



COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC

ILLEGALLY BATTING AND KICKING: 10-YARD PENALTIES

The rules committee has changed the penalties for illegally kicking and illegally batting the ball. These fouls each now carry a 10-yard penalty, down from the 15 yards historically applied. Early on this was framed as reserving 15-yard penalties for personal fouls, unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, and pass interference. While this is certainly within the spirit of the committee's action, it is in fact overly general; it is better simply to remember that illegally kicking and illegally batting the ball now carry 10-yard penalties.

The principle that the committee followed in making this change is this: such acts as personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct are player-on-player fouls that impact player safety and sportsmanship. They are thus in a different category than fouls enacted against the football, and so the former should be more expensive.

Note also this point: other aspects of the penalties for these fouls remain unchanged. In particular, some instances of batting and kicking have included loss of down as part of the penalty. They still do. Only the yardage is new for 2011.

All this can be found in Rule 9-4.

DISQUALIFIED PLAYERS: LEAVE THE ARENA

A player who has been ejected from the game is not allowed to remain in the team area or anywhere else within the playing enclosure. This requirement appears as an editorial addition to Rule 2-29-12. Paragraph (c) reads: "*A disqualified player must leave the playing enclosure within a reasonable amount of time after his disqualification. He must remain out of view of the field of play under team supervision for the duration of the game.*" In practical terms this means that the player must go to the locker room and be accompanied by someone to supervise him.

When the player is ejected the officials who report this to the head coach should make clear that the player is not allowed to remain in the team area, on the sideline or anywhere within sight of the field.

GAME MANAGEMENT: WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

The safety and integrity of the playing area and its general environs are a shared responsibility of the officials and game management/stadium personnel. The rules have been somewhat vague as to who is responsible for what and for how long. Changes for 2011-12 provide some clarification. You will find new language in two places, shown here in italics. Rule 1-2-3-b now says: "No person outside the team area shall be inside the limit lines. *Game management personnel have the responsibility and the authority to enforce this rule.*" And Rule 1-2-8-d is a new paragraph, "*After the officials have completed their pregame inspection of the playing enclosure, it is the responsibility of game management personnel to ensure that the playing enclosure remains safe throughout the game.*" These changes reflect the reality that once the game starts the officials must focus on the action in the game; thus they cannot be constantly aware of changes to conditions off the playing field, and especially outside the limit lines.