



BLOCKING BELOW THE WAIST CLARIFICATIONS

This memo will clarify some issues that have surfaced following the rule changes related to blocking below the waist.

1 – If Team A has normal splits by their lineman (or no splits), we rule the tackle box ends just outside the tackles for a balanced line and the back will need to “get a piece” of the offensive tackle to be considered within the tackle box. If they have wide splits, the tackle box extends no more than 5 yards from the ball and the back must be partially within that 5 yards to be considered in the tackle box.

2 – The neutral zone is expanded one yard beyond the line of scrimmage for the purposes of defining the tackle box for the linemen who are in the tackle box and legally allowed to block below the waist. Those linemen can go forward up to a yard beyond the neutral zone and still be considered in the tackle box when they block. There have been questions about the backs who come forward into the line to block. Those backs who are legally allowed to block below the waist in the tackle box will also get that leeway up to a yard beyond the neutral zone for their blocks, which must be 10-2 if below the waist.

3 – The interior linemen in the tackle box are not restricted to one low block during the down, nor are they restricted to blocking low ONLY on the initial line charge. However, their legal low blocks after the initial line charge must be 10-2.

4 – The “initial line charge” is not defined by a specific number of steps after the snap. It is a combination of time after snap and number of actions after the snap. If the block is the player’s 2d action after the snap, it is AFTER the initial line charge. The team A lineman in the tackle box who takes a quick step back or laterally just before blocking low can block from the side.

If you have any questions regarding this or any other rule, please email football@taso.org