



COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC

INTERPRETATION

FORWARD PROGRESS FOR BALL CARRIER OUT OF BOUNDS

Locating the point of forward progress is a very important matter, especially when the action is near the line to gain. **Rule 4-2-4-d** (FR-57) addresses this when the ball is declared out of bounds. The rule (FR-57) reads:

- The most forward point of the ball when declared out of bounds between the goal lines is the point of forward progress. (**Exception:** When a ball carrier is airborne as he crosses the sideline, forward progress is determined by the position of the ball as it crosses the sideline.)

INTERPRETATION: For purposes of the Exception to 4-2-4-d, a ball carrier who strides across the sideline before first touching out of bounds is considered to be an airborne player.

EXAMPLE 1. Ball carrier A22 sweeps around left end and heads toward the sideline. As his right foot touches the sideline at the A-45 he is holding the ball so that its most forward point is at the A-46.

RULING: The ball is out of bounds when A22 touches the sideline, so the A-46 is the point of forward progress. It is the location of the ball when declared dead that determines forward progress in this play. Team A's ball at the A-46. (4-2-4-d)

EXAMPLE 2. Ball carrier A22 sweeps around left end and heads toward the sideline. As his right foot touches the sideline at the A-45 he has the ball tucked into his body so that its most forward point is at the A-45.

RULING: Again it is the location of the ball when declared dead that is the key to the ruling. The ball is out of bounds when A22 touches the sideline, so this time the A-45 is the point of forward progress. Team A's ball at the A-45. (4-2-4-d)

EXAMPLE 3. Ball carrier A22 sweeps around left end and heads toward the sideline. As his right foot touches the sideline at the A-45 he is turned so that the most forward point of the ball is at the A-44.

RULING: Once more it is the location of the ball when declared dead that is the key. The ball is out of bounds when A22 touches the sideline, so this time the A-44 is the point of forward progress. Team A's ball at the A-44. (4-2-4-d)

EXAMPLE 4. Ball carrier A22 sweeps around left end and heads toward the sideline. His right foot touches the ground inbounds very close to the sideline at the A-30. As he continues to run his stride is such that his left foot then lands out of bounds at the A-32. The ball crosses the sideline at the A-31, and A22 holds the ball such that when his left foot touches the ground the most forward point of the ball is at the A-33.

RULING: In this play the Exception to Rule 4-2-4-d is in effect. By interpretation A22 is *airborne* as he crosses the sideline because he crosses it in stride. The crossing point is at the A-31, so Team A will put the ball in play at the A-31. (4-2-4-d-Exception)

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