



2020 NCAA FOOTBALL RULES CHANGES

The following rules changes were approved by the NCAA Football Rules Committee and the Playing Rules Oversight Panel.

Players Numbering – Rule 1-4-2

With the recognized popularity of the single digit numbers, the digit “0” is added as a legal number. Any number to be preceded by “0” such as “07” or “00” remains illegal.

Jersey / Concurrently Worn / Jersey Violations – Rule 1-4-5

A second jersey meeting all requirements of Rule 1-4-5 worn concurrently is allowed. Vests and/or altered jerseys with zippers, Velcro, clasps or other fasteners are not allowed.

In addition, the penalty for a team not complying with the jersey rule (i.e., legal and contrasting numbers or a colored jersey in violation of the rule) will be a 15-yard penalty after the kickoff of each half and the loss of a timeout in each quarter that illegal jerseys are worn.

Targeting - Disqualified Player - (Rule 2-27-12)

There were no changes to the Targeting rule from an on-field officiating perspective and from the 2019 adjustments in Instant Replay. The change for 2020 is that now a player disqualified for Targeting will be declared ineligible for further participation in the game, but the player may remain in the team area. If the targeting foul is committed in the second half, the disqualified player cannot participate in the first half of his team’s next scheduled game but may participate in pre-game warm-up activities and stay in the team area during the first half.

All other disqualifying fouls such as Fighting, two Unsportsmanlike Conduct fouls, Flagrant Personal fouls, etc. will be reclassified as fouls requiring ejection. Players ejected will be required to leave the playing enclosure and must remain out of view of the field of play under team supervision.

Pregame Warmup - Rule 3-1-1

When any Squad Member enters the playing enclosure prior to the officials escorting the captains out for the coin toss, the head coach or an assistant coach from that team must be present on the field. Furthermore, when any Squad Member is present within the playing enclosure subsequent to the officials’ jurisdiction, they must be wearing their jersey or have their numeral readily visible. Players without their numeral readily visible must leave the playing enclosure.

Defensive Team Substitution Infraction – Rule 3-5-3

The defense is allowed to briefly retain more than 11 players on the field to anticipate the offensive formation, but it may not have more than 11 players when the ball is snapped. The new rule change would stipulate that this infraction will be treated as a live-ball foul. Under the current rules, the foul can be either a live ball or dead ball foul, and this change will bring consistency to this enforcement.

Defensive Linemen on Scrimmage Kick Plays – Rule 6-3-14

To enhance the protection of the snapper on scrimmage kicks, if the offense is in a scrimmage kick formation at the snap, any defensive player within one yard of the line of scrimmage must be aligned completely outside the frame of the body of the snapper at the snap. This change paired with current Rule 9-1-14 that does not allow the defense to initiate contact with the snapper until one second has elapsed on these type plays will further protect the snapper on kick downs.

Unfair Tactics – Rule 9-2-2

No more than two Squad Members may be assigned or wear the same jersey number. There were no limits to duplicate numbers in previous seasons. This foul is an Unsportsmanlike Conduct charged against the Head Coach and the players must immediately correct the numbering and report the change.

Penalty Enforcement / Carryover to Extra Periods – Rule 10-2-5

All fouls that have an option to carry over to the succeeding kickoff will also contain an option to carry over to the succeeding spot in extra periods.

Officials Jurisdiction - Rule 11-1

The officials' jurisdiction now begins at 90 minutes before kickoff (previously 60 minutes) and ends when the Referee declares the score final. It is expected that a minimum of 3 officials will take the field at 90 minutes. All officials will be on the field at 40 minutes prior to kickoff.

At 90 minutes before kickoff the playing field will be divided into an L-shaped configuration with the 30 yard-lines forming the "L". No later than 40 minutes before kickoff, the configuration will change to the "Buffer Zone" configuration, and no player shall enter the 10-yard buffer zone between the 45 yard-lines.

Instant Replay / Clock Adjustment – Rule 12-3-6

If the clock expires at the end of a half, and replay determines that there was time remaining on the clock, and the clock would start on the Referee's signal after review, there must be at least 3 seconds remaining when the ball should have been declared dead to restore time to the clock. With 2 seconds or 1 second remaining on the clock, the half is over. This change will not impact situations when the clock is stopped and will remain stopped until the snap such as incomplete passes and runners out of bounds.

Instant Replay Review Time – Rule 12-6-2

The expectation is that the Instant Replay Official will not exceed two minutes to complete a review. If the review has end of game impact or has multiple aspects as a part of the review, it should be completed efficiently but will have no stated time limit.

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