

Football: Volume I, Bulletin 1
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Postseason Tournament Consideration... *even if you're in a 6 or 7-person crew*

Because we utilize 5-person crews for the first three rounds of the football postseason, those Field Judges and Side Judges in 6 and 7-person crews are in a difficult “position” when it comes to tournament consideration. Our goal is to provide as many postseason tournament opportunities as possible for our eligible officials, and so we are opening up opportunities for officials in those positions to make themselves available for alternate positions as individuals for tournament consideration in the Pre-District, District, and Regional levels.

There are some limitations: As noted above, these will be individual opportunities when a full 5-person crew cannot fill a game. The second constraint is that these eligible Field and Side Judges can only fill for the positions of **Back Judge, Head Linesman, or Line Judge**. If you would like to be considered for these early rounds of playoff games, go to <https://www.mhsaa.com/My-MHSAA/Official-Services/Football-Position> and enter one of the three authorized (in **bold** above) positions you feel the most comfortable and prepared to officiate based on your experience. All other postseason tournament consideration requirements must also be met.

When to Tack-On

There has been some confusion regarding the new Tack-On exception for penalty enforcement during kicks. We hope to clear some of this up with these explanations. NFHS Rule 10-4-2 EXCEPTION reads “The basic spot may, at the option of the offended team, be the succeeding spot for fouls by K during a free or scrimmage kick down (other than kick catch interference) when K will not be next to put the ball in play.”

Let’s first start with an interpretation. The word “down” in the exception has been struck so that this only includes fouls by K during the kick (including foul at the snap). It would not, for instance, include penalties by K that occurred following multiple turnovers in the play, but still resulting in R having final possession. This would be regular penalty enforcement.

The second area of confusion in this rule seems to be with free kicks (untouched by R) out-of-bounds. Part of this is a result with the addition of a fourth option by R for penalty enforcement. Along with the three previous options, R may also choose to accept the ball five yards from the succeeding spot – that is, the inbounds spot. There is no tack-on because this would be double-penalizing team K for one foul. The tack-on provision isn’t a tack-on of an additional penalty; it just allows the foul that occurs to be penalized without having to re-kick.

Finally, we want to add a point of clarification for the 2018-19 season. The tack-on exception only applies when “K is not the next to put the ball in play.” This **WILL** apply for scrimmage kicks in overtime as well. A couple of points: (1) This does not apply to regulation-to-overtime since those special enforcements are for fouls on R (8-3-5 and 8-4-3). (2) It is possible for a fouling team to determine whether the penalty will be enforced if they are the team that selects which will start on offense for an OT beyond the first OT. We understand there are some concerns with these issues, but we will be watching closely during the season to see how this enforcement affects play, and will use that information to work the NFHS in consideration of enforcement for future seasons.

UNS vs. Personal Foul

We have noticed a large number of enforcements of Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalties when it should be a personal foul for Illegal Personal Contact. Remember: UNS fouls are non-contact fouls (9-5). While fighting may certainly be unsportsmanlike, it is enforced as a personal foul.

Uniform Considerations

Reminder: Uniform jerseys must extend to at least the top of the uniform pants. An undershirt tucked into the pants or that extends to the top of the pants does not satisfy this requirement. It must be the jersey.