



# 2003 FOOTBALL RULES EXAMINATION – PART I

**Instructions:** Only the **answer sheet** of this examination will be sent to the grader. **You retain the questions for further study.** Since correction is by machine scanning or perforated key, you must use care in clearly marking correct spaces on the answer sheet according to directions. **Every part** of each question is to be answered. Indicate whether you believe a part is true or false by marking the appropriate blank on the answer sheet.

**NOTE:** Send answer sheet to your state association office unless otherwise instructed.

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**NOTE:** In the exam situations, **A**--refers to the **offensive team** and **B**--refers to their opponents the **defensive team**. **K**--refers to the **kicking team** and **R**--refers to the **receiving team**. A1, B1, K1 and R1 are players of these teams. If team possession changes during the down, each team retains its identity. In kicking situations, it is not during a try and no fair-catch signal has been given unless specified. Unless stated, acts occur while: the ball is inbounds; a forward pass is legal; any out-of-bounds is between the goal lines. Line means scrimmage line. Reference to a foul is to a player foul which is not unsportsmanlike. There is no foul or change of possession, unless it is mentioned, and penalties are considered accepted for enforcement.

## A. Rules Changes or Emphasis for 2003

1. A chop block is a legal block within the 6-by-8 yard free-blocking zone.
2. A1 and B1 may legally block in the back while the ball is in the free-blocking zone and both players were on their line of scrimmage at the snap.
3. Should B foul during a successful try, A may accept the penalty and replay the down after penalty enforcement or accept the result of the play and enforce the penalty from the succeeding spot.
4. If during a touchdown a foul occurs by the opponent, the scoring team must decline the penalty in order to keep the score.

## B. Rules Changes or Emphasis for 2003

5. In order to utilize the post-scrimmage kick enforcement procedure, a foul by R must occur on K's side of the line of scrimmage.
6. Post-scrimmage kick enforcement procedure applies to all kicking situations.
7. If R fouls during a successful goal, K may accept the penalty and replay the down following enforcement of the penalty or accept the results of the play and enforce the penalty from the succeeding spot.
8. The kicking tee may not elevate the ball more than 2 inches above the ground.

## C. Authorized Conferences

9. If one coach goes to the huddle for 30 seconds, another coach may then confer for the time remaining as long as only one coach is in the huddle at any given time.
10. The length of an official-coach conference is strictly limited to two minutes.
11. A coach-referee conference may result in a penalty for delay of game.
12. It is an unauthorized conference if a player(s) goes near the sideline between downs to communicate with coaches.

## D. Batting

13. A backward pass in flight may be batted in any direction by either team.
14. It is legal for R1 to bat a scrimmage kick in or behind the expanded zone in an effort to block it to keep it from going into R's end zone.
15. If K1 bats a grounded scrimmage kick, which is beyond the neutral zone toward K's end zone, in an effort to keep it from rolling into R's end zone, it is a foul for batting.
16. Any pass in flight may be batted in any direction by an eligible receiver, unless it is a backward pass batted forward by the passing team.

## E. Blocking

17. A block in the back is defined as a block with contact inside the shoulders, below the helmet and above the waist.
18. When a defensive player uses a hand or arm, the hand must be in advance of the elbow at the time of contact.
19. Any player in the free-blocking zone, at the time of the snap, may block below the waist.
20. In closed-hand blocking, the blocker's elbows must be entirely inside his shoulders.



#### **F. Dead Ball**

21. The ball becomes dead if place-kick holder K1 fumbles the snap and recovers with his knees off the ground and then touches his knee(s) to the ground while in possession of the ball.
22. A ball becomes live when the ball has been legally snapped or free kicked and a down is in progress.
23. If a field-goal attempt touches R1 in the end zone and then caroms through the goal, the ball becomes dead when touched and no points are scored.
24. If the try is by kick, the ball becomes dead when it is obvious the drop-kick or place-kick has failed.

#### **G. Definitions**

25. A down is action, which starts with a legal snap or a free kick and ends when the ball next becomes dead.
26. A multiple foul involves a live-ball foul by each team and each team may decline the penalty.
27. A defensive player is considered to be on his scrimmage line when he is within 1 yard of his line of scrimmage at the snap.
28. A down begins when the ball is marked ready-for-play.

#### **H. Downs-New Series**

29. Roughing the kicker is a foul which results in a 15-yard penalty plus a first down.
30. The down is ended when the runner allows any part of his person, other than hand or foot, to touch the ground.
31. Award a new series to R if K's punt goes out of bounds behind the neutral zone.
32. Award a new series to K if K1's punt is touched beyond the neutral zone by R1 and is recovered by K2 behind the neutral zone.

#### **I. Equipment: Game-Field**

33. Relative to ball choice, when there has been no change of possession, the try is not considered to be part of the previous series in which the touchdown was scored.
34. The pylon, when properly placed on the goal line, is out of bounds at the intersection of the sideline and goal line extended.
35. If the field is wet, the referee may allow use of a mat or towel on the ground to improve the kicker's footing on a place-kick.
36. It is permissible to use college or professional fields with inbound lines marked at the distance specified by their respective codes.

#### **J. Equipment: Player**

37. The umpire has authority to declare equipment illegal if he determines it is inappropriate equipment.
38. Gloves, without the (NF/NCAA specifications) label or stamp, may be worn if made of unaltered plain cloth.
39. Equipment which becomes illegal through game use is handled by rule procedure without penalizing the player or the head coach.
40. If a player's eye shield does not permit visual examination of his eyes, it is illegal equipment.

#### **K. Equipment: Player**

41. Removable shoe cleats shall not exceed one-half inch in length.
42. A knee brace that has metal across the front of the knee may be approved if properly padded.
43. An official's time-out shall be declared to permit prompt repair of equipment that becomes illegal or defective during use.
44. The sleeves on the jersey must fully cover the required shoulder pads and any hard surface auxiliary attachments.

#### **L. Force**

45. Initial force may result from any carry, fumble, kick, pass or snap.
46. On kicks going into K's end zone, force is not a factor.
47. Force is a concern only near the goal line and with ball movement either toward or away from the goal line.
48. A new force may be given to a grounded forward pass.

#### **M. Fouls**

49. An illegal shift is a foul at the snap.
50. If a substitute enters the huddle and the replaced player does not leave the field immediately, it is a dead-ball illegal participation foul.
51. Displacing the punter or kick holder is always a 15-yard penalty and automatic first down.
52. A disqualified player shall be removed even if the penalty for the foul is declined.

#### **N. Fouls**

53. If B1 clips A1 and B2 piles on after A2 is tackled, it is a multiple foul.
54. The restrictions on players being in the team box extend from the 35-yard line to the 35-yard line.
55. Butt blocking is illegal in the open field, but it is permitted only in close line play.
56. An illegal shift is a dead-ball foul.



#### **O. Fundamentals - Fundamental Statements**

57. A forward-pass interference foul can occur only beyond the neutral zone.
58. A handed ball beyond the neutral zone is considered to be a pass.
59. The distance penalty for any foul may be declined.
60. No kick may legally be batted, unless it is an attempt to block the kick in or behind the neutral zone or if a grounded scrimmage kick, which is beyond the neutral zone, is batted by K toward his own goal line.

#### **P. Illegal Participation**

61. During the down, it is illegal participation if any player intentionally goes out of bounds and does not return inbounds.
62. If A1 accidentally goes out of bounds and returns during the down, it is illegal participation; and a foul during the down and the "all-but-one" enforcement principle is used.
63. If a player is blocked out of bounds by an opponent, he may at the first opportunity come back inbounds and legally participate.
64. If R1 accidentally goes out of bounds during a scrimmage kick and then returns and catches the punt, it is a foul for illegal participation.

#### **Q. Illegal Position**

65. Any player of A numbered 1-49 or 8-99 who is an interior lineman at the snap is not an eligible pass receiver.
66. A defensive player is considered on the line of scrimmage when he is within 2 yards of the line of scrimmage at the snap.
67. A Team A offensive player is a back if his head breaks the plane of an imaginary line drawn parallel to the line of scrimmage through the waistline of the nearest teammate who is legally on his line.
68. One of the requirements for an offensive player being on his line of scrimmage is that he must face B's goal line.

#### **R. Passing**

69. A pass thrown backward out of bounds to stop the clock is an illegal pass.
70. A forward pass caught beyond the neutral zone by A1, number 76, is illegal and the ball becomes dead when caught.
71. It is pass interference if ineligible A1 catches a forward pass in or behind the neutral zone.
72. Touching of a forward pass by B1 causes pass interference restrictions to end and all A players to become eligible.

#### **S. Penalty Enforcement**

73. The basic spot of enforcement for a foul during a loose-ball play is the previous spot.
74. If B fouls during a successful field goal by A, the penalty is automatically declined.
75. No Team A penalty causes loss of down.
76. If B1 charges directly into snapper A1 on a run from scrimmage, the foul carries a penalty of 15 yards and an automatic first down.

#### **T. Possession**

77. After K1's punt has crossed the neutral zone, it is still in K's possession.
78. A third-down backward pass, which is simultaneously possessed by opponents, belongs to the defensive team.
79. A player loses possession by either a fumble or a muff.
80. If a free kick becomes dead inbounds between the goal lines while no player is in possession or inbounds anywhere while opponents are in joint possession, the free-kick down is replayed.

#### **U. Safety**

81. If A1 is in his own end zone when he intentionally grounds a forward pass, it is a safety even if B declines the penalty.
82. The batting of a pass, kick or fumble in flight is not considered a new force for judging whether a touchback or safety results.
83. It is a safety if A1 retreats into A's end zone and fumbles the ball beyond the end line.
84. It is a safety if B1 forces A1's fumble into B's end zone and A2 recovers there.

#### **V. Scrimmage Kicks**

85. It is roughing the kicker if, after R1 touches the kick, he intentionally charges into kicker K1.
86. K1 may advance a scrimmage kick after it has been muffed by R and recovered by K1 beyond the neutral zone.
87. If a kick becomes dead in R's end zone, it is always a touchback.
88. Any member of the kicking team may recover a scrimmage kick beyond the neutral zone and advance.

#### **W. Snap**

89. The snapper may lift the ball for lateral rotation but may not rotate the ball end-for-end or change the location of the ball.
90. A snap is the legal act of passing or handing the ball backward from its position on the ground.
91. The snapper may have his free hand on the ground in advance of the ball.
92. An illegal snap causes the ball to remain dead.



**X. Time-outs**

93. Charged team time-outs shall be reduced in length if both teams are ready to play before the ready-for-play signal.
94. Regular time-out privileges are permitted during a television/radio time-out.
95. An official's time-out can be called for unusual heat or humidity situations.
96. After a team has used its three charged time-outs in a half, a time-out request for a designated injured player must be denied.

**Y. Timing**

97. If K1 commits kick-catching interference and R chooses an awarded fair catch, the clock will be started with the snap or when the free kick is touched, other than first touching by K.
98. During a down, time expires for a period and a signal is sounded, the officials shall ignore the signal.
99. A clock stopped during a period for an official's time-out will start with the ready-for-play signal unless a free kick follows.
100. The clock will start with the snap on a scrimmage down following a fair catch.

