



COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC

2013 PLAY INTERPRETATIONS BULLETIN NO. 1

Action Against the Passer: Is This Targeting?

1. Quarterback A12 drops back to pass and defensive end B89 rushes him. As A12 releases the ball B89 leaps to try to knock down the pass. He misses the ball, and as he follows through, his initial contact is when his elbow hits A12's helmet.

RULING: Not a foul for targeting. While B89's initial contact is to the head of this defenseless player, his action has none of the elements of targeting. B89 is making a normal football play and there is no apparent intent to punish A12. This could potentially be a foul for roughing the passer depending on whether it is obvious that the pass has been thrown. Although the contact is initiated to the head or neck area of a defenseless player, there is no *targeting and* initiating contact. (9-1-4, 9-1-9).

Action Against the Passer: Is This Targeting?

2. Quarterback A12 drops back to pass and defensive end B89 rushes him. After A12 has released the pass, B89 takes two steps, launches, and drives his elbow into A12's throat. The pass is completed to A44 who is tackled 12 yards downfield at the B-40.

RULING: Foul by B89, roughing the passer with targeting. B89 is disqualified from the game. The actions by B89 include the elements of targeting. The penalty is enforced at the B-40, which is the end of the run, consistent with penalty enforcement for roughing the passer. First and 10 for Team A at the B-25. (9-1-4, 9-1-9)

Blindside Block: Targeting Foul?

3. As Team B is returning a kickoff, B66 races across the field in pursuit of A77. When he gets close enough, B66 executes a blindside block against A77 by launching and driving his shoulder into A77's rib cage.

RULING: Legal block. Although A77 is by definition a defenseless player and B66's action includes a launch, this is not a foul under Rule 9-1-4 because the initial contact is not to A77's head or neck area. (9-1-4, 2-27-14)

Blindside Block: Targeting Foul?

4. As Team B is returning a kickoff, B66 races across the field in pursuit of A77. When he gets close enough, B66 executes a blindside block against A77 by launching and driving his shoulder or elbow into the side of A77's helmet.

RULING: Foul by B66, targeting and initiating contact to the head or neck area of a defenseless player. 15-yard penalty (three-and-one enforcement). B66 is disqualified from the game. (9-1-4, 2-27-14)

Blindside Block: Targeting Foul?

5. As Team B is returning a kickoff, B66 races across the field in pursuit of A77. When he gets close enough, B66 executes a blindside block against A77 by lowering his head, launching and driving the top of his helmet into A77's rib cage.

RULING: Foul by B66, targeting and initiating contact with the crown of the helmet. 15-yard penalty (three-and-one enforcement). B66 is disqualified from the game. (9-1-3)

Helmet Contact: Targeting Foul?

6. Ball carrier A33 takes the handoff and starts through the line. Linebacker B55 sheds a blocker, dips his head slightly and hits A33 with a hard, wrap-up, head-up tackle. The two players' helmets collide and A33's helmet comes off.

RULING: Legal tackle. There is no targeting action by B55, and the slight dip of the head is a natural reaction that is not to be read as attacking to punish with the crown of the helmet. Because his helmet came off, A33 must leave the game for one play unless Team A takes a charged timeout. If this occurs in the last minute of the half, the rules for the 10-second runoff are in effect. (9-1-3, 3-3-9)

Helmet Contact: Targeting Foul?

7. Receiver A88 comes across the middle on a pass play. He and defender B25 leap for the pass, and neither player is flagged for pass interference. As B25 goes for the ball in the air, he makes initial contact when his helmet collides with A88's helmet.

RULING: Legal play. While the initial contact by B25 is to the head of a defenseless player there is no foul for targeting, as his actions have none of the elements of targeting. (9-1-4)

Targeting Foul?

8. Receiver A88 has his hands on the ball in an attempt to catch a pass. Defender B25 launches, turns his head to the side and drives his shoulder into A88's midsection, separating A88 from the ball which falls to the ground as an incomplete pass.

RULING: Legal play. While the launch is an indication of targeting, and although A88 is defenseless, there is no foul on this play as the initial contact is not to the head or neck area. To be a foul under 9-1-4, there must be targeting *and* initiating contact to the head or neck area. (9-1-4, 2-27-14)

Targeting Foul?

9. As ball carrier A33 is going to the ground, B77 takes two steps, ducks his head, and forcibly drives the crown of his helmet into A33's back.

RULING: Foul by B77, targeting and initiating contact with the crown of the helmet. 15-yard penalty. B77 is disqualified. The action by B77 is unnecessary and has the elements of targeting accompanied by initiating contact with the crown of the helmet. (9-1-3)

Blocking Below The Waist

10. End A88 is positioned inside the low-blocking zone six yards to the right of the ball. Immediately after the snap, he takes two steps to his right, thus leaving the low-blocking zone, and blocks below the waist against linebacker B55. The block is directly at B55's front and is directed back toward the line through the position of the ball at the snap.

RULING: Legal block. This action may have the appearance of a crackback block, but A88 is not restricted by his original position, making this block legal. (9-1-6-a-1 and -4)

Blocking Below The Waist

11. Team A aligns three receivers to the right side: split end A88 and backs A33 and A44. All three receivers are outside the low-blocking zone. A12 in a shotgun formation throws a quick bubble-screen pass to A44, and A33 crosses the line of scrimmage and blocks below the waist against linebacker B55 who is covering A33. This block is at the knees and is directed to the left—i.e., toward the original position of the ball.

RULING: Foul, crackback block by A33 who is restricted and thus not allowed to execute a crackback block. (9-1-6-a-4)

Blocking Below The Waist

12. End A88 is split 10 yards to the right of the formation. Ball carrier A33 sweeps around right end and A88 leads him down the sideline. After A33 is 15 or 20 yards downfield with A88 still leading the play, A88 blocks below the waist on defender B22 who comes across the field to try to make the tackle. A88's block is within the 10-to-2 range and directed at an angle generally toward the middle of the field.

RULING: Legal block. While the block by A88 is technically toward the line through the original position of the ball, this is not a "crackback" block under the spirit and intent of the rule and should not be ruled a foul. (9-1-6-a)

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