

## NCAA FOOTBALL RULES COMMITTEE

### 2007 Major Rules Changes (Approved April 12, 2007)

#### **Rule 3-1-1**

The coin toss begins when the field captains leave the nine-yard marks and ends when the captains return to the nine-yard marks.

*Rationale: This change clarifies when the coin toss begins and ends and avoids unnecessary confrontations between teams.*

#### **Rule 3-2-2-h**

Following television timeouts, the ready for play period will, with the teams on the field, be 15 seconds. *Exception:* Free kicks.

*Rationale: This change will eliminate some dead time during televised games and encourage teams to be on the field ready for play. The committee estimates about three minutes of time savings.*

#### **Rule 3-2-2-i.**

This proposal alters the inadvertent whistle rule to read: "(i). If an inadvertent whistle occurs on a play and the down is replayed under the provisions of Rule 4-1-2-b, then the time and status of the game clock and play clock shall be reset to their position prior to the play in which the inadvertent whistle occurs. If necessary, instant replay can be consulted to determine the exact time and status of the game clock and the play clock."

*Rationale: This allows an official to add lost clock time in the rare case where an inadvertent whistle is blown.*

#### **Rule 3-2-5**

When the ball is free-kicked, the game clock shall be started when the ball is legally touched in the field of play or crosses the goal line after being touched legally by Team B in its end zone and subsequently stopped when the ball is dead by rule.

*Rationale: This reverts to the 2005 rule. The 2006 rule, which started the clock when the ball was kicked, created some difficult situations at the end of the half and game and the rule overall did not achieve its intended effect.*

#### **Rule 3-2-5-e**

When Team B is awarded a first down, the game clock is stopped and starts on the snap.

*Rationale: This reverts back to the 2005 rule. This rule change last year was a large part of changes that eliminated about 16 plays from the game and cut about 15 minutes of elapsed time off of the game. The committee believes the elimination of participation opportunities for student-athletes is too much and addressed the overall length of game issues in other ways.*

**Rule 3-3-7-a**

A team timeout is 30 seconds plus the 25-second play clock interval. This provision will only apply to televised games. Conference television contracts will supersede this rule. (For example, if a team calls a timeout and a conference television agreement allows for a television timeout to be used, this timeout extends to a full media timeout. The television partners – through normal protocols – make the decision through their timeout coordinator when the ball should be whistled ready for play.)

*Rationale: This change eliminates 30 seconds from team timeouts. The committee believes many timeouts are called to simply stop the clock (or when a team has formation, substitution or play clock problems). This reduction in time will save about three to six minutes, depending on how many timeouts are used during the game.*

**Rule 3-4-2-a (Possible Implementation in 2008)**

Consuming more than 40 seconds to put the ball in play after declared ready for play is an illegal delay. When the play is completed, the 40 second clock will start. The administrative duties listed below would continue to use the 25 second play clock.

*Exceptions (administrative duties):*

- Free kick.
- Measurements
- Fumbles.
- Penalties.
- Touchbacks.
- Injury timeouts.
- Live ball out of bounds.
- Team B awarded a first down.
- Team timeouts.
- Try.

*Rationale: This possible change is being raised now to alert conferences and teams to the change in how the ball will be marked ready for play. The AFCA is in strong support of this system of play clock management and believes it will bring more consistency to the pace of play. The rules committee has been asked by the Playing Rules Oversight Panel to collect information throughout this season to determine the effect of this possible change.*

**Rule 6-1-1**

Unless relocated by penalty, the kicking team's restraining line on kickoffs shall be the 30-yard line.

*Rationale: This change will create more kickoff returns and therefore create more action. This change will save about one minute of playing time and eliminate a play with no action (touchbacks).*

