



COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC

MECHANICS: 10-SECOND SUBTRACTION RULE

Situations involving the 10-second subtraction rule require extreme focus and concentration by the entire crew so that the rule is administered correctly and as efficiently as possible. By definition, the rule will almost always come into play in hurry-up situations when players and coaches are working against the clock to get plays called and defenses set. It is imperative that officials completely understand all possibilities concerning the various options available to each team so they are able to administer what can be a complex enforcement.

The following guidelines will serve as the CFO mechanics for administering the 10-second subtraction rule.

1. Fouling team has no time-outs remaining and it is obvious the opponent would want the 10-second subtraction:

A. Referee will:

1. Make the announcement (See below);
2. **Inform the quarterback the game clock will start on the ready;**
3. Give the offense a chance to move quickly to the line (if they so desire);
4. Declare the ball ready for play and wind the clock.

B. Umpire must stand over the ball until cleared by the Referee just prior to the ready-for-play signal.

Announcement--when more than 10 seconds remain on the game clock:

"False start, offense #72. Five yard penalty.

The foul occurred with the clock running and under one minute in the second half.

By rule, the penalty includes a 10-second run-off.

Please reset the game clock to "xx" seconds and it will start on the ready for play."

Announcement--when 10 seconds or fewer remain on the game clock:

"False start, offense #72. Five yard penalty.

The foul occurred with the clock running and less than 10 seconds on the game clock.

By rule, the game (or half) is over."

2. Fouling team has time-outs remaining and it is obvious the opponent would want the 10-second subtraction:

Ask the head coach of the fouling team if he would like to use a time-out to avoid the 10-second run-off.

A. **IF NO**, proceed as in **1**.

B. **IF YES**, announce that decision and the game clock will start on the snap following the time-out.

Announcement:

"False start, offense #72. Five yard penalty.

The offense has chosen to use their 3rd and final timeout to avoid the 10-second run-off."

3. Fouling team has no time-outs remaining and it is *not* obvious the opponent would want the 10-second subtraction (e.g., foul occurs on 3rd or 4th down in the 1st half):

Ask the head coach of the offended team if he wants the 10-second run-off.

A. **IF NO**, then announce that decision and the game clock will start on the snap.

Announcement:

"False start, offense #72. Five yard penalty. The defense has elected to decline the 10-second run-off. The game clock will start on the snap."

B. **IF YES**, proceed as in **1**.

4. Fouling team has time-outs remaining and it is *not* obvious the opponent would want the 10-second subtraction (e.g., foul occurs on 3rd or 4th down in the 1st half):

Ask the head coach of the offended team if he wants the 10-second run-off.

A. **IF NO**, then announce that decision and the game clock will start on the snap.

B. **IF YES**, then proceed as in **2** (determine if the fouling team will use a timeout to avoid the 10-second run-off).

The situation in 4B will require a decision by both head coaches. It will be crucial that sideline officials recognize when it arises. They should get the appropriate information to each head coach so that the proper decisions can be made with as little delay as possible.



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