

Rules 5 – 7 Most Missed Questions Analysis

A, 1/10, B-30. Quarterback A7 drops back to the B-40 and attempts a screen pass. Intended receiver A45 muffs the pass at the B32, and the ball continues downfield, where it is caught by A53, who had been blocking a team B player at the B-35. (7-5-6; 7-5-7; 7-5-13; 7-5-12; 7.5.10E)

1. (4, 3.05%) Ineligible player downfield
2. (11, 8.40%) No foul by A53. Because the pass was touched behind the neutral zone, it is considered to be a pass that did not cross the neutral zone
3. (11, 8.40%) b, c and d
4. (4, 3.05%) OPI
5. (101, 77.10%) Illegal touching

Matt: Screens are complicated, but require particular attention because there are specific exceptions that exist when executed properly. Because the initial pass doesn't go beyond the neutral zone, there is no concern for ineligible beyond the LOS (7-5-12) or OPI (7-5-7). And one might think that A45 touching the ball would make the subsequent touch by A53 legal, however, A45 simply muffing the pass doesn't create a new force (2-13-3). As such, A45 has caught a forward pass and that is only legal after it's been touched by B (7-5-13). Therefore, this is illegal touching by an ineligible player.

Tim: Good to focus on who touched it, if Team B touched the ball A 45 would become eligible.

Kickoff, K-40. R4 catches the ball at the R-10 and advances to the R-30, where he throws an underhanded pass to R15 at the R-35. R15 muffs the ball, and it falls to the ground and is recovered by a team K player at the R-40. (4-2-2c; 7-5-2a Pen)

1. (6, 4.62%) R, 2/10, R-25
2. (108, 83.08%) R, 1/10, R-25
3. (5, 3.85%) K, 1/10, R-35
4. (11, 8.46%) K, 1/10, R-40

Matt: Anytime a ball goes forward, in flight, and on purpose, it is a pass (2-31). Also, the second any forward pass (legal or illegal) hits the ground, the play is dead (4-2-2c). So this is nothing more than an incomplete pass, so the ball will remain with R. However, clearly this pass is illegal having taken place after R4 catches a kickoff (7-5-2a). Therefore, this is an illegal forward pass and will be assessed 5 yards from the spot of the illegal pass. The loss of down part of the foul is ignored as the new set of downs has not started.

Team A is lined up and set for one second with the interior lineman in a two-point stance. On the quarterback's signal, the interior linemen drop to a three-point stance, and flanker A22, who was on the line of scrimmage, goes in motion parallel to the LOS and at the snap continues running 4 yards behind the line. (7-2-6; 7-2-7)

1. (17, 13.08%) Illegal shift
2. (1, 0.77%) Legal play
3. (108, 83.08%) b and c
4. (4, 3.08%) Illegal motion

Matt: Clearly this is an illegal shift because not everyone comes to an absolute stop for at least one second before the snap (the line may be still, but the motion man never stops) (7-2-6). However, this is also illegal motion because the motion man was originally on the line. If he goes in motion straight from the line then he must do so more than 5 yards behind the LOS at the time of the snap (7-2-7).

Tim: Flanks and R need to work together on this.

A, 3/10, B-20. At the snap, A89 is lined up at the right end of the formation, facing B's goal with neither his head nor foot breaking an imaginary plane parallel to the LOS through the waist of the snapper; but A89's head does break the plane of an imaginary line parallel to the LOS through the waist of his nearest teammate, lineman A75. Quarterback A12 drops back to the B-25 and throws a forward pass to A89, who muffs it at the B-10. (2-32-3; 2-32-9; 7-2-3; 7-2-5a; 7-5-1, 7-5-2, 7-5-6; 7-5-10; 7-5-12; 7-5-13)

1. (2, 1.53%) OPI. A, 4/25, B-35
2. (2, 1.53%) Illegal forward pass. A, 4/20, B-30
3. (110, 83.97%) Illegal touching. A, 4/15, B-25
4. (17, 12.98%) Legal play

Matt: This is so petty (and, frankly, something none of us would call). Based on the description, A89 is neither a back (2-32-3) nor a lineman (2-32-9). So technically, he's not an eligible receiver based on his being in "no man's land." In reality, we would not call this and strive to make A89 legal.

Tim: If he is not a lineman he is a back.

K, 4/11, R-30. K's field goal attempt is short and rolling on the ground when a K player muffs it at the R-10. The ball continues to roll and comes to rest at the R-1, where it is touched but not controlled by another K player. After a second, an R player picks up the ball and runs 99 yards for a touchdown. (5-1-3e; 4-2-2f; 6-2-7)

1. (111, 84.09%) R, 1/10, R10
2. (6, 4.55%) R, 1/10, R-1

3. (15, 11.36%) R touchdown

Matt: When the kicked ball comes to rest and is touched, this play is dead (4-2-2f). However, the ball was first touched by K at the 10 so R has the right to take the ball at that spot (6-2-5)

Tim: Key statement was at rest. If the ball were still rolling and was touched it would be different.

The signal for a free-kick infraction is: (6-2 Pen; 6-1-2; 6-1-3b; 6-1-4)

1. (112, 86.15%) Signals 7 and 19

2. (18, 13.85%) Signal 19 only

Matt: Semantics. Technically these fouls happen prior to the kick (which is why we blow the play dead). As such, signal dead ball (S7) and then S19.

A, 4/3, A-26. Team A is in a scrimmage kick formation with four linemen numbered 50-79. A-90 is on the line inside flanker A-83, who is on the end of the right side of the line. The ball is snapped to the "punter" who throws a legal forward pass to A-90 at the A-35, where he is downed. (7-2-5b, Exc 2; 7-5-1; 7-5-6a; 7-5-12; 7-5-13)

1. (4, 3.03%) B, 1/10, A-30

2. (114, 86.36%) B, 1/10, A-21

3. (7, 5.30%) A, 4/8, A-21

4. (7, 5.30%) Legal play as A-90 was legally in the game as the SKF exception to the rule

Matt: Because A is in a scrimmage kick formation, there is a numbering exception which allows only 4 players 50-79 to be on the line (7-2-5b Ex). And A90 would normally be legal by number (7-5-6a). However, A90 is not an eligible receiver because he is not at the end of the line and covered up by A83 (7-5-6a). Therefore, this is illegal touching by an illegible receiver during a loose ball play. 5 yards from the previous spot and loss of down (which gives the ball to B). This goes to show how important it is to get eligibles during kicking plays.