

RULE 8

Scoring

SECTION 1. Value of Scores

Scoring Plays

ARTICLE 1. The point value of scoring plays shall be: (A.R. 8-3-2:IX)

Touchdown	6 points
Field Goal	3 points
Safety (points awarded to opponent)	2 points
Touchdown during try	2 points
Field Goal during try	1 point
Safety during try (point awarded to opponent)	1 point

Forfeited Games

ARTICLE 2. The score of a forfeited game, or a suspended game that later results in a forfeiture, shall be: Offended Team – 1, Opponent – 0. However, if the offended team is ahead at the time of forfeit, the score stands (Rules 3-3-3-a, 3-3-3-b, and 9-2-3).

SECTION 2. Touchdown

How Scored

ARTICLE 1. A touchdown shall be scored when:

- a. A ball carrier advancing from the field of play has possession of a live ball when it penetrates the plane of the opponent's goal line. This plane extends beyond the pylons only for a player who touches the ground in the end zone or a pylon. (A.R. 2-23-1:I) (A.R. 8-2-1:I-IX)
- b. A player catches a forward pass in the opponent's end zone. (A.R. 5-1-3:I-II)
- c. A fumble or backward pass is recovered, caught, intercepted, or awarded in the opponent's end zone (*Exceptions*: Rules 7-2-2-a Exception 2, 7-2-5 and 8-3-2-d-5). (A.R. 8-2-1:X)
- d. A free kick or scrimmage kick is legally caught or recovered in the opponent's end zone. (A.R. 6-3-9:III)
- e. The referee awards a touchdown under the provisions of Rule 9-2-3 Penalty.

Approved Ruling 8-2-1

- I. Ball carrier A1, while attempting to score, strikes the pylon located on the right intersection of the goal line and sideline with their foot. They are carrying the ball in their right arm, which is extended over the sideline. **RULING**: Whether or not a touchdown is scored depends on the forward progress of the ball as related to the goal line when the ball becomes dead by rule (Rules 4-2-4-d and 5-1-3-a). [Cited by 2-9-2, 4-2-4-d, 8-2-1-a]
- II. Ball carrier A1, advancing in the field of play, becomes airborne at the two-yard line. Their first contact with the ground is out of bounds three yards beyond the goal line. The ball, in possession of the ball carrier, passes over the pylon. **RULING**: Touchdown (Rule 4-2-4-d). [Cited by 2-9-2, 4-2-4-d, 8-2-1-a]
- III. The ball, in possession of airborne ball carrier A21, crosses the sideline above the one-yard line, continues beyond the pylon and is then declared dead out of bounds in possession of A21. **RULING**: Ball is declared out of bounds at the one-yard line (Rules 2-12-1 and 4-2-4-d). [Cited by 2-9-2, 4-2-4-d, 8-2-1-a]

- IV. Quarterback A12 completes a forward pass to a teammate who is standing in Team B's end zone. (a) A12 is beyond the neutral zone when they release the ball. (b) The receiver is wearing uniform number 73. **RULING:** In (a) and (b) the result of the play is a touchdown. The penalty is completed according to Team B's options. [Cited by 2-9-2, 8-2-1-a]
- V. Ball carrier A22 dives for the goal line at the B-1. The ball in their possession (a) touches the pylon; (b) goes over the top of the pylon; (c) crosses the goal line inside the pylon. A22 then first contacts the ground out of bounds three yards beyond the goal line. **RULING:** (a), (b) and (c) Touchdown in all three. The ball in A22's possession has broken the plane of the goal line in all three scenarios. [Cited by 2-9-2, 4-2-4-d, 8-2-1-a]
- VI. Ball carrier A22 heads for the right-hand pylon at the goal line. At the B-2 they dive or are blocked into the air by an opponent. The ball in A22's right hand crosses the sideline at the B-1 and passes outside the pylon, and then A22 (a) touches the pylon with their foot or left hand; (b) first touches the ground out of bounds three yards beyond the goal line. **RULING:** (a) Touchdown. The goal-line plane is extended since A22 touches the pylon. (b) Not a touchdown. The goal-line plane is not extended because A22 did not touch either the pylon or the ground in the end zone. The ball is ruled out of bounds at the B-1. [Cited by 2-9-2, 4-2-4-d, 8-2-1-a]
- VII. Ball carrier A22 heads for the right-hand pylon at the goal line. The ball in their right hand crosses the extension of the goal line outside (i.e., to the right of) the pylon, and then A22 steps (a) on the goal line; (b) on the sideline inches short of the goal line. **RULING:** (a) Touchdown. The goal-line plane is extended because A22 touches the ground in the end zone. (b) Not a touchdown. The goal-line plane is not extended. The ball is ruled out of bounds at the crossing point. [Cited by 2-9-2, 4-2-4-d, 8-2-1-a]
- VIII. Ball carrier A22 heads for the right-hand pylon at the goal line. The ball is in their right hand. Their foot hits the pylon just before the ball crosses (a) the pylon or (b) the extension of the goal line just to the right (outside) of the pylon. **RULING:** (a) and (b) No touchdown in either case. Because the pylon is out of bounds, the ball is dead when A22's foot hits it. Thus in both cases the ball is dead before it crosses the goal line. [Cited by 2-9-2, 4-2-4-d, 8-2-1-a]
- IX. Ball carrier A1 is hit and their forward progress stopped inbounds near the goal line at the sideline to their right. When they are stopped they have the ball in their right hand extended beyond the goal line (a) inside the pylon; (b) outside the pylon. **RULING:** (a) Touchdown. The ball became dead when they extended it beyond the goal-line plane. (b) Not a touchdown, because no part of their body touches either the pylon or the end zone. In this case the goal-line plane is not extended. [Cited by 2-9-2, 4-2-4-d, 8-2-1-a]
- X. Ball carrier A33 is running toward the Team B goal line. A33 drops the ball at the one-yard line, circles through the end zone and runs to the team area, believing a touchdown has been scored. There is no touchdown signal by any official. The fumbled ball hits the ground just outside the goal line, rolls along the ground in the end zone, and is declared dead there when it comes to rest and no player attempts to recover it. **RULING:** When a fumble comes to rest inbounds and no player attempts to secure the ball in advance of the spot of the fumble, the ball belongs to the fumbling team at the spot of the fumble. Team A's ball at the 1-yard line. [Cited by 8-2-1-c]

SECTION 3. Try Down

How Scored

ARTICLE 1. If the try results in what would be a touchdown, safety or field goal under rules governing play at other times, the point or points shall be scored according to the point values in Rule 8-1-1 (A.R. 8-3-1:I-II) (A.R. 8-3-2:I-III and VI) (A.R. 10-2-5:X, XII-XV).

Approved Ruling 8-3-1

- I. During a try, after having obtained possession, Team B fumbles and Team A recovers in the Team B end zone. **RULING:** Team B can fumble after intercepting a pass, catching or recovering a fumble or recovering a backward pass. Touchdown. Award Team A two points (Rule 8-3-2-d-1). [Cited by 8-3-1]
- II. B19 is the first player beyond the neutral zone to touch Team A's blocked kick try when B19 muffs the in-flight kick in the end zone. A66 recovers in the end zone. **RULING:** Award Team A two points. [Cited by 8-3-1]

Opportunity to Score

ARTICLE 2. A try is an opportunity for either team to score one or two points while the game clock is stopped after a touchdown or in the third or subsequent extra period(s). It is a special interval in the game which, for purposes of penalty enforcement only, includes both a down and the “ready” period that precedes it.

- a. The ball shall be put in play by the team that scored a six-point touchdown. If a touchdown is scored during a down in which time in the fourth period expires or in the second possession series of an extra period, the try shall not be attempted unless the point(s) would affect the outcome of the game.

Exceptions:

1. If the scoring team is ahead by one or two points, they have the option to forego the try.
 2. The try shall not be attempted if the fourth period ends due to a running clock before the ball is snapped.
- b. The try, which is a scrimmage down, begins when the ball is declared ready for play.
- c. The snap will be midway between the hash marks on the opponent’s three-yard line or from any other point on or between the hash marks on or behind the opponent’s three-yard line if the position of the ball is selected by the team designated to put the ball in play before the play clock is at 25 seconds or before any subsequent ready-for-play signal. The ball may be relocated after a Team B foul or a charged timeout to either team unless the timeout is preceded by a Team A foul or offsetting fouls (Rules 8-3-3-a and 8-3-3-c-1). **(A.R. 3-2-4:IV)**
- d. The try ends when:
1. Either team scores.
 2. The ball is dead by rule. **(A.R. 8-3-2:IV-VI)**
 3. An accepted penalty results in a score.
 4. A Team A loss-of-down penalty is accepted (Rule 8-3-3-c-2).
 5. Before a change of team possession, a Team A player fumbles and the ball is caught or recovered by any Team A player other than the fumbler. There is no Team A score. **(A.R. 8-3-2:VIII)**

Approved Ruling 8-3-2

- I. On a try attempt, B2 adds new impetus to a Team A fumble that is recovered in the Team B end zone by Team B. **RULING:** Safety, award Team A one point (Rules 8-3-1 and 8-5-1). [Cited by 8-3-1]
- II. On a try attempt, B2 kicks a Team A fumble into the Team B end zone where Team B recovers while grounded. **RULING:** Safety, one point for Team A, or Team A may accept the penalty for illegally kicking the ball (Rules 8-3-1 and 8-3-3-b-1) and repeat the down. [Cited by 8-3-1, 8-3-3-b-1]
- III. On a one-point try attempt, B2 blocks A1’s kick. The ball, which does not cross the neutral zone, is picked up by A2, and they advance the ball across Team B’s goal line. **RULING:** Award Team A two points (Rule 8-3-1). [Cited by 8-3-1]
- IV. On a one-point try attempt, Team A’s kick is blocked. A2 picks up the ball beyond the neutral zone in the field of play. **RULING:** The ball is dead where picked up by A2. The try is ended. [Cited by 8-3-2-d-2]
- V. On a one-point try attempt, Team A’s kick is blocked. The ball, untouched beyond the neutral zone, (a) is recovered by B3 on their one-yard line or (b) hits the ground in Team B’s end zone. **RULING:** (a) B3 may advance the ball. (b) The ball is dead, the try is ended (Rule 8-3-1). [Cited by 8-3-2-d-2]
- VI. On a one-point try attempt, Team A’s kick is blocked. B3 recovers the ball and advances across Team A’s goal line. During B3’s run, B4 clips. **RULING:** No score, the try is ended, and the penalty is enforced on the succeeding kickoff (Rules 10-2-7-a and 10-2-7-b). [Cited by 8-3-1, 8-3-2-d-2]
- VII. On a try attempt, B1 intercepts Team A’s legal forward pass in their end zone. They run the ball across Team A’s goal line, and (a) there are no fouls during the run, (b) B3 clips during the run or (c) A2 fouls during the run. **RULING:** (a) Award Team B two points. (b) No score, the try is ended, and the penalty is enforced on the succeeding kickoff (Rule 10-2-7-a). (c) Award Team B two points, and the penalty is enforced on the succeeding kickoff (Rules 8-3-1, 10-2-7-a and 10-2-7-b). [Cited by 10-2-7-b]

- VIII. On a try attempt, A1 muffs the hand-to-hand snap from the snapper. A2 recovers the ball and carries it into Team B's end zone. **RULING:** Award Team A two points (Rule 2-11-2). [Cited by 8-3-2-d-5]
- IX. On a one-point try attempt, Team A's kick is blocked and B75 recovers at the two-yard line. B75 then fumbles and the ball rolls into the end zone, where B61 recovers while grounded. **RULING:** Safety. Award Team A one point (Rule 8-1-1). [Cited by 8-1-1]

Fouls During a Try Before a Change of Team Possession

ARTICLE 3. a. *Offsetting fouls:* If both teams foul during the down and Team B fouls before the change of possession, the fouls offset and the down is repeated, even if additional fouls occur after the change of possession. Any repeat of the down after offsetting fouls must be from the previous spot. (A.R. 8-3-3:II, IV-V) (A.R. 10-2-5:XI).

b. *Fouls by Team B on a try:*

1. When the try is successful, Team A shall have the option of declining the score and repeating the try after enforcement, or declining the penalty(ies) and accepting the score. Team A may accept the score with penalties for personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls enforced on the succeeding kickoff or from the succeeding spot in extra periods. (A.R. 3-2-3:VI) (A.R. 8-3-2:II) (A.R. 8-3-3:I) (A.R. 10-2-5:IX-X)
2. A repeat of the down after a penalty against Team B may be from any point on or between the hash marks on or behind the yard line where the penalty leaves the ball. (A.R. 8-3-3:III)

c. *Fouls by Team A on a try:*

1. After a foul by Team A on a successful try, the ball shall be put in play at the spot where the penalty leaves it. (A.R. 8-3-3:I)
2. If Team A commits a foul for which the penalty includes loss of down, the try is over, and the score is cancelled, and no yardage penalty is assessed on the succeeding kickoff.
3. If before a change of team possession Team A commits a foul that is not offset, and during the down there is neither another change of team possession nor a score, the penalty is declined by rule.

d. *Dead-ball enforcement:*

1. Penalties for fouls occurring after the ball is ready for play and before the snap are enforced before the next snap.
2. Penalties for live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls occurring during the try down are enforced on the succeeding kickoff or from the succeeding spot in extra periods. If the try is repeated, these penalties are enforced on the repeat (Rule 10-1-6). (A.R. 3-2-3:VII)

e. *Roughing or running into kicker or holder:* Roughing or running into the kicker or holder is a live-ball foul.

f. *Kick catch interference:* The penalty for interference with a kick catch is declined by rule. Any score by Team A is cancelled.

Approved Ruling 8-3-3

- I. During a try attempt, Team A's legal kick, untouched and in the air, has crossed the neutral zone when a foul occurs. **RULING:** If the foul is by Team A and the try is unsuccessful, and Team B does not gain possession, the try ends. If the foul is by Team A and the try is successful, the penalty is at the previous spot. If the foul is by Team B and the try is successful, score the point unless Team A chooses to accept the penalty and attempt a two-point play. The try is exempt from postscrimmage kick enforcement. Penalties for Team B personal fouls on a successful try may be enforced on the subsequent kickoff or at the succeeding spot in extra periods. If the try is unsuccessful, Team A may accept the penalty and the down will be repeated. [Cited by 8-3-3-b-1, 8-3-3-c-1]
- II. Both teams foul during a try, and Team B had not gained possession. **RULING:** Repeat the down at the previous spot. [Cited by 8-3-3-a]
- III. Lined up for the try at the middle of the B-3, Team A commits a false start and is penalised to the B-8. The kick attempt is blocked, but B77 was in the neutral zone at the snap. The penalty takes the ball to the

B-4 for the repeat of the down. Team A requests that the ball be placed at the right hash mark. **RULING:** The officials grant the request and the ball is made ready for play at the B-4 on the right hash mark. [Cited by 8-3-3-b-2]

- IV. During a try, both teams foul before Team B intercepts a forward pass. On the return, (a) B23 clips or (b) A18 tackles the ball carrier by twisting their face mask. **RULING:** (a) and (b) The fouls offset and the down is repeated. [Cited by 8-3-3-a]
- V. During a try, B79 is in the neutral zone at the snap. B20 intercepts a forward pass and A55 tackles them by pulling the face mask. **RULING:** The fouls offset and the down is repeated. [Cited by 8-3-3-a]

Fouls During a Try After a Change of Team Possession

ARTICLE 4. Fouls after a change of team possession are treated specially (Rule 10-2-7). (**A.R. 8-3-4:I-IV**)

Approved Ruling 8-3-4

- I. B15 intercepts Team A's legal forward pass and is running at midfield when tackled by A19, who grasps and pulls B15's face mask. **RULING:** The penalty is enforced on the succeeding kickoff (Rule 10-2-7-a). [Cited by 8-3-4]
- II. B1 intercepts Team A's legal forward pass and runs it to midfield. During the run of the interception, B2 clips in Team B's end zone. **RULING:** The penalty is enforced on the succeeding kickoff (Rule 10-2-7-a). [Cited by 8-3-4]
- III. During a two-point try attempt, Team A is flagged for an illegal shift. B21 recovers a fumble and on the return, B45 clips and A80 punches an opponent. B21 carries the ball across the goal line. **RULING:** The score does not count, the fouls cancel, the down is not repeated and the try is ended. A80 is disqualified. [Cited by 10-2-7-c, 8-3-4]
- IV. During a two-point try attempt, Team A is flagged for an illegal shift. B21 recovers a fumble and on the return, A80 punches an opponent. B21 carries the ball across the goal line. **RULING:** The score counts and the penalty for A80's flagrant foul is enforced on the succeeding kickoff or at the succeeding spot in extra periods. A80 is disqualified. [Cited by 10-2-7-c, 8-3-4]

Fouls After a Try

ARTICLE 5. Penalties for fouls occurring after a try are enforced on the succeeding kickoff or from the succeeding spot in extra periods. However, if the try is repeated, these penalties are enforced before the repeat (Rule 10-1-6). (**A.R. 10-2-5:XIV-XVI**) (**A.R. 3-2-3:VII**)

Next Play

ARTICLE 6. After a try, the ball shall be put in play by a kickoff or at the succeeding spot in extra periods. The team scoring the six-point touchdown shall kick off.

SECTION 4. Field Goal

How Scored

- ARTICLE 1. a. A field goal shall be scored if a scrimmage kick, which may be a drop kick or place kick, passes over the crossbar between the uprights of the receiving team's goal before it touches a player of the kicking team or the ground.
- b. If a legal field goal attempt passes over the crossbar between the uprights and is dead beyond the end line or is blown back but does not return over the crossbar and is dead anywhere, it shall score a field goal. The crossbar and uprights are treated as a line, not a plane, in determining forward progress of the ball.

Next Play

ARTICLE 2. a. *Successful field goal.* After a field goal is scored, the ball shall be put in play by a kickoff or at the succeeding spot in extra periods. The team scoring the field goal shall kick off.

b. *Unsuccessful field goal attempt.*

1. When the ball is declared dead and is untouched by Team B after crossing the neutral zone, it belongs to Team B. Except in an extra period, Team B will snap the ball at either the previous spot, the 20-yard line or the dead-ball spot (whichever is most advantageous to Team B).
 - (a) The 20-yard-line snap shall be from midway between the hash marks unless Team B selects a different location on or between the hash marks before the ready-for-play signal.
 - (b) After the ready-for-play signal, the ball may be relocated after a charged team timeout, unless preceded by a Team A foul or offsetting fouls.
2. If the ball does not cross the neutral zone, or if Team B touches the ball after it crosses the neutral zone, all rules pertaining to scrimmage kicks apply. **(A.R. 6-3-4:II) (A.R. 8-4-2:I-VIII) (A.R. 10-2-3:V)**

Approved Ruling 8-4-2

- I. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's untouched field goal attempt rolls dead on Team B's seven-yard line. **RULING:** Team B's ball at Team B's 40-yard line. [Cited by 8-4-2-b-2]
- II. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's attempted field goal touches B1 at the 10-yard line and goes out of bounds at the five-yard line. **RULING:** Team B's ball at Team B's five-yard line. [Cited by 8-4-2-b-2]
- III. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's attempted field goal strikes the ground at the three-yard line and bounces into the end zone, where it is received in the air and then downed by a Team B player. **RULING:** Touchback (Rule 8-6-1-b). Team B's ball at the 20-yard line. [Cited by 8-4-2-b-2]
- IV. Fourth and eight on Team B's 18-yard line. Team A's unsuccessful field goal attempt goes out of the end zone. **RULING:** Team B's ball at the 20-yard line. [Cited by 8-4-2-b-2]
- V. Team A's unsuccessful field goal attempt strikes the ground beyond the neutral zone and bounces back across the neutral zone, where it is recovered by B1 and advanced into the end zone. **RULING:** Touchdown (Rule 6-3-5). [Cited by 6-3-5, 8-4-2-b-2]
- VI. Fourth and six on Team B's 18-yard line. Team A's unsuccessful field goal attempt strikes the ground beyond the neutral zone and bounces back across the neutral zone to Team B's 28-yard line, where it goes out of bounds or is recovered and downed by either team. The kick is untouched beyond the neutral zone. **RULING:** Team B's ball, first and 10 at Team B's 28-yard line (Rules 6-3-6, 6-3-7 and 8-4-2-b). [Cited by 8-4-2-b-2]
- VII. Team A snaps the ball at the B-15 to attempt a field goal. The kick is blocked, crosses the neutral zone and lands at the B-12. Before any player touches it beyond the neutral zone, the ball rebounds behind the neutral zone and goes out of bounds at the (a) B-17; (b) B-25. **RULING:** (a) Team B's ball, first and 10 at the B-20; (b) Team B's ball, first and 10 at the B-25. (Rules 6-3-7 and 8-4-2-b) [Cited by 6-3-7, 8-4-2-b-2]
- VIII. Fourth and goal at the B-10. The field goal attempt is blocked and hits the ground at the B-7. It then rebounds to the B-13 where B44 muffs it. A44 recovers at the B-11. **RULING:** First and 10 for Team A at the B-11. Team B has touched a scrimmage kick that has crossed the neutral zone. (Rule 6-3-3) [Cited by 6-3-3, 8-4-2-b-2]

SECTION 5. Safety

How Scored

ARTICLE 1. It is a safety when:

- a. The ball becomes dead out of bounds behind a goal line, except from an incomplete forward pass, or becomes dead in the possession of a player on, above or behind their own goal line, or becomes dead by rule, and the defending team is responsible for the ball being there. **(A.R. 6-3-1:IV) (A.R. 7-2-4:I) (A.R. 8-5-1:I-II, IV and VI-XII) (A.R. 8-7-2:II) (A.R. 9-4-1:VIII)**

When in question, it is a touchback, not a safety.

Exception: It is not a safety if a player between their own team's five-yard line and goal line:

- (a) intercepts a pass or fumble; or recovers an opponent's fumble or backward pass; or catches or recovers an opponent's kick; and

- (b) their original momentum carries them into their own end zone; and
- (c) the ball remains behind that team's goal line and is declared dead in that team's possession there. This includes a fumble that goes from the end zone into the field of play and out of bounds (Rule 7-2-4-a-1) or is at rest and no player attempts to secure it (Rule 7-2-5).

If conditions (a)-(c) are satisfied above, the ball belongs to this player's team at the spot where they gained possession.

- b. An accepted penalty for a foul leaves the ball on or behind the offending team's goal line. (*Exception:* Rules 10-2-7-c and 10-2-7-a). (**A.R. 8-5-1:III, V**) (**A.R. 10-2-2:VI**)

Approved Ruling 8-5-1

- I. A10, after receiving the snap in their own end zone, is downed with the ball resting on their goal line, its forward point being in the field of play. **RULING:** Safety. A part of the dead ball is on the ball carrier's goal line. [Cited by 2-9-2, 4-2-4-a, 5-1-3-a-1, 8-5-1-a]
- II. A scrimmage kick fails to cross the neutral zone, or crosses the neutral zone and is first touched by Team B, or is untouched and then rebounds into the end zone where it is declared dead in Team A's possession. **RULING:** Safety (Rule 8-7-2-a). [Cited by 8-5-1-a, 8-7-2-a]
- III. B1 intercepts a legal forward pass (not a try) deep in their end zone, and advances but does not get out of the end zone, where they are downed. During the run, B2 clips A1 in the end zone. **RULING:** Safety, since the penalty leaves the ball in Team B's possession in the end zone. [Cited by 8-5-1-b]
- IV. B1 intercepts a pass or fumble or catches a scrimmage or free kick between their five-yard line and the goal line, and their momentum carries them into the end zone. The ball remains in the end zone and is declared dead there in Team B's possession. **RULING:** Team B's ball at the spot where the pass or fumble was intercepted, or the kick was caught. The ruling is the same if B1 had recovered a fumble, a backward pass or a kick under similar circumstances. [Cited by 8-5-1-a]
- V. B1 intercepts a pass or fumble or catches a scrimmage or free kick between their five-yard line and the goal line, and their momentum carries them into the end zone. Before the ball is declared dead, B2 clips in the end zone. B1 does not get out of the end zone, and the ball is declared dead. **RULING:** Safety by penalty. The basic spot is the end of the run where B1 gained possession between the five-yard line and goal line, and the foul is behind the basic spot. [Cited by 8-5-1-b]
- VI. Team A's fumble or backward pass strikes the ground. Team B muffs the ball in an attempt to recover, but it crosses Team A's goal line, where Team A falls on the ball or the ball goes out of bounds from the end zone. **RULING:** Safety. The impetus came from the fumble or pass (Rule 8-7-2-a). [Cited by 8-5-1-a, 8-7-2-a]
- VII. A36 intends to punt from behind their goal line, but they muff the ball. After A36 recovers the ball, they run into the pylon at the intersection of the sideline and goal line. **RULING:** Safety, unless the entire ball is beyond the goal line as the ball carrier contacts the sideline or pylon. The ball is dead at its most forward point when A36 contacts the pylon or sideline (Rules 2-31-3 and 4-2-4-d). [Cited by 2-31-3-c, 4-2-4-d, 8-5-1-a]
- VIII. B40 intercepts a pass on Team B's four-yard line. Their momentum is taking them into the end zone when they fumble the ball on the one-yard line and (a) B40, the fumbler, recovers the fumble in the end zone, or (b) B45, a teammate of the fumbler, recovers the fumble in the end zone. **RULING:** Safety in both (a) and (b). [Cited by 8-5-1-a, 8-7-2-a]
- IX. B47 intercepts a pass at the B-3. Their momentum carries them into the end zone where they fumble. The ball rolls into the field of play. A33 recovers at the B-2 but they are hit and fumble. The ball rolls into the end zone and over the end line. **RULING:** Touchback. Team B's ball, first and 10 at the B-20. The momentum rule applies only if the ball remains in the end zone and is declared dead there. (Rule 8-6-1) [Cited by 8-5-1-a]
- X. Third and five at the B-20. Defensive back B44 intercepts a forward pass in their end zone. While still in the end zone they fumble the ball. It rolls forward, goes into the field of play, and in the scramble the ball goes back into the end zone (a) where B44 recovers while grounded; (b) and over the end line. **RULING:** (a) and (b) Safety, two points for Team A. The impetus for the ball going into the end zone the second time is B44's fumble. The scramble to recover the ball does not add new impetus. The momentum rule does not apply because the ball did not remain in the end zone. (Rule 8-7-2) [Cited by 8-5-1-a]
- XI. 4/Goal @ B-8. Runner A44 is hit at the B-5 and fumbles, and B54 bats the grounded loose ball at the B-3 back into their own end zone. A88 sees the loose ball and recovers while the ball is still in the end zone. **RULING:** Safety, score 2 points for Team A. The bat is a legal bat since B54 is batting the ball backward

(Rule 9-4-1-c), but B54 does add a new impetus to the ball and is responsible for the ball's progress into Team B's end zone (Rule 8-7-2-b-1). When A88 recovers the ball, the ball is declared dead based on the 4th down fumble rule (Rule 7-2-2-a Exception 2). The ruling is a safety because the ball becomes dead by rule in the end zone, and B54 is responsible for the ball being there (Rule 8-5-1-a). The safety rule and the fourth down fumble rule would seem to be in conflict here, but the spirit and intent of the safety rule is extremely specific to this play and would supersede the fourth down fumble rule which describes generally how recoveries by Team A on fourth down are handled. [Cited by 8-5-1-a]

- XII. After a safety, Team A free kick the ball by punting it from their own 20 yard line into a very strong wind. The wind blows the punt back over the kicker's head and it bounces at Team A's 15 yard line. The kick rolls into Team A's end zone where it comes to rest. In the confusion, no player attempts to recover the ball and it is declared dead. **RULING:** Safety. Rule 8-5-1-a prevails over any attempt to apply Rule 8-2-1-c. [Cited by 8-5-1-a]

Kick After Safety

ARTICLE 2. After a safety is scored, the ball belongs to the defending team at its own 20-yard line, and that team shall put the ball in play on or between the hash marks by a free kick that may be a punt, drop kick or place kick (**Exception:** Extra-period and try rules).

SECTION 6. Touchback

When Declared

ARTICLE 1. It is a touchback when:

- a. The ball becomes dead out of bounds behind a goal line, except from an incomplete forward pass, or becomes dead in the possession of a player on, above, or behind their own goal line and the attacking team is responsible for the ball being there (Rule 7-2-4-b) (**A.R. 7-2-4:I**) (**A.R. 8-6-1:I-III**)
- b. A kick becomes dead by rule behind the defending team's goal line and the attacking team is responsible for the ball being there (**Exception:** Rule 8-4-2-b). (**A.R. 6-3-4:III**)

Approved Ruling 8-6-1

- I. Team A's fumble strikes the pylon at the intersection of Team B's goal line and sideline. **RULING:** Touchback. Team B's ball at the 20-yard line (Rules 7-2-4-b and 4-2-3-b). [Cited by 2-31-3-c, 7-2-4-b, 8-6-1-a]
- II. B1 intercepts Team A's legal forward pass in their own end zone, after which A1 snatches the ball from their hand while in Team B's end zone. **RULING:** Touchdown. The ball is not automatically dead when intercepted, but it becomes dead when A1 gets possession. However, if in the judgement of the official there is perceptible time during which the Team B player made no attempt to advance after the interception, declaring a touchback is justified. [Cited by 8-6-1-a]
- III. Third and five at the B-20. Defensive back B44 intercepts a forward pass in their end zone. While still in the end zone they fumble the ball. It rolls forward, goes into the field of play, and in the scramble A33 kicks the ball into the end zone and over the end line. **RULING:** First and 10 for Team B at the B-30. The result of the play is a touchback, and therefore the basic spot for enforcement of the 10-yard penalty for illegally kicking the ball is the B-20. The touchback results because of the new impetus given by A33 kicking the ball. (Rules 2-16-1-a, 8-7-1, 10-2-2-d-2-a) [Cited by 8-6-1-a]

Snap After a Touchback

ARTICLE 2. After a touchback is declared, the ball belongs to the defending team at its own 20-yard line, unless the touchback results from a free kick, in which case the ball belongs to Team B at its 25-yard line. The ball shall be put in play on or between the hash marks by a snap (**Exception:** Extra-period rules). The snap shall be from midway between the hash marks, unless a different position on or between the hash marks is selected by the team designated to put the ball in play before the play clock is at 25 seconds or before any subsequent ready-for-play signal. After the ready-for-play signal, the ball may be relocated after a charged team timeout, unless preceded by a Team A foul or offsetting fouls.

SECTION 7. Responsibility and Impetus

Responsibility

ARTICLE 1. The team responsible for the ball being out of bounds behind a goal line or being dead in the possession of a player on, above or behind a goal line is the team whose player carries the ball or imparts an impetus to it that forces it on, above or across the goal line, or is responsible for a loose ball being on, above or behind the goal line.

Initial Impetus

- ARTICLE 2. a. The impetus imparted by a player who kicks, passes, snaps or fumbles the ball shall be considered responsible for the ball's progress in any direction even though its course is deflected or reversed after striking the ground or after touching an official or a player of either team (A.R. 6-3-4:III) (A.R. 8-5-1:II, VI and VIII) (A.R. 8-7-2:I-IV).
- b. Initial impetus is considered expended and the responsibility for the ball's progress is charged to a player:
1. If they kick a ball not in player possession or bat a loose ball after it strikes the ground.
 2. If the ball comes to rest and they give it new impetus by any contact with it, other than through forced touching (Rule 2-11-4-c).
- c. A loose ball retains its original status when there is new impetus.

Approved Ruling 8-7-2

- I. Ball carrier A1, advancing toward Team B's goal line, fumbles when B1 bats the ball from their hand or tackles them from the rear. In either case, A1 loses possession short of the goal line, and the ball goes into Team B's end zone where Team B recovers. **RULING:** Touchback. Impetus is charged to the fumble by Team A (Rule 8-6-1-a). [Cited by 7-2-4-b, 8-7-2-a]
- II. Any kick by Team A strikes the ground and a Team B player bats the ball across Team B's goal line, where Team B recovers it while grounded or it goes out of bounds. **RULING:** New impetus is given by Team B. Safety, two points for Team A. Batting the kick is considered to have destroyed the impetus of the kick and imparted a new impetus. However, merely touching or deflecting the kick, or being struck by it, does not destroy the impetus of the kick (Rule 8-5-1-a). [Cited by 8-5-1-a, 8-7-2-a]
- III. Team A punts. The ball is touched by Team B (no impetus added) and crosses Team B's goal line. Then Team B falls on the ball or the ball goes out of bounds from the end zone. **RULING:** Touchback. The same ruling applies if a kick in flight strikes Team B or is merely deflected by an attempted catch. Team B may recover and advance, and it is a touchback if a Team B player is downed in the end zone or goes out of bounds behind the goal line (Rule 8-6-1-a). [Cited by 8-7-2-a]
- IV. Team A free kicks from its 35-yard line. The ball is rolling on the ground on Team B's three-yard line when B10 kicks the ball into the end zone and over the end line. **RULING:** Safety, due to the new impetus by B10. Team B foul for illegally kicking the ball. If the penalty (10 yards) is accepted, the down is repeated with the free kick at the A-45. (Rules 9-4-4 and 10-2-2-d-4.) [Cited by 8-7-2-a, 9-4-4]