**SAN DIEGO COUNTY FOOTBALL OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION - THE WEEKLY BULL FOR FLAG FOOTBALL – August 25, 2025**  
   
**Punt or Play?** – Teams have been reasonably quick in announcing their decision.  If there is hesitancy to respond, the referee should ask a second and final time.  If there is no response the referee will announce “Play” and start the 25-second play clock.  
   
**CA Mercy Rule** – The same as tackle football except the point margin is 21-points.  At the conclusion of the third quarter or any point thereafter, if there is a point differential of 21 or more points, a running clock shall be instituted for the remainder of the game regardless of the score.  The game clock shall stop only for a score, a free kick following a fair catch or awarded fair catch, a charged team timeout, a coach-referee conference or an official’s timeout.  This bylaw applies to all levels of play.  
   
**Penalty Enforcement** – If a runner advances beyond the line to gain, and is penalized for flag guarding.  The penalty is enforced from the spot of the foul, 10-yards, and if the ball is still beyond the line to gain, it is a first down at that spot.  If the 10-yard penalty takes the ball back behind the line to gain, the ball is placed at that spot, and the down will be replayed (not a loss of down).  
   
**Safety** – After a safety, the ball is placed at the 30-yard line.  
   
**The Clock** – The clock will stop for all penalties and then started immediately after the enforcement if the penalty is the only reason the clock was stopped.  The clock will start at the snap following a change of possession.  The clock will not stop on 1st downs (unless inside of 2-minutes of 2nd or 4th quarters).  If the clock stops for a first down inside of 2-minutes, the clock will be restarted when the ball is placed and marked ready-for-play.  
   
**No Place Kicks in California** – Do not attempt a place kick (PAT / field goal formation).  It was reported that a team was attempting to use a place kick instead of punting the ball.  Officials should prevent this from happening.   
   
**Illegal Batting** – A ball in player possession shall not be batted by a player of either team.  Causing a fumble by batting or slapping at the ball should be a foul and penalized.  Stripping the ball from the runner is also very hard to do because as soon as both players possess the ball and there is a struggle, it should be considered joint possession, progress stopped and the ball remains with the offense.  
   
**Overtime:**  
(a) If the 4th quarter ends in a tie, overtime will commence for varsity contests.  
(b) For junior varsity and Freshman contests, coaches and game officials will agree before the start of the game whether overtime will be played. If an agreement is not reached prior to the start of the contest, no overtime will be played for JV and Freshman games.  
(c) A coin toss shall decide which team chooses first. The visiting team will call the toss.  
(d) The coin toss winner can choose to be on offense first, defense or select the end of the field that overtime will be played on. The loser of the toss shall exercise the remaining option for the first extra period and have the first choice of options for subsequent even-numbered extra periods.  
(e) Each team will receive one (1) timeout per extra period (offensive and defensive possession). Unused extra-period timeouts may not be carried over to other extra periods. Timeouts between periods shall be charged to the succeeding period.  
(f) Each extra period shall consist of a two-possession series, with each team putting the ball in play by snapping on the designated 20-yard line (unless relocated by penalty), which becomes the opponent’s 20-yard line. The line to gain is always the goal line, regardless of whether a penalty enforcement puts the ball more than 20 yards from the goal line to start a new series of downs.  
(g) Possession series: Each team retains the ball during a possession series until it scores or fails to reach the endzone. The ball remains alive after a change of team possession until it is declared dead. However, Team A may not have a first down if it regains possession after a change of team possession.  
(h) There shall be an equal number of possession series, as described in (f) above, in each extra period, unless Team B scores.  
(i) By the regulation play procedures, teams may attempt a 1-point or a 2 point try after a touchdown is scored. (i) Beginning in the 3rd and subsequent overtime periods, both teams must attempt a 2-point try after a successful score.  
(j) The game clock is not needed during extra periods. Regulation play procedures will keep the 25/40 second play clock in effect.  
(k) The ball is live after a turnover in overtime. Team B may return the ball for a touchdown.  
(l) Fouls During a Try or in Overtime After a Change of Team Possession:  
(i) A score by a team committing a foul during the down is canceled. Exception: Live-ball fouls are treated as dead-ball fouls.  
(ii) If both teams foul during the down and the defensive team had not fouled before the change of possession, the fouls are canceled, and the down is not repeated.  
(iii) Penalties against either team are declined by rule. 1. Exception: Penalties for flagrant personal fouls, unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, dead-ball personal fouls, and live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls are enforced from the succeeding spot (20-yard line)  
   
**More on Legal Screen Blocking and Illegal Blocking**  
**Screen blocking** is taking a position to obstruct the path of an opponent without contacting the opponent with any part of the blocker's body.  After assuming a legal position, a screen blocker may move to maintain a legal position by moving in the same direction or path as the opponent.  Screen blocking shall take place without initiating contact during the process of the block.  
   
CIF has given everyone the language of “right of place” and “right of way”, and “contact with impact” to assist in this.  Remember, Right of Place supersedes Right of Way.   Establishing a stationary stance and obstructing your opponent’s path is Right of Place. If there is CONTACT, someone has committed a foul.  Contact with Impact is intended to allow for a gentle brush of shoulders or a light touch on a player, without it being considered a foul.  The NFHS rule book is obvious, legal screen blocking will take place without contact.