



VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

MEMORANDUM

July 3, 2014

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TO: NCAA Head Football Coaches, Conference Administrators and Coordinators of Officials.

FROM: Troy Calhoun, chair
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Rogers Redding, secretary-rules editor
NCAA Football Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: Sideline Rules and Officiating Guidance.

The rules for sideline management have been in place for many years. However, over time many officials have become lax in their enforcement, both as to the spirit and the letter of these rules. This lack of consistency in sideline management has resulted in actions by coaches and players that go well beyond the rules' intent. As a result, the image of the game is being tarnished by unsportsmanlike acts that have become much too prevalent.

The enclosed document outlines the guidelines and expectations for coaches and game officials in order to better manage the sidelines with regard to practices of both players and coaches. With this standardized set of guidelines and protocols, it is the committee's hope that coaches and student-athletes will fully understand that they can continue to perform their normal and customary duties without concern that game officials will become overzealous in applying these procedures.

Thank you for your attention to these guidelines and good luck as you prepare for the 2014 season.

TC/RR:bw

Enclosure

cc: NCAA Football Rules Committee
Selected NCAA Staff Members

National Collegiate Athletic Association

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SIDELINE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES:
SUMMARY FOR COACHES

NCAA Football Rules 9-2-1, 9-2-3, 9-2-5

1. The 6-foot border at the sideline, commonly referred to as “the white,” is to remain clear of all team personnel immediately before, during, and after the play until all action has ceased. Officials will work with “get-back coaches” to keep this area clear.
2. Failure of teams to keep “the white” area clear will result in the following:
 - An official warning for the first occurrence;
 - A 5-yard penalty for the second and third occurrences;
 - A 15-yard penalty for any subsequent occurrences.

Note: Egregious violations may result in a penalty (five or fifteen yards) without warning.
3. After all action has ceased and prior to the snap becoming imminent, coaches may move to the sideline or slightly on the field to:
 - Call plays.
 - Congratulate players.
 - Request information from game officials.
4. Head coaches may enter the field between downs to attend to an injured player.
5. Head coaches may leave the team area along the sideline to request a time-out or issue a replay challenge. The head coach must make this request immediately upon reaching the sideline official. Otherwise, coaches leaving the team area for any reason other than attending to an injured player are subject to the protocols in item 2.
6. During time-outs coaches may enter the field near the sideline to communicate with players. They may never move as far as the numbers, except to attend to injured players. Violations will be subject to protocols in item 2.
7. Coaches who enter the white area or the field to mount a protest that is exaggerated or prolonged, or is threatening, obscene, or abusive, will be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct.