



Oregon School Activities Association

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2021 OSAA Football Experiment - Intentional Grounding

7-5-2...An illegal forward pass is a foul. Illegal forward passes include:

- a) A pass after team possession has changed during the down.
- b) A pass from beyond the neutral zone.
- c) A second or subsequent forward pass(es) thrown during a down.
- d) A pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an eligible offensive receiver.
- e) A pass intentionally thrown incomplete to save loss of yardage or to consume time.

COMMENT: Some factors to look for in making an intentional grounding decision are absence of eligible offensive receivers in the area and the “dumping” to avoid loss of distance. The ability and skill of the passer and the pressure of the defense are also factors to consider.

Officials need to be aware of these situations and remember this is a crew call. In order to make the correct call under NFHS football Rules, this foul may be a delayed call after the game officials have gathered and discussed the play. The discussion should include whether the pass was intentionally thrown incomplete or whether the passer was simply unable to throw the ball close to an eligible receiver. When a foul does occur, the penalty flag needs to be thrown by the referee as this is a spot foul. The penalty is 5-yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down.

EXCEPTION 1: It is legal for a player positioned directly behind the snapper to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving the snap that has neither been muffed nor touched the ground.

EXCEPTION 2: (New – Oregon only)

It is legal for a player to conserve yardage by intentionally throwing an incomplete forward pass if:

- a) *The player is, or has been, beyond the lateral boundaries of the free blocking zone (as established at the snap) when the pass is released; AND;*
- b) *The forward pass reaches the neutral zone or beyond, including the area outside the field of play. There is no requirement for an eligible offensive receiver to be “in the area”.*
 - *Should the passer fail to accomplish BOTH a) AND b), Intentional Grounding (7-5-2e) shall be called!*
 - *Should the passer achieve BOTH a) AND b), the down counts, the ball is placed at the previous spot.*