

MHSAA OFFICIALS BULLETIN



Postseason Format

This year has been different, that's for sure. The MHSAA 8- and 11-player football postseasons will see some changes as well. Each will have an additional round added to the start of the tournament that will allow all teams to make the 11-player tournament, and nearly all teams make the 8-player tournament. Because of the extensive number of officials that will be needed for these First Round games, each will be assigned by host schools. Additionally, officials will only need to be registered to work these games— traditional postseason requirements will not be mandated at this level. The MHSAA will continue to assign all other rounds of the postseason, so keep your eyes open from schools, assigners and the MHSAA for invitations to work this year's tournament.

Postseason Requirements

Only MHSAA-approved mechanics are permitted for the 2020 postseason football tournaments. 5-person crew mechanics will be used for the entire 8-player tournament, and from the District First Round through the Regionals in 11-player. 7-person crew mechanics will be used for the 11-player Semifinals and Finals. Both of these mechanics can be found in the updated [MHSAA Football Officials Manual](#). Make sure to review the entire manual, but especially the changes for 2020.

It's also important that any officials intending on working the 2020 football postseason become familiar with the No-Touch Ball-Handling Mechanics. Details can be found in the [COVID-19 Football Working Guidelines](#). These are mandatory for tournament contests.

Casts and Braces

The MHSAA permits padded casts to be worn as long as the athlete receives written authorization from an approved medical professional. There has been some recent confusion as to who must have access to this written authorization. All that is needed is for the

school to have the authorization on file and for the head coach to attest that the players are all properly and legally equipped. **Under no circumstances are game officials to request to see or keep the actual authorization document.**

Sideline Restricted Areas

The entire 6' of the restricted areas belong to the sideline officials when the ball is live. Warn early, then enforce the rule. There's no need to search for sideline infractions, but when they're in front of you, call them. A simple sideline warning (or even 5- or 15-yard penalty for successive incidents) may prevent a more serious situation of running into sideline personnel.

Untimed Downs

An untimed down *must* be replayed when *any* penalty for a foul is accepted on a down when time expires in a period. The two exceptions are when the penalty includes a loss of down, or when the resulting enforcement spot will be on a free kick or during overtime. This includes fouls by either the offense or defense. For instance:

2nd and Goal at the B-3 with five seconds remaining in the first half. A25 runs up the middle for a touchdown as time expires. During the play, A65 is called for holding. The defense, naturally, will accept the penalty to negate the score. This enforcement, however, also comes with a replay of the down...untimed. The defense does not have the choice to just go to halftime.

If it was the defense that was called for holding, this penalty could be enforced on the try or on the second half kickoff, but it would *not* be replayed with an untimed down.

Personal Fouls vs. UNS

We've observed way too many instances of shoves or other contact fouls being called UNS. Remember, unsportsmanlike fouls can only occur with non-contact fouls. If there's contact, it's not UNS.

Rules Review: As Team K kicks off following a score, they have three players on the right of the kicker and seven on his left. R20 fields the kick and flight and then returns the ball back for a touchdown. Ruling?

Ruling: The touchdown will not count. The ball should be ruled dead the moment the ball is kicked without four players on the right side of the kicker. Team R may accept the 5-yard distance penalty and the ball will be re-kicked.