggle in that area and don't have a David Gore, and we are just extremely lucky to have him."

In addition to Gore's extensive high school officiating background, he remains busy at the college level, too.

Last fall, Gore operated the clock at the Big 12 championship game in Arlington, Texas, and the College Football Playoff national championship game in Miami Gardens, Florida.

Yet even with his extensive background and college experience, high school officiating is near and dear to Gore's heart.

However, Gore never truly aspired to officiate at a higher level. The camaraderie of hopping in a car with four other people each Friday night in the fall and

driving across the state to different towns while getting to officiate high school football games?

There was nothing like it.

"I enjoyed being on a football field on Friday nights," Gore said. "It was a lot of fun being with the crew. It was not a bad gig, so I decided to concentrate my efforts on high school and the timing worked out that it became my best option."

Gore retired after the 2015 season.

His retirement came at a time when older officials stepping away aren't always replaced by young ones. It left a shortage.

Reversing that trend is something Gore and others, like OSSAA director of officials Grant Gower, are trying to do. Although they work to improve the quality of officials in the state, a lot of time recently has gone toward recruitment and retention.

It's not a problem only Oklahoma faces; it's a nationwide crisis. The shortage is already affecting middle school and junior varsity contests, and if it doesn't start to improve, high school varsity games could start being impacted as soon as next season.

"I am just very, very concerned about the number of officials that we have currently in Oklahoma," Gore said. "My

message would clearly be to any youngster out there that enjoys football but realistically is not likely to play past their high school days, we would welcome them with open arms and do all the teaching we can to help them get involved."

Although Gore won't be blowing his whistle at an Oklahoma high school football game any time soon, those who are officiating the contests can do their jobs more effortlessly because of him.

Officiating is thankless. It's difficult for five sets of eyes to catch everything that happens on a high school football field.

That's another reason why Gore has invested so much time and energy into making sure officials can be in the best positions possible to call games.

It's why he'll continue to serve on national committees and travel across Oklahoma helping teach the rules and best practices of officiating. It's why he's thought of as a legend by his peers and numerous others.

High school football officiating wouldn't be where it is without David Gore.

"He is the icon of football officiating in Oklahoma," Gower said. "His knowledge, his experience, his expertise is just phenomenal."

# David Gore

PROFESSION: FOOTBALL OFFICIAL

AGE: 64

RESIDES: NORMAN

INTERVIEWED BY RYAN ABER, RABER@OPUBCO.COM

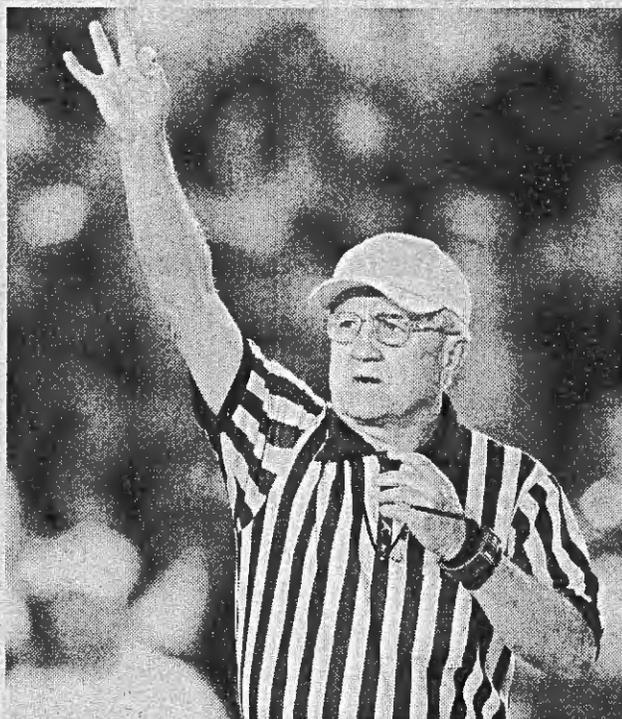
David Gore has always been involved in sports. He's gone from playing them in high school in Tipton to coaching them in Norman at the junior high and high school level to officiating for the last 31 years.

In addition to continuing his work as a baseball and football official, Gore is also the football technical adviser for the Oklahoma City Metro Officials Association. He also works as a play clock and game clock operator for the Big 12. Now, Gore is also being nominated for the National High School Hall of Fame.

## I grew up in Tipton

down in the southwest corner of the state. Our football coach when I was in high school was Don Royal, Darrell Royal's older brother. He was not only a great football coach, he was pretty much the math department at my little high school. I thoroughly enjoyed his class. Math was my area, and I was very impressed with him as a teacher as well as a coach. He was easy to work with, knew what he was going and he was a great teacher. I'm sure there was a lot of influence there in what I've ended up doing in my life.

**Baseball was about the only thing** I played seriously in high school. I was on the basketball team but I didn't play much. I've always thoroughly enjoyed athletics and would have enjoyed playing after high school but I didn't have enough talent. So in order to stay involved, I got into baseball umpiring first and worked that for a few years, and finally some friends of mine that I was



Referee David Gore signals the down during a high-school football game on Oct. 21.

PHOTO BY BRYAN TERRY, THE OKLAHOMAN

working baseball with got me involved in football and I just fell in love with officiating football. I started football in '81 and I've done it ever since. It allows me to stay involved with the game. It keeps me healthy. I really enjoy what I do especially the teaching aspect of it.

**My first football game was down at Konawa High School** and about 15 minutes before we were supposed to go out on the field, we're checking everything and I had left my whistle at home. Now if that doesn't mess the other guys up knowing they brought along this brand-new guy who's supposed to know what he's doing, and he left his whistle at home. Needless to say, they've given me a

hard time about that every since.

## I was in Norman Public Schools for 38 years

and was a classroom teacher. An opportunity came along to be a technical adviser. I teach classes in July, August and September on Wednesday nights. We're talking about rules, talking about mechanics and stuff. It helped me learn the game as well as teach others. Probably our most difficult challenge is convincing young officials to stay with it. They're going to hear coaches complain, they're going to hear parents complain and they're going to hear players complain. It's hard to know how to deal with that, knowing that no matter what your call is, somebody's not going to

be in total agreement with you. You have to believe in what you're doing and just move on.

**There is no substitute for game experience.** You just have to get out on the field. We tell our young officials absolutely every opportunity you have to work a game, you need to take advantage of it because every time you work a game, you're gaining more and more experience, and you may end up in a situation that you haven't ever thought about but once you've experienced it, the next time it comes along, you've been there.

**I've been involved in seven different state championship games.** In '07, I got to work the Jenks-Union game, and of course everybody enjoys and would like to be able to work a 6A state championship although I will be very quick to tell you, it doesn't matter if it's 6A, 5A or smaller schools, it's very important to those kids. Any time you're in a playoff atmosphere and especially in a state championship game, those are special.

**When I'm watching a game either in person or on TV,** I'm almost exclusively watching the officials. I will go to a football game with my wife and we're just sitting there watching and she'll ask me something and I'll say, 'I didn't see that, I was watching the officials.' She just absolutely cannot understand that. It is interesting. You have a whole different perspective. It's a whole new world when you get involved in officiating.

# Gore named top athletic director

David Gore, Director of Athletics/Physical Education for Norman Public Schools, has been recognized as the most outstanding athletic director for 2000 in the state of Oklahoma.

Gore was presented the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association State Award of Merit at a recent awards luncheon during the Oklahoma Coaches Association Summer Clinic in Oklahoma City.



**David Gore:**

To attend national athletic directors conference.

there are many outstanding athletic directors in Oklahoma," he said.

The award is given to one athletic director in the state each year in recognition of significant contributions to interscholastic athletics. As the Oklahoma award winner, Gore will be among 50 directors in the nation to be honored next February at the national conference in Orlando, Florida.

Gore's dedication to the athletic program in Norman Public Schools as well as his contributions and commitment to the state and national organization were contributing factors to Gore receiving this award. Gore, who has 31 years of expe-

rience with the district, has been athletic director for the past six years. In 1997, he earned the Oklahoma Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association Newcomer of the Year Award. In 1998, he received the OIAAA Outstanding Service Award Inside in Field of Athletics. He has served on the OSSAA Athletic Directors Advisory Board since 1995, and is presently serving as 2000-01 President of OIAAA.

Gore, who was selected by members of his state association, said he was honored to receive the award.

"It is a honor to be chosen by your peers because

there are many outstanding athletic directors in Oklahoma," he said.

Gore began his career in Norman as a math teacher at West Jr. High in 1969. He taught math for 17 years at West Jr. High, West Mid High and Norman High School. Gore coached football and basketball at West Mid High and Norman High School for 13 years. He served as assistant principal at Norman High from 1986 to 1994.

Since Gore has been athletic director for the district, he has been involved as tournament manager for Norman Schools hosting regional, area, and state basketball tournaments, semi-final and championship football competitions, regional and state baseball tournaments, track and field meets, and other sporting events. Since 1972, in his spare time, he has been a game official for OSSAA football and baseball including three state championships in football. From 1978-1995, he served as a Big 8 baseball umpire.

Gore and his wife, Denise, who teaches at Cleveland Elementary, have a daughter, Melissa, a senior at Norman High School North, and a son Darren, an eighth grader at Whittier Middle School.

# Meet the retiree excited to live out CFP dream



**Jenni Carlson**

**D**avid Gore couldn't say yes fast enough when he was asked to be the clock operator for last month's Big 12 Championship Game.

But when he was asked to do the same at the national championship game, he couldn't speak.

"It may have taken me 10 seconds to say anything," he remembered with a chuckle.

His stunned silence ultimately gave way to agreement — of course he would work the biggest game of the season — and Monday night, the longtime Norman resident got to live a dream. He was part of the officiating crew for college football's national championship.

"Whether you're an official, whether you're a clock operator, whether you're replay, you want that opportunity," he said. "It was exciting."

Gore reminds us, it's not just the young men in the helmets and shoulder pads who have a goal of making it to the Big Bowl.

Gore, a native of the

# CARLSON

From Page B1

far southwest Oklahoma town of Tipton, spent most of his adult life working in Norman Public Schools. He started as a math teacher in the district, then became an administrator. He was the district's athletic director for almost a decade.

But all along the way, he always made time for officiating.

He was a referee for football and an umpire for baseball, and with his calm demeanor, kind spirit and quick wit, he was a standout. He worked high school games in Oklahoma for more than three decades and called small-college football as well as major-college basketball and baseball.

When Gore began scaling back his on-field officiating, he started filling in when needed in the timer's booth at OU football games. He'd been running the clock at OU men's basketball games for several years, and with his refereeing experience, moving to football was seamless.

Then in 2008 when the Big 12 decided to start assigning clock operators to regular-season conference games, Gore applied to be part of the pool. He was accepted, and since then, he's worked Big 12 games nearly every weekend of the season.

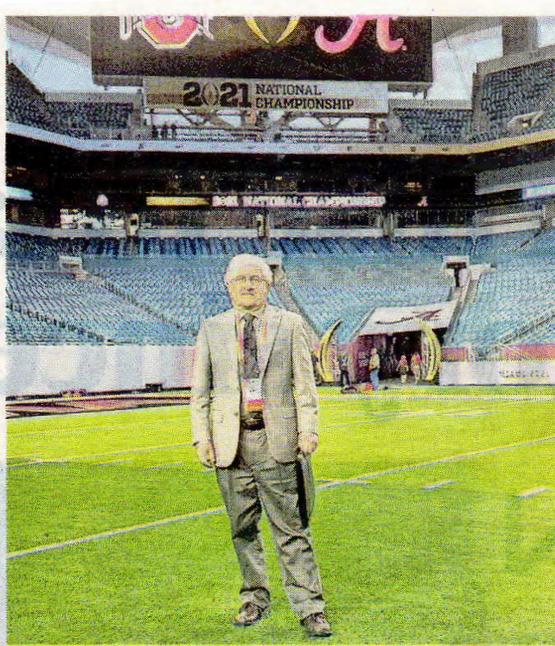
"Because I'm fully retired ... I just thoroughly enjoy doing this," said Gore, who left full-time work at Norman Public Schools in 2007. "As long as they'll have me, I'll continue to do it."

Even though Gore has worked more than a hundred Big 12 games over the past decade or so, he hadn't been assigned the conference title game.

That changed this past season.

"I was very pleased just to get to work the Big 12," he said.

Gore was still riding the



**Longtime Norman resident David Gore worked the game clock during Monday's national championship game. He spent decades as an on-field official, but for more than a decade, he's been a clock operator for Big 12 football games.**

[PHOTO PROVIDED]

high from that game when the Big 12 called two days later with the assignment for the national championship game.

After the College Football Playoff selection committee picks the top four teams, it determines which conferences will supply the officiating crews for the semifinals and the final. The playoff doesn't want any conflicts of interest, so it selects conferences without teams in the games. This year, without a league team in the playoff, the Big 12 was asked to provide the on-field and in-booth officials for both the Sugar Bowl, the semifinal between Alabama and Notre Dame, and the national championship.

The day after the playoff selections were announced, Gore got the call that he had been assigned to the national championship.

He and wife, Denise, flew from Oklahoma City to Miami on Saturday. Gore had several meetings and responsibilities over the weekend, but because of pandemic precautions, many events surrounding the Big Bowl were canceled. A huge gala normally held on Saturday night, for example, was a no-go.

The game itself didn't turn out all that great either, as Alabama rolled Ohio State.

But Gore didn't let any of that sully his experience.

"What is a lot of fun at a

game like this is, you look at the booth next to you and you see Kirk Herbstreit or you see Sean McDonough," Gore said of the ABC and ESPN analysts. "All these different personalities, and they're just regular folks doing their job just like we're regular folks doing our job."

Gore admits he always soaks in the atmosphere before a big game, but once the whistle blows and the clock starts, it becomes like any other game. He has a job to do, and he focuses on the details of the work, not the magnitude of the moment.

"My job (Monday) night was no different than nine or 10 other times, other weeks this year," he said. "Once the game gets started, you're just back into your routine."

David Gore would love to work another national championship game some day. Maybe one where COVID isn't an issue. Perhaps with all the pomp and circumstance and as many fans as can pack the stadium.

Still, if Monday was his one and only, he has no complaints.

"We had a great, great time," he said. "It just worked out beautifully."

*Jenni Carlson: Jenni can be reached at 405-475-4125 or [jcarlson@oklahoman.com](mailto:jcarlson@oklahoman.com). Like her at [facebook.com/JenniCarlsonOK](https://www.facebook.com/JenniCarlsonOK), follow her at [twitter.com/jennicarlson\\_ok](https://twitter.com/jennicarlson_ok).*

David Gore  
Author

Referee Magazine  
Article

**In or Out-Live or Dead**

## **In or Out – Live ball or Dead**

Rule four in the NFHS code and also in the NCAA code is the place to start to determine when a live ball becomes dead and the play has ended. Both sets of rules immediately address the issue of a loose ball or a player/runner that goes out of bounds from the field of play. We want to focus our attention here on the difference between the loose ball and the player/runner in the definition from the NFHS rule two or the NCAA rule four for out of bounds (NFHS 2-29-1, 2, 3; NCAA 4-2-1, 2, 3).

A loose ball is not in the possession of any player and can result from a pass, fumble, or kick during the down (NFHS 2-1-3; NCAA 2-2-3). The ball remains in the status of a loose ball until a player gains possession or the ball otherwise becomes dead by rule such as an incomplete forward pass or a legal non-scoring kick that crosses team R's goalline in NFHS play or is grounded in the end zone untouched by team R in NCAA play. Possibly the most common reason for a loose ball becoming dead is when the ball goes out of bounds. This definition is quite clear in stating that a loose football is out of bounds at the moment that it touches the sideline or endline or it touches anything at all that is on or beyond the sideline or endline. This would include an official or a player who is touching the sideline or endline or is beyond the sideline or endline. It is also important to remember that a pylon that is properly placed is in fact out of bounds and a loose ball that touches the pylon becomes dead immediately. It is also important to remember that the loose ball is not out of bounds until it has touched something that is out of bounds as opposed to a pass, fumble, or kick that is still in flight beyond the plane of the sideline or endline.

It must be noted at this point that a ball in the possession of a player is treated differently as it relates to out of bounds. We want to start this with the definition of a player who is out of bounds. A player is out of bounds if he is touching the sideline or endline or is touching anything outside of the sideline or endline with two important exceptions. The player is not considered to be out of bounds if he contacts an official or another player who is in fact out of bounds. We are now able to clearly understand that the ball that is in player possession is out of bounds by rule when that player or that football touches the sideline or endline or anything outside the sideline or endline except for the two exceptions.

Remember that out of bounds occurs when actual touching takes place. We have mentioned the loose ball or the player touching a pylon earlier and we can also include a loose ball or a player who touches a goalpost support as well. The game clock stops each and every time that the ball is out of bounds and it is therefore critical to emphasize the actual touching that must occur when precious seconds are a factor late in either half of play (NFHS 3-4-4-e; NCAA 3-3-2-e-2, 3). An airborne player or a loose ball in flight are not out of bounds by rule until the actual touching occurs. It must also be noted that a covering official must anticipate and be prepared to stop the clock when the touching creates an out of bounds runner or loose ball.

David Gore  
Author

Referee Magazine  
Article

**Fourth and Short**

## Fourth and Short

Officials who bring many years of experience to a football game are able to share with the younger group about those game situations where the antennas need to be a little bit higher and their focus needs to be a little bit stronger. Our recent rule changes at every level have clearly emphasized the need to make our game safer. One result of this new direction is our increased focus on the defenseless player. It has become clear to all officials that it is a critical time in our game to make certain that we do raise our antennas higher and increase our focus on those players who have been identified as defenseless players.

It is equally important that our younger officials begin to understand and recognize additional situations that are not relatively new areas of concentration in our game. We want to take a close look at a real common scenario that involves a fourth down and less than five yards to the line to gain. Veteran officials are quick to share how important it is to always be aware of the current game situations that will clearly influence coaching decisions such as down and distance, the score, the quarter and time on the clock, the yard line, possible weather issues, etc. An offensive team who is facing a fourth and less than five may very well have several “tricks up their sleeve” that they believe will enhance their efforts to earn that very important first down. Are their “tricks” legal or illegal? There are many things that have been tried over the years and all officials need to study, discuss and be prepared for the various possibilities that could very well turn the momentum of the game completely around and ultimately determine the final outcome.

Let’s start our focus with NFHS rule 7-1-7 and NCAA rule 7-1-2. The topic of a false start by team A includes movement that simulates action at the snap and any action that is clearly intended to cause team B to encroach. Various examples might include a quarterback who does different things with his verbal cadence or possibly with a head bob, offensive linemen who initiate a different shift into a 3-point stance or an entire offensive line who raises up abruptly in unison to look to their sideline for a new play signal, and the offensive back who moves from a 3-point stance directly forward quickly before turning to his right or left to continue his motion. Each of these likely border on legal vs illegal tactics and it therefore becomes imperative that a crew discusses and prepares for these possibilities and anticipate their occurrence accordingly to the current game situations.

This conversation becomes even more critical when the fourth and less than five becomes fourth and inches to go. In addition to the possibilities already mentioned, we now need to consider a quarterback who quickly takes a snap prior to all of his teammates being completely set, a runner who is assisted by a teammate, or the very difficult task of determining if six or seven offensive linemen who are nose to nose against six or seven defensive opponents and everyone is crowding the neutral zone. Let’s make certain at this point that we don’t forget the responsibility of the defensive players to avoid any disconcerting movement or words designed to cause a false start by the offense (NFHS 9-5-1-d; NCAA 7-1-5-a-3). This can be a tough task for the interior officials and this defensive effort to create a foul is just as critical as those various offensive possibilities.

Our final comments must include conversation about the difficult task of determining forward progress when the runner disappears into a mass of offensive and defensive linemen and the two wing officials lose sight of the football. Wing officials who work opposite each other on a weekly basis develop strong habits that become routine each game as they grow accustomed to each other and therefore avoid conflicting decisions as they pertain to forward progress. One suggestion that has made the rounds is to determine which line won the battle of movement forward or backward when it becomes difficult to find the football. This critical decision becomes even more paramount when either goalline is involved. It is important for these two officials to discuss and come to very clear agreement as to how they plan to determine the forward progress that is so critical on short yardage situations. There is not a single perfect answer, but the two wing officials must be on the same page.

David Gore  
Author

Referee Magazine  
Article

**It's About Time**

## Shared Responsibility - It's About Time

Effective football crews have and carry out their individual assignments before, during and following each down throughout the game. In addition to these assignments, it is important for each individual to recognize those areas of game management that involve shared responsibility for the entire crew to work together to effectively address important areas that are critical to a well-officiated football game. An excellent example of this would be accurate penalty enforcement. It is important for each member of the crew to become proficient with the rules of penalty enforcement to ensure that there are no errors that would diminish the overall strength of the crew.

Let's take a close look at another equally important area of game management that would lend itself to shared responsibility for the entire crew. Game clock management is another critical area of game control that each member of the crew should pay close attention to in order to avoid any timing errors throughout the contest. Do you feel completely proficient in starting and stopping the game clock or do you leave that up to your referee? It is understood that the referee is the person primarily responsible for the winding of the clock when appropriate, but effective communication from other crew members can enhance this process to avoid problems when a referee may not be completely aware of the results of the play. Although it is common practice in a 5-person crew for the referee and the back judge to have the major portion of the clock management responsibility, the two wing officials will often find themselves on the backside of the critical action at the end of a down and are in position to take a close look at the game clock to make certain that it is running or is stopped appropriate to the result of the play. Effective communication among the crew with each other or possibly with a head coach or the quarterback can certainly enhance the sharing of critical information during those moments in a game when seconds can become precious.

Rule 3 in the NFHS rulebook and also in the NCAA rulebook clearly spells out the details of starting and stopping the game clock. Officials may find it helpful as you master these details to think of various groups of reasons to stop the game clock. For example, the game clock will stop at the end of scoring plays or touchbacks, any out-of-bounds play, plays that involve a foul, all fourth down plays, any change-of-possession plays in addition to plays that result in a new series for either team (NFHS 3-4-4; 3-5-7; 3-5-9; NCAA 3-3-2). This list is not all-inclusive, but it does suggest one method for learning and remembering critical game clock decisions. When the discussion turns to the correct starting of the clock, it is understood that the referee has that primary responsibility although individual crew members must know and be prepared to assist with verbal or physical reminders to start the clock on the ready-for-play. Naturally we understand that the decision to start the clock is totally dependent upon why the clock was stopped. As you study rule 3 carefully and in detail, you are encouraged to divide all of the reasons for stopping the game clock into two categories. The larger list will be those situations that call for the clock to remain stopped until the next legal snap or the legal touching of a free kick. The smaller list will be those situations that call for winding the clock on the next

ready-for-play. Most crews refer to these two lists as major/minor, large/small or long/short.

It is not unusual throughout the game for the clock to stop for multiple reasons at the end of a down. If any of those reasons calls for the clock to start on the next snap, the clock will not be started on the ready-for-play.

**Play 1:** Third and 8 on team A's 45 yardline late in the first half. A1 receives the snap and throws a backward pass to back A2. A2 breaks free at the 50 yardline and runs down to and out-of-bounds at team B's 28 yardline. B2 is guilty of a personal foul for a late hit on A2. **Comment:** The result of this play causes the game clock to stop because A2 runs out-of-bounds, A2 runs beyond the line-to-gain and there is a dead-ball foul after the play has ended. **Ruling 1:** Following the enforcement of the dead-ball personal foul from the end of the run down to B's 14 yardline, the game clock will start on the next snap.

An official's timeout that stops the clock is taken for the awarding of a first down, for addressing possible medical issues with an injured player, for legal/illegal equipment concerns in addition to various intermissions that include the break between the first two periods or the last two periods and the break following a try, a successful field goal or a safety (NFHS 3-5-7; 3-5-9; 3-5-10; NCAA 3-3-2; 3-3-4). This list is also not all-inclusive, but does show additional examples for stopping the clock and therefore must be studied carefully in to determine whether the clock will start on the ready-for-play or on the next snap. Each crew member is encouraged to become proficient with these lists to enhance your shared crew responsibility.

Although it is a fairly rare occurrence, it is possible for the game clock to start other than on the ready-for-play or on a legal snap.

**Play 2:** Second and 12 on team B's 33 yardline during the final minute of the last period. A1 receives the snap and quickly throws a forward pass that is caught behind the neutral zone by A2. A2 runs to B's 25 yardline where he is hit and fumbles the ball. There is a significant pile of players from both teams who attempt to recover the fumble and the covering official stops the game clock as the digging begins to locate the football. After several seconds have elapsed, it is determined that teammate A3 has recovered the ball at the bottom of the pile at B's 24 yardline.

**Ruling 2:** Team A has retained the ball and is in possession of the ball short of the line-to-gain. It is therefore necessary to immediately restart the game clock when it is determined that A3 made the recovery.

This is a great example of shared crew responsibility that calls for a member of the crew that is not involved in digging for the football to verbally remind the referee to immediately restart the game clock.

Our last example of a game situation that involves the starting of the game clock other than on the ready-for-play or on a legal snap is a free kick down. By rule, the game clock will start when the kick is legally touched in the field of play other than first touching by team K (NFHS 3-4-3; NCAA 3-3-2).

**Play 3:** Following a successful field goal during the third period, K1 kicks off from team K's 40 yardline. The ball travels down to team R's 15 yardline where it bounces in front of R1. R1 muffs the grounded kick that bounces to team R's 5 yardline where several players from each team

attempt to recover the ball and causes the loose ball to break the plane of team R's goalline.

**Ruling 3:** The free kick broke the plane of team R's goalline that resulted in a NFHS touchback. The game clock should have started when R1 legally touched the ball at the 15 yardline. The clock then was stopped when the kick broke the plane of R's goalline.

Crews are encouraged to carefully study the timing rules to gain a complete understanding of game clock management and to further discuss as a group how individual crew members can best assist with this critical piece of a great big puzzle that we refer to as crew responsibility. Add to your dead-ball officiating to-do list the habit of taking a quick look at the game clock when you are able, concentrate on the result of each down as it pertains to game clock management, communicate whenever possible with appropriate crew members or either head coach or appropriate players as to the status of the game clock during critical moments when seconds are precious and study rule 3 continuously to enhance the level of game clock proficiency for the entire crew. The crew and the game will benefit from these efforts.

## 2021 OSSAA Crew Test Instructions

**It is so very important that each crew read these instructions very carefully because our 2021 crew test is clearly different from previous years but does match the 2020 crew test!**

- 1.) Each crew who chooses to take the crew test must do so as a crew working together by yourselves at a time and place convenient for you during the window of opportunity. You **ARE NOT** to work with other crews or with your local association as a large group. Make absolutely certain that you turn in the single page **TEST ANSWER SHEET** by the deadline of **Wednesday, October 13**. That sheet is the very last page of this test document.
- 2.) The test contains 66 items and follows this page of instructions and you are welcome to print the entire test although that is not necessary or required. That is simply your decision to make. You will have to print the final page which is the **TEST ANSWER SHEET!**
- 3.) The test items are to be answered as TRUE or FALSE. You are to **PRINT** the entire word TRUE or FALSE on the Answer Sheet for each test item. Make certain to complete the entire TEST ANSWER SHEET as instructed prior to returning it to us.
- 4.) Please note that none of the test items deal with any COVID-19 adjustments. The test items are to be answered according to the NFHS Football Rules.
- 5.) You **will be** allowed to use your NFHS FB rule book and case book while you take the test.
- 6.) Each crew may choose to invite a new, young official who you may be mentoring to join you to experience the crew test process. You **ARE NOT** to include a veteran, retired official to take the test with your crew.
- 7.) You **MUST** return the completed single page **TEST ANSWER SHEET** to Sheree Riddell or to David Gore by **Wednesday, October 13**. You have 2 options for returning the answer sheet. You may mail it OR you may scan it and email it. We **MUST** be able to read the completed answer sheet! The addresses that you need are listed here.

David Gore  
2003 Martingale Drive  
Norman, OK 73072

[dgoreref910@hotmail.com](mailto:dgoreref910@hotmail.com)

Sheree Riddell  
O.S.S.A.A.  
P. O. Box 14590  
Oklahoma City, OK 73113-0590  
[sriddell@ossaa.com](mailto:sriddell@ossaa.com)

Any crew is welcome to send a text or an email to David Gore if you have a question about these instructions. (405) 255-6959 or [dgoreref910@hotmail.com](mailto:dgoreref910@hotmail.com)

- 1.) On a 3<sup>rd</sup> down from A's 32 yard line, the QB throws a forward pass that is intercepted at the 50 and returned for a touchdown by B24. A bean bag must be dropped at the 50 to mark the enforcement spot for a holding penalty by B44 at A's 40 yard line during B24's return.
- 2.) The designated representative who will make decisions on penalties must determine acceptance or declination of the penalty before a charged time-out can be granted.
- 3.) A substitute entering the game during a dead ball and still on his opponent's side of the neutral zone when the ball is snapped is not guilty of encroachment.
- 4.) During a free kick down, a team R player may signal for and execute a fair catch from inside the 10-yard neutral zone.
- 5.) The loss of player possession by an unsuccessful execution of the attempted handing of the ball becomes a fumble only if the direction of the handing is backward.
- 6.) A team K player in position to punt the ball illegally kicks a grounded backward pass (snap) well beyond the neutral zone. This results in a loose ball play until the ball is possessed or otherwise becomes dead.
- 7.) The team who will next snap the ball may request that the ball be placed anywhere between the hash marks following a touchback, following a fair catch or following a free kick out of bounds untouched by team R.
- 8.) A16 throws a forward pass to eligible A83 who catches and advances 20 yards beyond the neutral zone. Prior to the catch, B90 holds eligible receiver A40. If accepted, this penalty will be enforced at the end of A83's run.
- 9.) Running back A35 is 5 yards behind the neutral zone when his face mask is grabbed and pulled causing a fumble that bounces out of bounds 8 yards behind the neutral zone. If accepted, this penalty will be enforced from the previous spot.
- 10.) Defensive pass interference may only occur against an eligible receiver.
- 11.) During the final down of the 4<sup>th</sup> period when the clock goes to 0:00, team A scores a touchdown and team B is guilty of pass interference. During the successful try that ties the score, team B is guilty of holding. Both team B fouls can be enforced at the beginning of overtime.
- 12.) K18 punts from his own end zone and R24 who is beyond the expanded neutral zone muffs the kick in flight and the ball rebounds back into K's end zone where K18 falls on and recovers the kick. The ball is dead and the result of this play is a safety.
- 13.) A18 receives a shotgun snap and turns to throw a forward pass to A83 behind the neutral zone. B24 knows that there is no pass interference behind the neutral zone and tackles A83 prior to the arrival of the pass. This is a legal play behind the neutral zone.
- 14.) Any pass in flight may be batted in any direction by an eligible receiver.
- 15.) Very late in the game, team A trails by 4 points and is facing a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10 at B's 13 yard line. A16 scrambles to find an open receiver but cannot and is about to be tackled at B's 5 yard

line when he throws a pass out of bounds at B's 8 yard line. This is a legal play and the game clock will start on the snap.

16.) A dead-ball foul that occurs after the ready-for-play whistle is sounded for a try cannot be carried over to the subsequent kickoff.

17.) The ball becomes dead and the down has ended if and when any team K player gains possession of any legal, free kick anywhere in the field of play.

18.) Clipping or a block in the back is a foul that involves contact with any opponent below the shoulders from behind.

19.) The team in possession must be in a scrimmage kick formation at the moment the ball is snapped if they are using any form of the numbering exception.

20.) The first touching of a free kick can occur anywhere in the field of play between K's free kick line and R's goal line.

21.) A legal block below the waist must now occur immediately following a legal snap with the initial movement of the blocker directly against his opponent.

22.) During the very first possession in an overtime period, team K kicks a successful field goal on 4<sup>th</sup> down and their kicker is roughed. Team K may choose to keep their 3 point lead and enforce the penalty at the succeeding spot which results in a 1<sup>st</sup> down and goal to go for their opponent at the 25 yard line.

23.) K83 punts on a 3<sup>rd</sup> down and his kick is blocked and the kick goes out of bounds several yards behind the neutral zone. The ball will belong to team R following the down.

24.) B15 intercepts A's forward pass in B's end zone and begins to advance when A80 pulls him to the ground by the face mask inside the end zone. If accepted, this penalty will be enforced from B's goal line.

25.) With 8 seconds to go in the 4<sup>th</sup> period and the score is tied, team A lines up in the field goal scrimmage kick formation on 3<sup>rd</sup> down. The holder receives the snap and with his knee on the ground shovels a forward pass to an eligible receiver who catches the pass and advances into B's end zone. This results in an illegal forward pass and the penalty is enforced from the spot of the pass and includes a loss of down.

26.) The ball is marked ready-for-play at the beginning of an overtime period. Team A chooses to call a time-out prior to their first snap. Team A may not be granted another time-out during their offensive series or during the opponent's offensive series.

27.) A simultaneous catch of a pass, a simultaneous recovery of a fumble and a simultaneous recovery of any legal kick (except on a try) belongs to the team in possession at the beginning of the down.

28.) During the final down of the 3<sup>rd</sup> period when the time goes to 0:00, team A scores a touchdown and team B is guilty of holding. During the successful try, team B is guilty of illegal participation. Both team B fouls can be enforced on the free kick to start the 4<sup>th</sup> period.

- 29.) A85 runs a pass route near the sideline and steps out of bounds before a pass to him is in flight. He returns to the field of play and catches the forward pass inbounds. A85 is guilty of illegal touching of a forward pass.
- 30.) The game clock will start on the Referee's wind when the ball is in place if it was only stopped when team K recovered a blocked punt behind the neutral zone and ran for a first down.
- 31.) The last timed down (0:00) of the 3<sup>rd</sup> period includes a non-player foul by team B during the down. If the penalty is accepted, it is necessary to run an untimed down.
- 32.) The line-to-gain chain is not necessary during any overtime series.
- 33.) The catch of a loose ball in flight must include clear possession of the live ball followed by first touching the ground inbounds with a body part and maintaining possession when the ground or an opponent is contacted.
- 34.) A new force can occur to a pass, kick or fumble in flight if the muff or legal batting by an opponent clearly changes the direction of the pass, kick or fumble to the opposite direction.
- 35.) A16 throws a forward screen pass to A45 behind the neutral zone. B55 bats the pass that then goes beyond the neutral zone. A75 was beyond the expanded neutral zone prior to the release of the pass while blocking B40. This play is free of any fouls whether the pass is successful or not.
- 36.) Roughing the passer is a personal foul that can occur following any legal pass.
- 37.) After a safety has occurred, the kicking team may free kick using a place kick, a punt or a drop kick.
- 38.) If team K is aligned in a typical swinging gate formation with 6 offensive linemen to the left or to the right of their snapper and the snapper is standing with his shoulders parallel with the sidelines, he may legally shovel the ball directly to a teammate who is a back.
- 39.) Illegal touching of a forward pass by an ineligible player must be an intentional act and can only occur in or behind the neutral zone.
- 40.) Unintentional contact between an official and a non-player in the restricted area is by rule a personal foul and a second occurrence of this same foul does result in the disqualification of the head coach.
- 41.) Team K kicks off to start the 2<sup>nd</sup> half and the grounded kick is bouncing at R's 6 yard line with K players attempting to recover the kick when R24 intentionally kicks the ball into and out of R's end zone. This illegal kick is penalized at the previous spot and the free kick is replayed.
- 42.) R28 is back to receive a 4<sup>th</sup> down punt and gives a valid fair-catch signal. He muffs the kick and the grounded kick bounces toward R's end zone. R36 recovers the kick at R's 2 yard line and his momentum takes him into R's end zone where he is downed resulting in a safety.

- 43.) During a dead ball between downs, A45 enters the game as a substitute but never gets inside the numbers prior to the snap. Following the snap, A45 catches a forward pass for a sizable gain. This results in a foul for illegal touching.
- 44.) A55 is lined up in the traditional fullback spot behind his QB. A55 may legally do each of the following during the down. A55 may throw a forward pass, may receive a backward pass, or he may receive a handoff for a running play.
- 45.) A65 steps forward into the expanded neutral zone prior to a legal, forward pass that crosses the neutral zone. A65 is not guilty of being an ineligible downfield if he is never in contact with an opponent.
- 46.) Team A has a 4<sup>th</sup> and 8 from B's 33 yard line. A12 runs and is forced out of bounds at B's 28 yard line. The LJ collided with a team B coach during the down inside the restricted area. The penalty is enforced half the distance from B's 28 down to B's 14 and results in a new series for team A.
- 47.) Prior to the ready-for-play whistle, team A requests that the ball be placed on the right hash mark following a fair catch. Team A comes to the line of scrimmage and their spread formation causes team B to call a time-out. Team A may now ask for the ball to be placed on the left hash mark.
- 48.) Team A may legally spike the ball to stop the game clock if the snap is made directly to a player 4 yards deep in a shotgun formation and he immediately throws the ball forward to the ground following the snap that has not been muffed or has hit the ground.
- 49.) Because of a false start by team A, their try is now from B's 8 yard line. A45 runs to B's 4 and fumbles the ball into B's end zone where B25 intentionally bats the grounded loose ball out the back of the end zone. If this foul is accepted, the try is replayed from B's 2 yard line and team A may have the ball placed anywhere between the hash marks.
- 50.) A7 receives a hand-to-hand snap and turns to hand the ball to his fullback as A64 pulls and blocks B75 above the waist in the back for a typical trap block. A64 and B75 were on their line of scrimmage and in the free-blocking zone at the snap and the handoff occurred while the free-blocking zone was still intact. A64's block was illegal as it was not an immediate, initial action at the snap.
- 51.) On 4<sup>th</sup> and 8 from their own 12 yard line, K punts and a poor kick strikes the ground at K's 17 yard line and bounces back behind the neutral zone where K15 recovers the kick and throws a forward pass to K83 and it falls incomplete. Team K will have a new series at their own 12 yard line.
- 52.) Team A has illegal numbering at the snap if all seven linemen are numbered 50-79.
- 53.) The result of any personal foul by a player that is judged to be a flagrant foul by the game official(s) is disqualification for the remainder of the game.
- 54.) Targeting is an act by any player to take aim and initiates contact against an opponent above the shoulders with the helmet, forearm, hand, fist, elbow or shoulders.

- 55.) A pop-up kick is a free kick that is driven directly into the ground by the kicker and bounces only one time before going airborne and this is a foul that must become a dead ball immediately.
- 56.) Team A trails by 5 points and has a 3<sup>rd</sup> and goal from B's 7 yard line. A12 drops back to pass and begins to run when he does not find an open receiver. At the team B 4 yard line about to be tackled, A12 throws a pass into the end zone where his fullback A55 catches the pass as the clock goes to 0:00 to end the 4<sup>th</sup> period. This play includes an illegal forward pass, illegal touching by an ineligible and the game is over.
- 57.) An awarded fair catch can only occur as the result of an accepted foul.
- 58.) Players may wear moisture-absorbing sweatbands of any width as long as they are located between the elbow and the hand.
- 59.) Each of the following plays will result in a safety and 2 points for the opponent. \* A backward pass in flight from the QB to a teammate is batted by a defensive end and the ball then bounces into and strikes the pylon on A's goal line. \* A team K punt in flight 15 yards beyond the neutral zone is muffed by team R and rebounds back across the neutral zone and into team K's end zone where a simultaneous recovery between opposing players occurs. \* B34 intercepts a forward pass in B's end zone and begins to return the change of possession when B45 is guilty of holding in B's end zone while B34 is still in B's end zone.
- 60.) An ineligible team A player who has been beyond the expanded neutral zone prior to the release of a forward pass that crosses the neutral zone is guilty of a foul regardless of his location when the pass is released.
- 61.) B34 intercepts a forward pass at team A's 15 yard line and returns the change of possession for a touchdown. During the return, B80 is guilty of holding inside A's end zone. If accepted, the penalty will be enforced from A's goal line resulting in a new series for team B at A's 10 yard line.
- 62.) A14 receives a shotgun snap and begins to roll out to his right where he stops behind the neutral zone and throws a backward pass across the field to A50 who then throws a forward pass from behind the neutral zone that travels well beyond the neutral zone and falls incomplete. This entire down is one loose ball play and the basic spot for a live-ball foul would be the previous spot.
- 63.) During a change of possession down (pass interception), a team B non-player is on the field of play and collides with an official. Team B will retain possession after the penalty is enforced resulting in a 1<sup>st</sup> and 25 following the enforcement of this non-player foul.
- 64.) During the 1<sup>st</sup> period, a team A assistant coach is guilty of an unintentional contact foul in the restricted area during a live ball when he collides with an official. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> period, the same team A assistant is guilty of an unsportsmanlike conduct foul for inappropriate language directed at an official. By rule this assistant is disqualified.
- 65.) Runner A24 is inside B's 5 yard line near the sideline and dives from B's 3 across the sideline where he lands out of bounds at B's 1. Just as he is about to touch out of bounds, he

extends the ball across the extended goal line outside of the pylon and the ball is the first thing to touch the ground out of bounds. The result of this play is a touchdown for team A.

66.) The kicking rules that apply to an unsuccessful field goal attempt are the same as the rules that apply to a 4<sup>th</sup> down punt.

**Make certain that you have followed the Answer Sheet instructions correctly!**

## 2021 OSSAA Crew Test Answer Sheet

**PRINT** your answer (True or False) in each blank.  
**Do not** use just the first letter!!!

**PRINT** the name of each person who participated in taking this test **plus** their OSSAA ID#.

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BJ \_\_\_\_\_

Extra \_\_\_\_\_

**Did your crew take this test alone?  
(No other crew was involved in  
taking this test with you!)  
Circle YES or NO**

Make sure you  
answered every  
question!

**You must mail or email this answer  
sheet to either address listed on the  
instruction sheet. (Please note the  
deadline!)**

David Gore  
Author

**OSSAA Football page  
Penalty Enforcement**

## TO: All Football Officials

It is time for each of us to take on the critical responsibility of accurate penalty enforcement during the course of every football game. As an individual member of a crew, are you prepared to know the correct enforcement of each penalty that you call? If you were required to take the crew test by yourself, would you be ready for the penalty enforcement questions? Many decisions during the game involve subjective human judgment which will result in disagreement from time to time, but penalty enforcement is black and white and every official is equally responsible for the accuracy of those decisions that will impact the game. Please use this document to review penalty enforcement and prepare yourself properly!!!

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Every foul occurs while the ball is live OR occurs during a dead-ball period. It is also possible for a foul to occur while the ball is live, BUT the enforcement of that foul is treated as a dead-ball foul. It is most critical that you know the difference and make the appropriate determination when you throw the flag.

Most fouls that are treated as a live-ball foul are part of a Loose Ball Play OR part of a Running Play.

**LOOSE BALL PLAY:** Action that begins with a legal snap or a legal free kick and then includes:

1. a legal kick while the ball is in kick status;
2. a legal forward pass while the ball is in pass status;
3. a backward pass by A or a fumble by A or an illegal kick by A that occurs in or behind the neutral zone prior to any change of possession. A loose ball play can end while the play is still in progress.

**RUNNING PLAY:** Any action that begins with a legal snap and does not involve any of the action described in a Loose Ball Play OR any action that begins while the ball is still live and follows a loose ball play. Please note that it is clearly possible to have both one loose ball play plus a running play(s) that all occur during the same down. If this occurs, the loose ball play MUST precede the running play. It is NOT possible to have a running play followed by a loose ball play during the same down.

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Every foul that occurs during a game has a BASIC SPOT associated with that foul that is used to determine the spot from where the penalty will actually be enforced. Please note that the basic spot associated with a foul and the spot where the penalty is enforced may NOT be the same. It is critical to know the difference. When the foul occurred, where the foul occurred, what was happening when the foul occurred, and the actual foul that occurred are all critical factors that determine the enforcement spot.

**POSSIBLE ENFORCEMENT SPOTS:** 1. Previous spot (the spot where the previous play began); 2. Spot of the actual foul (the yard line where the foul occurred); 3. Succeeding spot (the spot where the next play is to begin); 4. Spot where the related run ends (the yard line where the ball becomes dead in player possession or where the runner loses player possession); 5. PSK spot (the yard line where the legal kick ends) The 20 yard line could be the PSK spot if the result of the kick is a touchback.

There are several fouls that can occur prior to the ball becoming live and we must blow the whistle to prevent the play from starting. These dead ball fouls include: 1. False Start; 2. Illegal snap; 3. Delay of game; 4. Encroachment; 5. Free Kick infraction; 6. Illegal substitution. Each of these penalties would be enforced from the succeeding spot (where the play was about to begin).

There are several fouls that become fouls at the moment that the ball is legally snapped. This is the case because the problem can be avoided or fixed prior to the snap. These include: 1. Illegal formation; 2. Illegal numbering; 3. Illegal motion; 4. Illegal shift; 5. Illegal substitution; 6. Illegal Participation. Each of these penalties would be enforced from the previous spot (where the play began). Please note that the ball does remain live in these live ball foul situations.

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**ALL-BUT-ONE PENALTY ENFORCEMENT:** Many but not all fouls that occur during a loose ball play or during a running play are penalized according to the all-but-one principle. It is critical to know that there are exceptions to this principle. The basic spot that is used to determine the enforcement spot for a foul that occurs during a loose ball play is the previous spot. This penalty is enforced from the previous spot if and when the defense commits the foul behind or beyond the previous spot or the offense commits the foul beyond the previous spot. If the offense commits the foul behind the previous spot, the penalty is then enforced from the actual spot of the foul. The basic spot that is used to determine the enforcement spot for a foul that occurs during a running play is the end of the related run. This penalty is enforced from the end of the related run if and when the defense commits the foul behind or beyond the end of the related run or the offense commits the foul beyond the end of the related run. If the offense commits the foul behind the end of the related run, the penalty is then enforced from the actual spot of the foul.

**POST-SCRIMMAGE KICK ENFORCEMENT:** This enforcement procedure applies if and only if the following occur: 1. A foul by Team R occurs beyond the expanded neutral zone; 2. This Team R foul occurs during the time period beginning with a legal snap and until the kick ends; 3. The down included a legal scrimmage kick (except for a kick try or a successful field goal) that crossed the expanded neutral zone and Team R was in possession of the ball at the end of the down. This penalty is then enforced from the end of the kick if Team R's foul occurred beyond the end of the kick and this penalty is enforced from the actual spot of the foul if it occurred behind the end of the kick. Remember that the end of the kick is the 20 yard line when the result of the kick is a touchback. Team R will retain possession of the ball.

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**CRITICAL STATEMENTS CONCERNING FOULS AND PENALTY ENFORCEMENT:**

- > Any non-player foul or any unsportsmanlike foul is always enforced the same as any dead-ball foul from the succeeding spot regardless of when the foul actually occurred.
- > A dead-ball foul and a live-ball foul do NOT offset each other but dead-ball fouls by each team can now offset each other. Any penalty may be declined. The offended team always has the option to accept the result of the play.
- > Multiple fouls are two or more live-ball fouls committed by the same team during the same live-ball action and their opponent may only accept one foul to be enforced.
- > Double fouls are live-ball fouls committed by both teams that may very well offset, but that is not automatic as there are some exceptions.
- > Dead-ball fouls that occur simultaneously by opponents or the order of the fouls cannot be determined are to be disregarded and they cancel each other out.

> Remember to enforce all penalties BEFORE the chain is set. If all penalties are enforced AND the chain is then set AND the next ready-for-play whistle is sounded, it would then be possible for a subsequent dead-ball foul at that point to create a down and distance of more than 1st and 10 or less than 1st and 10.

> The only fouls in our Federation Rule Book at this time that call for an Automatic First Down are Roughing the Passer, Roughing the Kicker or Holder of a Scrimmage Kick, or Roughing the Snapper if and only if the offense is in a scrimmage-kick formation at the snap.

> The only fouls in our Federation Rule Book at this time that call for a Loss of Down are an Illegal Forward Pass, an Illegal Forward Handoff, or the Illegal Touching of a Forward Pass.

> CLEAN HANDS EXCEPTION: If both teams foul during a down AND there is a change of possession during the down, the team that has possession of the ball at the end of the down may keep the football if and only if they did not foul prior to gaining final possession AND if and only if they decline their opponent's foul. Their opponent still has the option of accepting or declining the foul committed by the team in final possession. Otherwise the two fouls will offset and the down is replayed.

> PSK CLEAN HANDS EXCEPTION: If both teams foul during a scrimmage kick down and the foul by Team R involves PSK enforcement, R may keep the ball by declining Team K's foul. Team K still has the option to accept or decline Team R's foul. Otherwise the two fouls will offset and the down is replayed.

> ADDITIONAL FOULS WITH UNIQUE SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT RULES: You are encouraged to study Rule 10-5-1 very carefully for those fouls that have their own special enforcement rules that are unique to that foul only. They include: 1. A free kick out of bounds untouched by R; 2. Kick-catching interference; 3. A foul by the opponent of the scoring team during a successful try; 4. A foul by the opponent of the scoring team during a successful field goal; 5. Fouls that occur during or after a touchdown scoring play; 6. Roughing the passer; 7. Roughing the kicker or holder of a scrimmage kick; 8. Roughing the snapper if and when the offense is in a scrimmage kick formation at the snap. 9. New in 2018 – tack onto the end of the play fouls by team K during a free kick or scrimmage kick down (carefully note the EXCEPTION to rule 10-4-2)

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#### CRITICAL STATEMENTS THAT INVOLVE SCORING PLAYS:

> If the opponent fouls during a TOUCHDOWN scoring play, the team that scores may keep the 6 points AND have the penalty enforced on the try or the subsequent kickoff unless the foul occurred prior to a change of possession. This could include a dead-ball foul before the ready-for-play signal on the try. It must also be noted that the scoring team may have committed a foul that involves dead-ball enforcement and their opponent then has the same option to penalize them on the try or on the subsequent kickoff.

> If the opponent fouls during a successful FIELD GOAL, the scoring team may keep the 3 points AND have the penalty enforced at the succeeding spot OR they may take their 3 points off the board and have the penalty enforced from the basic spot with the down to be replayed.

> If the opponent fouls during a successful TRY, the scoring team may keep the point(s) and have the penalty enforced at the succeeding spot OR they may take their point(s) off the board and have the penalty enforced from the basic spot with the try to be replayed.

David Gore  
Author

**OSSAA Football page  
Live Ball/Dead Ball,  
Running Game &  
Forward Progress**

# SCRIMMAGE REQUIREMENTS

## Live Ball/Dead Ball, Running Game, & Forward Progress

### THE BASICS THAT YOU MUST KNOW!!!

#### Prior to the snap:

- Must have the “ready for play” that establishes the neutral zone.
- Each of the 11 offensive players must momentarily be between the numbers (9-yd marks) at some point after the “ready” and prior to the snap.
- After the snapper touches the ball, no one shall be in the neutral zone except entering/leaving subs/replaced players for either team.
- All 11 offensive players must be set as a unit for a full count before the snap or before legal motion begins plus no false start by any offensive player.
- Ball remains dead (blow the whistle) for false start, encroachment, illegal snap, illegal substitution issues by either team, no ready for play whistle, or defensive team disconcerting acts or words.

#### At the snap:

- Legal snap plus a legal formation by the offense [at least 7 on their line with correct numbers (scrimmage kick formation exceptions) and no one in “no-man’s-land” except probably the QB].
- Any legal motion must have started AFTER the offense is set for a full count and is parallel to the line or backward at the snap.
- All 11 defensive players must be behind their line.

#### A live ball becomes dead right now when:

- Ball/ball carrier goes out-of-bounds or forward progress is stopped.
- A score, a touchback, or simultaneous possession occurs.
- A legal kick breaks the plane of R’s goal or scores a field goal.
- A legal scrimmage kick is caught or recovered by K anywhere beyond the neutral zone or a legal free kick is caught or recovered by K anywhere.
- R catches or recovers any legal kick after a valid or invalid signal by any R player.

- Any forward pass (legal or illegal) hits the ground or goes out of bounds.
- B gains possession during a try or during OT or when any kick try fails.
- The ball carrier's helmet comes completely off.

### Running Game:

- A player becomes a runner when he has gained possession of a live ball by receiving the snap or a handoff, by catching a pass or kick, by recovering a fumble or backward pass, or by intercepting a pass or fumble.
- A handoff can be forward before any change of team possession and must be behind the line of scrimmage or a handoff can be backward at any time the ball is live and in possession of any player. (NO flag for a muffed handoff which is a fumble.)
- A player cannot fumble unless he has possession of a live ball.
- An unsuccessful attempt to gain possession is a muff.
- The catch, interception, or recovery of any fumble or backward pass in the field of play remains a live ball and may be advanced by any player.

### Forward Progress:

- A player must receive every inch of forward progress that is earned toward his opponent's goal while the ball is live and in his possession.
- Forward progress is the location of the football when the ball is in player possession and becomes dead by rule. Yes, forward progress does exist when the ball is loose.
- If their request is prior to the "ready-for-play" , allow A or K to designate the spot of the ball between the hash marks for the following: the try or the kickoff, the play following a safety or touchback, or the play following a fair catch or awarded fair catch. Do not allow them to change this spot of the ball after the "ready" by taking a timeout.

# THE PASSING GAME

## BASIC INFORMATION:

- A pass is an intentional act of throwing the football no matter how you release the ball.
- A catch includes possession in flight plus your first contact with the ground inbounds. Maintaining possession when you return to the ground or fall is required.
- A simultaneous catch involves opponents that are both inbounds, and belongs to the passing team, and becomes a dead ball.
- Normal line play (blocking) can include an expanded neutral zone.
- The initial direction determines a forward / backward pass including the direction of the passer's arm when it is hit during the release.
- Only 1 forward pass by A is allowed during a scrimmage down.
- A legal or illegal forward pass is complete if caught by any player and the ball remains alive OR it is incomplete and becomes dead if not caught.
- A forward pass crosses the neutral zone when the entire ball is beyond the zone regardless of where the pass may have been first touched.
- Any eligible receiver (A or B) may bat a forward pass.
- The passer is protected if he has thrown a legal, forward pass.
- Roughing the passer includes a 15 yard penalty that is tacked on to the dead ball spot if it is beyond the neutral zone and there was no change of possession. Otherwise, penalize from the previous spot AND it does include an automatic first down.

## ILLEGAL FORWARD PASSES:

- Thrown from beyond the neutral zone.
- Thrown following a change of possession.
- A second forward pass by A during the down.
- Intentional grounding (to save time or to save yardage or there is no eligible receiver) and please note that there is no "outside the tackle box" rule in grades 6-12.
- A spike to conserve time if it is not released immediately following a direct hand-to-hand snap OR it is released following a muffed snap that has touched the ground.
- Any incomplete illegal pass belongs to the passing team at the spot of the pass.
- 5 yard penalty from the spot of the pass plus a loss of down in most cases.

## ELIGIBILITY RULES:

- Only applies to a legal, forward pass.
- All team B players are eligible.

- Team A players must be eligible both by their number AND by their position at the snap.
- All team A players become eligible if and when B touches the pass.
- If eligible at the snap, a receiver remains eligible throughout the down although illegal participation may become an issue.
- Ineligibles may go beyond the neutral zone once the forward pass that goes beyond the zone is released OR at anytime if the forward pass does not cross the neutral zone.

### ILLEGAL TOUCHING:

- Can be behind, in, or beyond the neutral zone.
- An ineligible catches, bats, or muffs a pass (intentional act) before it is touched by B.
- 5 yd penalty plus a loss of down (all-but-one principle).

### PASS INTERFERENCE RULES:

- These rules only apply beyond the neutral zone AND only apply on a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone.
- Contact is NOW required - face guarding is no longer a pass interference foul.
- A and B have equal rights to the ball.
- Catchability is NOT a factor in our Federation rule book for grades 6 – 12.
- “Interfering with an eligible opponent’s opportunity to move toward, catch, or bat the ball.”
- Offensive interference can happen from the time of the snap (until B touches the pass) and is a 15 yd penalty. It is no longer a loss of down.
- Defensive interference can happen from the time of the release of the forward pass (until the pass is touched) and is a 15 yd penalty. It is no longer an automatic first down. DPI CANNOT happen away from the direction of the pass.

### BACKWARD PASSES:

- Any player in possession of a live ball at any time may throw a backward pass.
- 22 players are eligible to touch/catch a backward pass and the ball remains alive even if it touches the ground in bounds.
- The passing team may NOT bat it forward.
- The opponents may bat it in any direction.
- NO ONE may bat a backward pass after it has touched the ground.
- Any legal snap is a backward pass unless it is a successful hand-to-hand snap.

MOMENTUM EXCEPTION: ALWAYS be alert for an interception or recovery of a pass by the opponents that occurs inside the opponent's own 5 yard line!!!

# THE KICKING GAME

**LEGAL KICK:** A punt, a drop kick, or a place kick – the term legal involves when and where and how the kick is executed.

**FREE KICKS:** (A free kick down does not involve a snap.)

- Kickoff – Usually from K's 40 and there is a 10 yd. neutral zone. You cannot use a punt for a kickoff. (Ask about the tee.)
- Following a safety – Usually from K's 20 and has a 10 yd. neutral zone. You can use a punt or a place kick or a drop kick. (Yes, you can on-side kick following a safety.)
- K may recover (but NOT advance) a free kick if R has touched it OR if the kick has touched the ground AND broken the plane of R's free kick line (in either order).
- Protect the kicker – No one may block the kicker until the ball touches the ground or it touches R OR the kicker advances 5 yards beyond his kick line. (15 yd penalty for an illegal block enforced from the previous spot and a re-kick).
- Free kick out of bounds – DID R EVER TOUCH THE KICK??? Must know this!!!
  - 4 options:
    - 5 yard penalty and re-kick.
    - R's ball 25 yards from K.O. spot (at the hash mark).
    - Refuse the penalty and take the result of the play.
    - 5 yard penalty from the dead ball spot (succeeding spot)
- PSK does not exist on free kicks so all penalties during the kick are from the previous spot except for kick-catching interference (15 yard penalty and re-kick or an awarded fair catch following a 15 yard penalty from the spot of the foul) – New 2018 change allows for a foul during the kick by K can be enforced from the dead ball spot (succeeding spot) if K will not put the ball in play next. (tacked onto the end of the play)
- Fair catch is possible (Very SLOW, deliberate whistle on fair catches).
- TOUCHBACK IF THE BALL IN KICK STATUS BREAKS R's GOALINE PLANE!!!
- R may advance any free kick in the field of play unless a valid or invalid signal has been given by any R player but DO NOT let K advance any free kick !!!
- At least 10 K players must be less than 5 yards from their free kick line at the 'ready' AND at least 4 K players must be on each side of the football at the time of the kick.

**SCRIMMAGE KICKS:** (The down must start with a legal snap.)

- Legal kick by K in or behind the neutral zone during a scrimmage down.
- Illegal kick – incorrect method or incorrect location of the kick and the ball retains the same status as it was prior to the kick. (15 yard penalty from the spot of the kick.)

- Protect the snapper on any down that a scrimmage kick formation is used.
- R may advance any scrimmage kick in the field of play unless a valid or invalid signal has been given by any R player.
- Any scrimmage kick that goes out of bounds in kick status always belongs to R.
- A scrimmage kick possessed BEHIND the neutral zone can be advanced by all 22 players, or K can still throw a forward pass or K can even kick the ball again.
- A scrimmage kick possessed BEYOND the neutral zone can be advanced by R only. (K can gain possession if R has touched the kick but K cannot advance.)
- An unsuccessful field goal is treated exactly the same as a punt in terms of the scrimmage kick rules.
- FOULS by K enforced from the previous spot except for kick-catching interference. (Options for kick-catching interference are a 15 yd penalty and replay the down or an awarded fair catch 15 yards from the spot of the foul or decline the penalty.) – New 2018 change allows for a foul during the kick by K can be enforced from the dead ball spot (succeeding spot) if K will not put the ball in play next (tacked onto the end of the play).
- FOULS by R from the previous spot UNLESS they are POST SCRIMMAGE KICK enforcement fouls.
  - 1.) Foul by R occurs between the snap and the end of the kick AND occurs beyond the expanded neutral zone.
  - 2.) Kick must cross the expanded neutral zone.
  - 3.) The ball must belong to R at the end of the down.
  - 4.) PSK does not apply on a try or on a successful field goal.
- Protect the kicker/holder – Running into (5 yds) vs. Roughing (15 yds plus automatic 1st down)
- Fair catch (Valid or Invalid) – If any member of R signals, no member of R may advance. (Valid indicates “HOW” and “WHEN” the signal is given.)

### GENERAL RULES:

- R must be given an unhindered opportunity to catch the kick regardless of whether a fair catch is signaled or not.
- 1<sup>st</sup> touching – K touches a kick when they are not entitled to possess the kick.
- THE KICK ENDS and the play is over (blow your whistle and stop the clock) if:
  - 1.) The kick breaks the plane of R’s goal line.
  - 2.) Kick goes out of bounds. (It belongs to R.)
  - 3.) R gains possession following a fair catch signal.
  - 4.) K gains possession beyond the neutral zone on a scrimmage kick.
  - 5.) Kick dies with no one in possession.

▪ **6.) Simultaneous possession.**

**\*\*\* ALWAYS be alert for a fair catch signal and use a SLOW, DELIBERATE whistle !!!  
Remember that R loses his fair catch protection if he muffs the kick.**

**\*\*\* You must also be alert for the momentum exception that could occur near R's goal line plane inside the 5 yard line.**

