



COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC

HELMET COMES OFF DURING PLAY: NEW RULINGS

Please note the following changes regarding a player's helmet coming off.

Helmet Comes Off Near The End Of The Down

When a player's helmet comes off near the end of a down it is quite possible that this happens after the ball is dead. The first play on the CFO "Helmets Come Off" video shows a good example, in which the receiver who catches the ball lands on his back and then his helmet comes off, just shortly after the ball becomes dead. The intent of the rule is that this player should leave the game for the next down.

To make the statement of the rules consistent with this intent, the phrase "through play" replaces "during the down" in the applicable rules. Here is the new language, with the changes shown in italics:

Rule 3-2-4-c

"13. An offensive team player's helmet comes off *through play*...."

Rule 3-3-2-e

"16. A player's helmet comes completely off *through play*."

Rule 3-3-9

"a. If a player's helmet comes completely off *through play*, other than as a direct result of a foul by an opponent, the player must leave the game for the next down....."

Continued Participation After the Helmet Comes Off

Questions have arisen about whether a player who loses his helmet may continue to play if he quickly puts the helmet back on. An earlier interpretation would allow this; however, that interpretation is no longer in effect. The applicable rule (9-1-17) now reads (new language in italics):

9-1-17

“A player whose helmet comes completely off during a down may not continue to participate beyond the immediate action in which he is engaged, *whether or not he puts his helmet back on during the down.*”

NOTE: This requires a change in Play 12 of the “Helmet Comes Off—Play Situations,” posted March 21, 2012. That play now reads:

12. During a down B55’s helmet comes off without a helmet foul by Team A. B55 immediately picks up his helmet, puts it on and continues to chase the ball carrier.

RULING: *Personal foul by B55* for continuing to participate after losing his helmet. The clock stops at the end of the down and B55 must leave the game for the next down.

Rogers Redding

Secretary-Rules Editor

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