



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA FOOTBALL RULES COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 8-11, 2016**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **None.**

2. Nonlegislative items. The NCAA Football Rules Committee approved the following rules change proposals for the 2016 and 2017 seasons. The committee requests approval from the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) for the following items:

a. Televising Network Partner Camera (Rule 1-2.3).

- (1) Recommendation. The televising network partner may briefly bring hand-held cameras inside the limit lines during certain dead-ball periods. The rule prohibiting them on the field of play remains in effect. (This change makes the 2015 experimental rule official.)
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. After experimentation last season, this allowance worked well and provided the televising entity the ability to move more quickly to be in better position for filming.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

b. Digital Technology Allowed in Press Box and Locker Room (Rule 1-4.11).

- (1) Recommendation. Coaches are permitted to make use of digital technology in the press box and the locker room, but they still may not use video images, photographs or computers on the field. The digital connections in the press box provided by the home team/facility must be the same in both coaching booths.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. To enhance the tools available to coaches and staffs.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. This is a permissive rule, so institutions may choose not to add any equipment to take advantage of this allowance. However, there could be

some costs associated with this allowance through the purchase of additional equipment and the addition of some staff.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

c. Scrimmage Kick Formation (Rule 2-16.10).

(1) Recommendation. Clarifies that a scrimmage kick formation must include either a punter at least 10 yards behind the line of scrimmage or a kicker and holder at least seven yards behind the line of scrimmage; it must be obvious that a kick will be attempted.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. To eliminate an unfair tactic in the kicking game.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

d. Sliding Ball Carrier is Defenseless (Rule 2-27.14).

(1) Recommendation. A ball carrier who obviously gives himself up and goes into a feet-first slide is included in the list of defenseless players.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Enhancement of student-athlete safety.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. Enhances student-athlete safety.

e. Team Timeouts (Rule 3-3.7).

(1) Recommendation. The head coach may request that one of the team's three timeouts each half, and the timeout in an extra period, be one minute thirty seconds in length.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. To provide coaches with an option, particularly late in games, of a longer timeout for strategy purposes.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

f. Suspended Game (Rule 3-3.3).

(1) Recommendation. When a suspended interconference game may not be resumed and the athletics directors of the two teams are not able to reach an agreement about the outcome of the game, it shall be determined by the conference policy of the home team.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Clarifies situations where teams are unable to agree how to end a suspended game.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

g. Status of Game Clock (Rule 3-4.3).

(1) Recommendation. Inside the last two minutes of a half, if the game clock is stopped to administer the penalty for a foul by the team ahead in the score, the game clock will start on the snap, at the option of the offended team.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Eliminates an advantage gained by a team that fouls, particularly late in games.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

h. Tripping (Rule 9-1.2).

(1) Recommendation. A player may not trip an opposing ball carrier by deliberately obstructing him with the foot or lower leg. With this change, the rule is now the same for all players.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

- (3) Rationale. Enhances student-athlete safety.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Enhances student-athlete safety.

i. Blocking Below the Waist (Rule 9-1.6).

- (1) Recommendation. Offensive players, who are outside the tackle box at the snap, and those who leave the tackle box after the snap, may only block an opponent below the waist if the force of the initial contact is directly at the opponent's front. However, they may not block an opponent below the waist in a direction toward the original position of the ball unless the ball carrier has clearly crossed the line of scrimmage.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. To clarify which players are eligible to block low and to eliminate some blocks on unsuspecting players.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Some student-athlete safety enhancement.

j. Low Contact on the Passer (Rule 9-1.9).

- (1) Recommendation. This rule that protects the passer is modified to clarify that the tackler may not legally make forcible contact against the passer at the knee or below even if he is making a wrap-up tackle.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. Clarification of previous rule; student-athlete safety.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Enhances student-athlete safety.

k. Unsportsmanlike Conduct (Rule 9-2.6).

- (1) Recommendation. If a coach commits two unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, he is automatically disqualified from the game, which is the current rule for players.

- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. Clarifies that coaches are subject to the same rule as players in this area.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

l. Instant Replay – Targeting Fouls (Rule 12-5.5.f).

- (1) Recommendation. In reviewing targeting fouls the Instant Replay Official is to examine all aspects of the action: whether the player was defenseless, the location of the forcible contact, the presence of indicators of targeting, and the use of the crown of the helmet. Also, the replay official may create a targeting foul in the case of an egregious action that was not called by the officials on the field.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. To enhance the replay official's ability to rule on these plays and to enhance health and safety by enforcing egregious actions missed by the on-field officials.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Enhanced with the ability to penalize egregious actions.

m. Medical Observer (Rule 12-5.2).

- (1) Recommendation. The Instant Replay Official may stop the game at the initiative of a medical observer in the Instant Replay booth. (This change makes the 2015 experimental rule official.)
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. Enhances student-athlete safety.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. Enhances student-athlete safety.

n. Experimental Rule – Collaborative Instant Replay (Rule 12-4.3).

- (1) Recommendation. The rules committee approved a proposal for a one-year experimental exception to Rule 12-4-3. This experiment allows conferences to use a collaborative process for instant replay. The Instant Replay Official at the stadium remains the final decision-making authority.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. To allow conferences to experiment to potentially enhance the current instant replay system and process.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. For those conferences that utilize this experiment, it is expected that there will be some expenses for additional equipment and staffing.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

o. Interpretation -- Commercial Logos on Field (Rule 1-2.1.h).

- (1) Recommendation. To include regular-season neutral site games in the allowance for commercial logos on the field of play, with the same restrictions postseason bowl games must adhere to.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. The advent of early-season games, often hosted by bowl game organizations, has created a different issue with commercial logos on the field. After consultation with the Football Oversight Committee, this interpretation fits with the current restrictions for postseason bowl games, but maintains the restriction on home fields.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

p. Interpretation – Mascot Added to Uniform (Rule 1-4.5).

- (1) Recommendation. To include “mascot name” in the allowable items to have on the front of the game jersey.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.

- (3) Rationale. This has been common practice at many institutions for years without incident and when asked, this has been allowed by interpretation.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- 1. Welcome and roll call.** The chair welcomed the committee and thanked them for their time. Committee members were encouraged to raise any issues or viewpoints that could add to the discussions and to think broadly about the sport and make recommendations that will improve the game.
- 2. Review of Committee Structure, Process and Timeline.** The meeting schedule and agenda were reviewed. The committee also reviewed the Committee Operations Manual, which included the NCAA conflict of interest policy, guidance for committee members regarding meeting reports, notes and email, voting procedures, principles for rules writing, and experimental playing rules guidelines. A teleconference was set for March 3, 2016, to review the comment period results and feedback.
- 3. Editorial Subcommittee Meeting Report.** Rogers Redding discussed the subcommittee's work and reviewed the report from the group. Many of the recommendations dealt with minor wording adjustments, while others contemplated significant changes the committee may approve.
- 4. Discussion of Significant Topics/Rules Changes.** The committee reviewed the document that contained the major topics, statistical information and proposed changes.
- 5. Review of Rules Survey.** The committee reviewed the rules survey results in conjunction with discussion on the corresponding rules change proposals.
- 6. Reports from Invited Guests.** The committee heard reports from several invited guests (listed at the end of this report).
- 7. Review of Statistics and Trends.** The group reviewed the extensive report containing data and trends for all divisions. Additionally, the committee reviewed the executive summary that outlined the significant data points.
- 8. NCAA Injury Surveillance Data and Report.** The committee reviewed data provided by the Datalys Center for Sports Injury Research and Prevention. The committee offered the

NCAA Sports Science Institute its services to assist in encouraging the membership to provide data to the program.

- 9. Review of Medical Spotter Experiment.** The committee reviewed information and video footage from the conferences that utilized the medical spotter experiment during the 2015 season. The committee voted to approve the process permanently for conferences that choose to utilize this procedure.
- 10. College Football Officiating, LLC Report.** The committee heard reports from Jon Steinbrecher, chair of the CFO Board of Managers, and Bill Battle, chair of the CFO Competition Committee. The work of the CFO is much appreciated and assists the rules committee in its work.
- 11. National Football League Report.** The committee received a report from Dean Blandino, NFL vice president for officiating, and shared information on the rules proposals and process used.
- 12. Future Meeting Schedule.** The committee discussed several possibilities in terms of timing and noted the potential to meet in conjunction with the American Football Coaches Association Convention, at least for a short period, for those that are able to attend. After reviewing the overall calendar, the committee believes the week after signing date continues to work best for the committee in terms of the annual meeting. Staff will confirm corresponding dates for 2017. Additionally, it was noted that the rules processes in football and men's and women's basketball are being discussed in a variety of governance areas (especially Division I), so these dates should remain flexible for now.
- 13. Adjournment.** The committee adjourned at 10:15 a.m. on Thursday, February 11.

Committee Chair: Bob Nielson, South Dakota State University; Missouri Valley Football Conference.

Staff Liaison(s): Ty Halpin, Championships and Alliances.

NCAA Football Rules Committee February 8-11, 2016, Meeting	
Attendees:	
Mark Alnutt, University of Memphis; American Athletic Conference.	
Monte Cater, Shepherd University; Mountain East Conference.	
John Chandler, Coe College; Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.	
Larry Fedora, University of North Carolina; Atlantic Coast Conference.	
Joey Jones, University of South Alabama; Sun Belt Conference.	

Michael Mattia, Johns Hopkins University; Centennial Conference.
Bob Nielson, South Dakota State University; Missouri Valley Football Conference.
Rogers Redding, secretary-rules editor.
David Sharp, Ouachita Baptist; Great American Conference.
Ed Stewart, Big 12 Conference.
Brian Surace, Fairleigh Dickinson, Florham; Middle Atlantic Conference.
Paul Winters, Wayne State University; Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.
Tom Yeager, Colonial Athletic Association.
Absentees:
None.
Guests in Attendance:
Ray Anderson, Arizona State University; Pacific-12 Conference.
Matt Austin, active official.
Bill Battle, University of Alabama; Southeastern Conference.
Dean Blandino, National Football League.
Bob Bowsby, Big 12 Conference.
Greg Burks, Mountain West Conference.
Bob Colgate, National Federation of State High School Associations.
Jack Childress, Southern Conference.
Susan Elza, University Interscholastic League–Texas.
Nick Inzerello, USA Football.
Zack Kerr, Datalys Center.
Ed Placey, ESPN.
David Polanski, Tulsa University; American Athletic Conference.
Steve Shaw, Southeastern Conference.
Craig Silver, CBS.
Jon Steinbrecher, Mid-American Conference.
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:
Ty Halpin.
Other NCAA Staff in Attendance:
Dan Calandro, John Parsons and Ron Prettyman.