



## **COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC**

### **BLOCKING BELOW THE WAIST—CLARIFICATION:** **“CRACKBACK” BLOCK**

This announcement is being issued as a clarification of Rule 9-1-6, Blocking Below the Waist. The rule as originally constructed inadvertently legalized the “crackback block” which has long been prohibited as a matter of player safety. This clarification has been approved by the NCAA Football Rules Committee and ratified by the Playing Rules Oversight Panel.

Here is the rule in its entirety, with the new language highlighted in red.

#### Blocking Below The Waist (9-1-6)

a. *Team A prior to a change of team possession:*

Consider a low-blocking zone seven yards on each side of the snapper extending five yards beyond the neutral zone and back to Team A’s end line (Rule 2-3-7 and Appendix D).

1. The following Team A players may legally block below the waist inside this zone until the ball has left the zone: (a) players on the line of scrimmage completely within this zone at the snap and (b) stationary backs who at the snap are at least partially inside the tackle box and at least partially inside the frame of the body of the second lineman from the snapper.
2. Players not covered in paragraph 1 (above) while the ball is still in the zone, and all players after the ball has left the zone, are allowed to block below the waist only if the force of the initial contact is from the front, but they may not block below the waist if the force of the initial contact is from the side or back. “From the front” is understood to mean within the clock-face region between “10 o’clock and 2 o’clock” forward of the player being blocked.
3. Once the ball has left the zone a player may not block below the waist toward his own end line.

**4. Players not covered in paragraph 1 (above) may not block below the waist toward the original position of the ball at the snap.**

*b. Team B prior to a change of team possession:*

1. Other than in paragraphs 2 and 3 (below), players of Team B may block below the waist only within the area defined by lines parallel to the goal line five yards beyond and behind the neutral zone extended to the sidelines. Blocking below the waist by players of Team B outside this area is illegal except against the ball carrier.

2. Players of Team B may not block below the waist against an opponent who is in position to receive a backward pass.

3. Players of Team B may not block below the waist against an eligible Team A pass receiver beyond the neutral zone unless attempting to get to the ball or ball carrier. This prohibition ends when a legal forward pass is no longer possible by rule.

*c. Kicks*

During a down in which there is a free kick or a scrimmage kick, blocking below the waist by any player is illegal except against a ball carrier.

*d. After change of team possession*

After any change of team possession, blocking below the waist by any player is illegal except against a ball carrier.

Modification of Approved Rulings

Please note these changes to Approved Rulings 9-1-6-IV and -VII for consistency with the new language in Rule 9-1-6.

**A.R. 9-1-6-IV**

Back A31, a flanker positioned to the left side of a formation, runs a deep reverse to the right side after receiving the ball from a teammate. End A82 at the snap is positioned 10 yards from the snapper on the right side of the formation. As A31 turns the corner A82 blocks B62 toward the left sideline. The block by A82 is below the waist and generally at the front but outside the “10 o’clock to 2 o’clock” width. The block occurs behind or one yard beyond the neutral zone. **RULING:** Illegal block below the waist because it is too much to the opponent’s side **and because it is directed toward the original position of the ball.** 15-yard penalty. Enforce at the previous spot if the foul occurs behind the neutral zone.

**A.R. 9-1-6-VII**

Back A22 is stationary or in motion inside the tackle box at the snap. As the play develops he leads a sweep to the right side and blocks below the waist against a linebacker after the ball carrier has left the low-blocking zone. **RULING:** Legal block as

long as the force of the initial contact is at the front within the “10-to-2 o’clock” region and is not toward Team A’s end line. **If A22 is in motion at the snap, his block is illegal if it is toward the original position of the ball.**

***Rogers Redding  
National Coordinator of Football Officials  
Secretary-Rules Editor  
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