

2018 NCAA Football Rules Changes

NEW RULE 1:

Rule 1-2-1-f, 1-2-1-h

The Field – Decorative Markings/Advertising:

f. Only these contrasting decorative markings are allowed: conference logo, college or university name and logo, and team name and logo. These are permissible within the sidelines and between the goal lines, under these conditions (See Appendix C):

1. The entirety of all yard lines, goal lines, and sidelines must be clearly visible. No portion of any such line may be obscured by decorative markings.

2. No such markings may touch or enclose the hash marks.

3. A single decorative marking centered on the 50 yard line, and a maximum of four (4) smaller flanking decorative markings are allowed.

g. Goal lines may be of one contrasting color from the white lines.

h. Advertising is prohibited on the field except as follows:

1. For postseason and neutral-site games the title sponsor whose name is associated with the name of that game may advertise on the field, with the restriction that there be a maximum of three such advertisements: a single advertisement centered on the 50-yard line and no more than two smaller flanking advertisements. These advertisements must adhere to paragraph f above. No other advertisements, either by the title sponsor or by any other commercial entity, may be on the field.

2. The NCAA Football logo is permitted.

3. If a commercial entity has purchased naming rights to the facility, that entity's name **or commercial logo** may be painted on the field **in no more than two of the flanking locations and will count in the total of the maximum of four (4) flanking locations allowed.**

Rationale: These changes specify the total number and type of decorative markings that will be allowed on the field. Namely, the rule allows one center decorative marking and no more than four smaller flanking logos. In addition, now a corporate entity that has purchased naming rights to the facility may have their name or commercial logo on the field in two of the four allowed flanking locations.

No UIL exception, rule is applied as written.

NEW RULE 2:

Rule 1-4-5-a-2

Jersey Design, Color and Numerals

ARTICLE 5. a. Design.

2. Other than the player's number, the jersey may only contain:

Player's name;

School name;

Mascot name;

NCAA logo;

Sleeve stripes;

Logo for school, conference, mascot, postseason-game, memorial, the military;

Graduate or Academic Recognition as part of an institutional or conference logo;

The letter "C" to identify a Team Captain;

American flag;

State flag;

Permissive for the 2019 season only: College Football 150th Anniversary Mark.

Rationale: This rule allows the addition of a graduate or academic recognition as a part of an institutional or conference logo. The letter "C" may be added to identify a Team captain, and permissive for the 2019 season, the College Football 150th Anniversary mark may be added.

EXCEPTION: 1-4-5-a-2. Delete all of item 2 and replace with the following:

2. Other than the player's number, the jersey may only contain:

Player's name, or, words that reflect positive values, such as "Honor", "Integrity", "Courage", etc., substituted for the player's name on the back of the jersey (by local district approval)

School name

Mascot name

UIL Logo

Sleeve stripes

Logo for school, conference, mascot, postseason-game, memorial, the military

Team slogan/acronym (by local district approval)

The letter "C" to identify a Team Captain

American flag

State flag

UIL exception applies. (UIL Exception #16)

NEW RULE 3:

Rule 1-4-11-c

Prohibited Field Equipment – Exceptions Concerning Officials

c. Media communication equipment, including cameras, sound devices, computers and microphones, is prohibited on or above the field, or in or above the team area (Rule 2-31-1). **Exceptions:**

1. Camera equipment attached to a goal support behind the uprights and crossbar.
2. Camera(s) embedded in any pylon.
3. A camera, with no audio component, may be attached to the cap of **any official** with prior approval of the **official, conference the UIL,** and the participating institutions.

Rationale: This change, with Conference and participating institutions approval, will allow media partners to put a camera with no audio component on other officials in addition to the Umpire. This should give the viewer better game action shots and additional camera angles that could help Instant Replay.

UIL exception applies. (UIL Exception #22)

NEW RULE 4:

Rule 3-2-4-c

Play Clock After Touchdowns/Kickoffs

c. 25-Second Clock. If the officials signal the game clock to be stopped for any of the following reasons, the referee shall signal (one open palm in an over-the-head pumping motion) that the clock should be set at 25 seconds:

1. Penalty administration.
2. Charged team timeout.
3. Media timeout.
4. Injury timeout for a player of the offensive team only. The play clock is set to 40 seconds for an injury to a player of the defensive team.
5. Measurement.
6. Team B is awarded a first down.
7. After a kick down **other than a free kick.**
8. Score, **other than a touchdown.**
9. Start of each period.
10. Start of a team's possession series in an extra period.
11. Instant replay review.
12. Other administrative stoppage.
13. An offensive team player's helmet comes completely off through play. The play clock is set to 40 seconds if the helmet comes completely off a player of the defensive team.

Rationale: These changes work in order to keep the game moving without making a rules change that would take plays out of the game. After a touchdown, the play clock will be set to 40 seconds in order to expedite the try. Following a kickoff, the play clock will be set to 40 seconds in order to restart play more quickly.

No UIL exception, rule is applied as written.

NEW RULE 5:

Rule 6-5-1

Kickoff – Fair Catch

ARTICLE 1. a. If a Team B player makes a fair catch, the ball becomes dead where caught and belongs to Team B at that spot. **(Exception: If a Free Kick is caught behind Team B's 25-yard line, Team B will next snap the ball at its own 25-yard line. The next snap shall be from midway between the hash marks, unless a different position on or between the hash marks is selected by the team designated to put the ball in play before the play clock is at 25 seconds or before any subsequent ready-for-play signal. After the play clock is at 25 seconds or any subsequent ready-for-play signal, the ball may be relocated only after a charged team timeout, unless preceded by a Team A foul or offsetting fouls.)**

Rationale: Recent rules changes have resulted in more touchbacks during kickoffs. This is significant due to the fact that there are fewer injuries on kickoffs resulting in touchbacks versus kickoffs that have a return. This change gives the receiving team an option to take a touchback on kicks that fall short of the end zone. Additionally, this single change on kickoffs will be measurable in its effectiveness in increasing touchbacks during the 2018 season.

No UIL exception, rule is applied as written.

NEW RULE 6:

Rule 8-3-2-a

Try Down/Opportunity to Score

a. The ball shall be put in play by the team that scored a six-point touchdown. If a touchdown is scored during a down in which time in the fourth period expires, the try shall not be attempted unless the point(s) would affect the outcome of the game **(Exception: If the scoring team is ahead by one or two points, they have the option to forego the try.)**

Rationale: This could avoid needless extra point attempts when teams score on the last play of the game and the extra point would not impact the outcome of the game. Currently, the scoring team that scores on the last timed down and wins the game by one or two points still must attempt the try. In this situation the offense would likely take a knee on the try to keep from risking a blocked kick or fumble that is returned by the defense for two points.

UIL accepts new proposal as written, but also continue to use the 2017 exception allowing the scoring team to elect to play the try down:

EXCEPTION: 8-3-2-a. Varsity district games using "positive points" tie breaking criteria will use the following exception:

Coaches in the game should inform the referee before the game (pre-game conference) that the game will be played using the UIL "positive points" exception. Failure to notify the referee prior to the coin toss does not negate specific DEC rules relating to "positive points". If notification is given to the referee, the tie game will be played with the following exception to rule 8-3-2-a:

If a touchdown is scored during a down in which time in the fourth period expires, the scoring team may elect to play the try down. If the team on defense refuses to play the try down, the Referee may award the number of points the team could have scored had the defense played the try down without the snap of the ball being required. UIL exception #41.

NEW RULE 7:

Rule 9-1-6

Blocking Below the Waist

ARTICLE 6. a. *Team A prior to a change of team possession:*

1. Linemen with initial position completely inside the tackle box may legally block below the waist inside the tackle box until the ball leaves the tackle box. All other Team A players are allowed to block below the waist only if the force of the initial contact is directed from the front. “Directed from the front” is defined as within the clock-face region between “10 o’clock and 2 o’clock” forward of the area of concentration of the player being blocked.

Exceptions are given in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4.

2. Team A players may not block below the waist when the block occurs 5 yards or more beyond the neutral zone.

3. Players **in motion at the snap or lined up outside the tackle box** may not block below the waist toward the original position of the ball at the snap. ~~until the ball carrier is clearly beyond the neutral zone.~~

4. Once the ball has left the tackle box a player may not block below the waist toward his own end line.

Rationale: This change will eliminate blocks below the waist in the open field much like kickoff and change of possession plays. Eliminating blocks by Team A (offense) that occur 5 yards or more will also match the area that is allowed by Team B (defense) for blocking below the waist and balance offense and defense. Additionally, other than offensive players lined up on the line and in the tackle box, all blocks below the waist must be made from the front. This change will allow the defender to see the block coming and defend himself. This also cleans up the rules language and make it much easier for players, coaches and officials to understand, execute and coach blocking below the waist.

UIL NOTE: For a lineman’s initial position to be considered “completely inside the tackle box”, he must be positioned within five yards of the snapper, and be no more than the second lineman from the snapper.

No UIL exception, rule is applied as written. UIL Note above is clarification of the rule.

NEW RULE 8:

Rule 9-1-11-b and 9-1-11-c

Leaping

ARTICLE 11. a. No defensive player, in an attempt to gain an advantage, may step, jump or stand on an opponent.

b. It is a foul if a defensive player **moves forward and tries to block a field goal or try by leaving his feet in an attempt to leap over the frame of the body of an opponent.** It is not a foul if the player was aligned in a stationary position within one yard of the line of scrimmage when the ball was snapped.

c. It is a foul if a defensive player who is inside the tackle box tries to block a punt by leaving his feet in an attempt to leap **over the frame of the body of** an opponent.

Rationale: This change will accomplish the desired player safety change on Team B players trying to block a field goal, try or punt and by defining that the player must be attempting to leap over the frame of the opponent’s body. This will make the language consistent on all kick plays.

No UIL exception, rule is applied as written.

NEW RULE 9:

Rule 10-2-5-d

Field Goal Penalty Enforcement

d. Penalties for live ball fouls during field goal plays are administered by rule. **When the field goal is successful Team A shall have the option of canceling the score and have the penalty enforced from the previous spot or declining the penalty(ies) and accepting the score. Team A may accept the score with penalties for personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls enforced on the succeeding kickoff or from the succeeding spot in extra periods.** Penalties for live-ball fouls treated as deadball fouls and those for dead-ball fouls after a field goal down are enforced at the succeeding spot.

Rationale: Currently on a successful try, Team A (kicking team) can carry over penalties for Personal Fouls and Unsportsmanlike Conduct Fouls by Team B to the kickoff or to the succeeding spot in extra periods. This carryover is currently not an option on successful Field Goal plays. This change would bring together the penalty enforcement on Extra Points and Field Goals and ensures that Personal Fouls and UNS penalties are enforced.

No UIL exception, rule is applied as written.

New Rule 10 and New Rule 11 are proposed rule changes to Rule 12 (Instant Replay) and would only apply if replay is utilized in Texas High School football. The 2018 proposed rule changes to Rule 12, as well as any other exceptions of Rule 12 for UIL football, are addressed in the “2018 UIL Modified RULE 12 – Instant Replay” document.