



COMMENTS ON THE 2013 FOOTBALL RULES CHANGES

SOLID-COLORED TOWELS NOW LEGAL (1-5-3a(5)a): The committee modified the rule regarding the authorized wearing of a moisture-absorbing towel. Towels that are one solid color may now be worn, as long as they are not the color of the football or penalty flag. The towel cannot have no more than one visible manufacturer's logo/trademark, which cannot exceed 2 ¼ square inches in any dimension. Towels worn by teammates must be the same color. Previously, the towel could only be white and unmarked.

USE OF COMMUNICATION DEVICES EXPANDED (1-6): The committee has expanded use of communication devices to allow, coaches, players and nonplayers to use any form of available communication technology during authorized conferences outside the 9-yard marks (7-yard marks in nine-, eight- and six-player competition), on the sidelines and during the halftime intermission period. Use of communication devices by players except during conferences outside the 9-yard marks continues to be prohibited.

DEFINITION OF A CATCH CLARIFIED (2-4-1): The committee clarified the definition of a catch. An airborne player who has forward progress stopped inbounds and is carried out of bounds by an opponent before contacting the ground is awarded a catch at the spot of forward progress.

LOSS OF HELMET AFTER THE DOWN (3-5-10d): The committee clarified that if the helmet comes completely off during subsequent dead-ball action related to the down, and is not directly attributable to a foul by the opponent, the player must leave the game for at least one down (unless half-time or overtime intermission occurs). An official's time-out shall be called.

KICK-CATCHING INTERFERENCE (6-5-6 PENALTY; 2-9-2; 5-2-1; 5-2-2; 6-5-4; 10-4-2b): The committee added a 15-yard penalty to the existing option of accepting an awarded fair catch for kick-catch interference. The option to try a scoring free kick after an awarded fair catch remains.

PASS INTERFERENCE PENALTIES REVISED (7-5-10 PENALTY; Table 7-5): This rule change removes the automatic first down for defensive pass interference and the loss of down for offensive pass interference. The 15-yard penalty provision remains for both fouls.

CLARIFICATION ON SCORE ON A TRY (8-3-3): The committee clarified that the touchdown scoring team is the only team that can score on a try.

BLOCKING ON FREE KICKS REVISED (9-3-8c NEW): A new provision added to the existing rule stipulates the kicking team may initiate contact once the receiving team has initiated a block within the neutral zone.

INITIATING CONTACT WITH A HELMET-LESS OPPONENT (9-4-3i NEW): In the interest of minimizing risk, the committee added a new illegal personal contact foul. This foul is charged to any player who initiates contact with an opposing player whose helmet has come completely off.

ILLEGAL PARTICIPATION FOR PLAYERS CONTINUING TO PLAY WITHOUT A HELMET (9-6-4g NEW): Continuing with focus on risk minimization, the committee determined that a helmet-less player shall not block, tackle or otherwise participate beyond the immediate action in which the player is engaged when the helmet came completely off. The penalty would be a live-ball, basic-spot foul.