

RULE 12

Instant replay

SECTION 1. Definition

Definition

ARTICLE 1. Instant replay is a system utilizing electronic means to review and assist game officials with certain on-field decisions as listed in Section 3.

SECTION 2. Eligibility for Instant Replay

Participation

- ARTICLE 1. a. Any member institution may use instant replay. This rule is permissive, not a requirement. If instant replay is used, it must be used in full compliance with this rule.
- b. For any non-conference game, if the home team is using instant replay, the visiting team does not have the option of declining its use for that game. If the home team is not using instant replay, the visiting team does not have the option of requesting that it be used in that game.

SECTION 3. Reviewable Plays

Side Line, Goal Line, End Line

ARTICLE 1. Reviewable plays governed by a side line, goal line or an end line include:

- a. Scoring plays, including a runner in possession of a live ball breaking the plane of a goal line. This includes field goal attempts only if the ball is ruled (a) below or above the crossbar, or (b) inside or outside the uprights when it is lower than the top of the uprights. If the ball is higher than the top of the uprights, the play may not be reviewed.
 - b. A pass ruled complete, incomplete or intercepted at a side line, goal line an end line.
 - c. A runner or pass receiver ruled in or out of bounds. If a runner is ruled out of bounds, the play is not reviewable.
 - d. Recovery of a loose ball in or out of bounds in the field of play or an end zone.
 - e. A loose ball touching a side line, goal line or an end line.
- **Approved Ruling 12-3-1**
 - I. First and 10 on the Team A 30-yard line. Ball carrier A22 s run takes him very close along the sideline, until he is pushed out of bounds at the B-24. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding A22 possibly stepping on the sideline during his run before being pushed out.
 - II. First and 10 on the A-20. Ball carrier A22 runs to the A-28 and fumbles. B77 falls on and gains possession of the ball at the A-30, possibly with his foot touching the sideline. Officials rule that the ball belongs to Team B. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether B77 was contacting the sideline when he touched the ball. Replay official should remember the possibility of a forward fumble out of bounds.
 - III. First and 10 on the Team A 4-yard line. A22 fumbles and B45 recovers near Team A's goal

line. Officials award the ball to Team B at the Team A 1-yard line. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding where the fumble was recovered in relation to the goal line. Possible touchdown for Team B.

- IV. First and 10 at the A-2. Ball carrier A22 fumbles when hit. B45 possesses the loose ball in Team A's end zone, possibly with his right knee down, but A22 knocks the ball out of B45's hands and A10 recovers the loose ball in the end zone. Officials rule Team A recovered for a safety. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether B45 was down when he recovered the ball. Possible touchdown for Team B.
- V. First and goal on the B-5. Ball carrier A22 loses possession as he nears Team B's goal line and the officials signal touchdown. The ball rolls out of bounds in the end zone. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether A22 lost possession before the ball broke the plane of the goal line.
- VI. First and 10 on the B-35. B45 intercepts a forward pass near his one-yard line and continues into the end zone where he is tackled. Officials rule the momentum exception to a safety applies and award Team B the ball at its one-yard line. Potentially the ball in B45's possession had broken the plane of the goal line when B45's foot came down at the one-yard line. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether B45 caught the ball before or after it broke the plane of the goal line.
- VII. First and 10 on the A-20. Wide receiver A88 catches a pass at the 50 and carries the ball across Team B's goal line. Officials flag A88 for illegal touching after he apparently stepped on the sideline at the A-38 prior to the catch. It is possible that A88 was blocked out of bounds by his defender. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether A88 contacted the sideline, but not reviewable regarding whether he was blocked out of bounds.
- VIII. Fourth and 5 on the A-20. B45 muffs a punt at the 50. A80 recovers very close to the sideline at the B-45, and the officials award the ball to Team A. It is possible that A80's right foot was touching the sideline as he made the recovery. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether A80 was touching the sideline.
- IX. Team A's punt apparently hits a sideline at the Team B 27-yard line. The ball bounces back toward the middle of the field where B25 picks it up and carries it across Team A's goal line. The officials rule touchdown. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether the ball hit the sideline.
- X. A punt hits the ground untouched very close to Team B's goal line and then bounces to the B-5. There B45 recovers and returns the ball to the B-38, where he is tackled. Officials give the ball to Team B at that spot. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether the ball touched the goal line.
- XI. Fourth and 10 on the B-35. Team A's field goal attempt is ruled good. The ball goes very close to the upright and is possibly wide to the left. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether the ball was between the uprights if it was below the top of the uprights. Not reviewable if the ball crossed the plane of the goal posts above the top of the uprights.

Passes

ARTICLE 2. Reviewable plays involving passes include:

- a. A pass ruled complete, incomplete or intercepted anywhere in the field of play or an end zone.
- b. A legal forward pass touched by an originally ineligible receiver.
- c. A legal forward pass touched by a defensive player.
- d. A fumble ruled on the part of a potential passer. (*Note: If the on-field ruling is forward pass and the pass is incomplete, the play is not reviewable.*)
- e. A forward pass or forward handing ruled when a runner is beyond the line of scrimmage.
- f. A forward pass or forward handing ruled after a change of possession.
- g. A pass ruled forward or backward when thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

(Note: If the pass is ruled forward and is incomplete, the play is not reviewable).

• **Approved Ruling 12-3-2**

- I. Third and five on the Team A 30-yard line. In attempting to catch a low pass in the middle of the field, the receiver at the B-45 attempts to get his hands under the ball and control it. The pass is ruled incomplete. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether the pass was complete. If the ruling on the field is reversed, it will be Team A's ball, first and 10 at the B-45.
- II. First and 10 on the Team A 20-yard line. A10 throws a pass toward eligible A80 near the sideline at the A-35. A80 leaps, completes the catch, and carries the ball across Team B's goal line. Officials say A80 was touching the side line as he gained possession and rule the pass incomplete. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether A80 was out of bounds when he gained possession. Note that if the ruling on the field is reversed, the offense is entitled to the catch but not the advance.
- III. First and 10 on the Team A 20-yard line. A10 scrambles and throws a pass that is completed for an apparent touchdown. The line judge flags A10 for being beyond the neutral zone when he throws the pass. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether the passer was completely beyond the neutral zone when he released the ball.
- IV. Third and 10 at the A-30. A forward pass directed toward A80 is incomplete, but B45 is flagged for defensive pass interference. The pass possibly was tipped at the line of scrimmage by B77. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether B77 touched the pass. Note the possible cancellation of the foul for defensive pass interference.
- V. Second and 10 at the 50. As B45 dives trying to intercept a forward pass, his action results in the ball bouncing off his hands and high into the air. A80 catches the ball and runs for an apparent touchdown. The back judge rules the pass incomplete. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether the pass is complete or incomplete. If the ruling on the field is reversed, the ball is dead where A80 gained possession.
- VI. First and 10 on the B-20. Flanker A88 moves from the backfield toward the line of scrimmage where he is set at the snap, apparently "covering up" tight end A80. A80 goes downfield and catches a pass. **RULING:** Not reviewable.
- VII. Fourth and 10 on the Team B 20-yard line. A10 drops back to pass, is hit and loses possession of the ball. Eligible A22 catches the ball in mid-air at the Team B 25-yard line and runs to the B-5. The referee rules a forward pass. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether it is a pass or fumble. If the ruling on the field is reversed, a fourth-down fumble is created.

Miscellaneous

ARTICLE 3. Miscellaneous reviewable plays include:

- a. A runner judged not to have been down by rule.
- b. A ball carrier judged to have been down by rule when the recovery of a fumble by an opponent or teammate occurs in the immediate action following the fumble and is prior to any official signalling that the ball is dead.

NOTE:

1. If the ball carrier is judged down by rule and the replay official does not have indisputable video evidence as to which player recovers the fumble, the ruling of down-by-rule stands.
2. If the ruling of down-by-rule is reversed, the ball belongs to the recovering player at the spot of the recovery and any advance is nullified.
- c. A ball carrier judged to have been out of bounds when his immediate action takes him into the opponent's end zone and is prior to any official signalling that the ball is dead.
- d. A runner's forward progress with respect to a first down.
- e. Touching of any type kick by any player.

- f. The number of players participating by either team during a live ball.
- g. A scrimmage kicker beyond the line of scrimmage when the ball is kicked.
- h. Clock adjustment when a ruling on the field is reversed. The replay official may correct an egregious game-clock error.
- i. A fumble recovery by a Team A player during fourth down or a try and before any change of possession.
- j. A kick that is advanced by the kicking team after a muff or fumble by the receiving team.
- k. Correcting the number of a down. (*Note: The correction may be made at any time within that series of downs or before the ball is legally put in play after that series.*)
- l. Any person who is not a player interfering with live-ball action occurring in the field of play (Rules 9-1-5 and 9-2-3-c).

• **Approved Ruling 12-3-3**

- I. On the opening kickoff at the A-30, Team A tries an onside kick. A80 has his feet at the Team A 39-yard line when he picks up the ball that is on the ground apparently at the Team A 41-yard line. Officials rule illegal touching. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether the ball had gone 10 yards before being touched by Team A.
- II. On an onside kick attempt at the A-30, the ball is apparently first touched by A20 at Team A's 36-yard line and then is recovered by A80 at the A-45. Officials award the ball to Team A at the 45. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding possible touching by A20.
- III. On the kickoff to open the second half, the officials rule that B45 touched the ball before it went out of bounds at the A-47 and give Team B the ball at that spot. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding possible touching by B45. If B45 did not touch the ball, there is a foul by Team A for a free kick out of bounds.
- IV. With five seconds remaining in the fourth quarter, the kickoff goes between the legs of receiver B15 and out of bounds at the B-5. Officials rule the ball touched B15 and wind the clock accordingly. The game clock runs down to 0:00 during the play. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding possible touching by B15. If the ruling on the field is reversed, there is a Team A foul for a free kick out of bounds and the game clock should be re-set to 0:05.
- V. First and 10 on the A-20. Ball carrier A40 runs to the A-25 where he loses the ball. B15 recovers. Officials rule fumble and award possession to Team B. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether A40 was down before losing the ball.
- VI. First and 10 on the A-20. A22 carries to the A-25 where he loses possession of the ball, which is quickly recovered by B79. The line judge rules A22 down. **RULING:** Reviewable because of the immediate recovery.
- VII. First and 10 on the A-20. A22 carries to the Team A 25-yard line, where he loses possession of the ball, which quickly becomes buried under a pile of players. The head linesman rules A22 down. **RULING:** Reviewable because the ball was immediately recovered. If the replay official cannot determine which player recovered the ball, the ruling on the field stands.
- VIII. Second and goal on the B-9. Ball carrier A22 is hit, stumbles forward and finally goes completely to the ground at the Team B 2-yard line. The line judge rules him down at the B-5. **RULING:** Not reviewable. The play does not involve a first down, sideline or a score.
- IX. A80 voluntarily touches a sideline while running downfield to cover a punt, then downs the ball at the B-37. Officials rule a foul by A80 for illegally returning inbounds. It is possible that A34 touched the ball at the B-40 before it was downed by A80. **RULING:** Reviewable for possible touching by A34. Not reviewable for A80 going out of bounds.
- X. Team A's punt goes out of bounds untouched at the B-9. The officials mark the ball at the B-7. **RULING:** Not reviewable. The play did not involve the ball hitting a sideline or the kick being touched.

- XI. First and 10 on the A-20. A low pass that A80 apparently catches on his knees at the Team A 35-yard line is ruled complete. The game clock shows 10:00 remaining. After setting the chains and re-starting the game clock, the replay official stops the game to review the play with 9:40 on the clock. **RULING:** Reviewable, regarding whether the pass was complete or incomplete. If the ruling on the field is reversed, the game clock will be adjusted to 10:00 and started on the snap.

Limitations on Reviewable Plays

ARTICLE 4. No other plays or officiating decisions are reviewable. However, the replay official may correct egregious errors. This excludes fouls that are not specifically reviewable (Reviewable fouls: Rules 12-3-2-e, 12-3-2-f, 12-3-3-f and 12-3-3-g).

• Approved Ruling 12-3-4

- I. On a kickoff to start the game, A12 attempts an onside kick. The ball possibly hits the ground as soon as it leaves the tee and bounds high in the air to the Team A 43-yard line, where B25 signals for a fair catch. A20 contacts B25 before the ball arrives and A30 recovers it. Officials rule kick-catch interference. **RULING:** Not reviewable.
- II. On an onside kick attempt, the untouched ball goes out of bounds apparently at the Team A 39-yard line. The officials mark the ball at the Team A 41-yard line and give possession to Team B at that spot. **RULING:** Not reviewable.
- III. Team A kicks off and the ball apparently goes out of bounds at the Team B 1-yard line. Officials rule touchback. **RULING:** Not reviewable. However, the play would be reviewable regarding whether the ball possibly hit the pylon, and if it did, the ruling from the replay official would be a touchback.
- IV. First and 10 on the A-20. A22 carries to the A-25 and fumbles. A80 and B45 both dive for the ball and possibly recover it simultaneously in the middle of the field. Officials gave the ball to Team B. **RULING:** Not reviewable.
- V. First and 10 on the Team B 20-yard line. A22 catches a screen pass and runs for an apparent touchdown. A70 possibly was down field at the B-15 prior to the pass was thrown. **RULING:** Not reviewable.
- VI. First and 10 on the A-20. A10 is under pressure and throws a pass that lands incomplete behind the line of scrimmage. The referee flags A10 for intentional grounding. It is possible that eligible A22 was within two yards of the ball when it hit the ground. **RULING:** Not reviewable.
- VII. Fourth and 7 on the A-23. A80 voluntarily touches a sideline while running downfield to cover a punt. B45 muffs the punt, and A80 recovers at the B-30 yard line. **RULING:** Not reviewable.
- VIII. During a punt, A80 contacts receiver B45 before B45 touches the ball. The ball bounces off B45 and rolls to the Team B 35-yard line, where A88 recovers. Team A is awarded possession. **RULING:** Not reviewable.
- IX. During Team A's punt, B45 clearly signals for a fair catch. The ball hits the ground and bounces to B45, who returns it for an apparent touchdown. The officials on the field do not declare the ball dead when B45 recovers it. **RULING:** Not reviewable. However, the replay official may correct an egregious error.
- X. Team A's punt bounces untouched into Team B's end zone for a touchback when the game clock reads 7:35 in the first quarter. Team B will have the ball at its 20-yard line. After the ball is dead, the officials on the field do not notice that the game clock continues to run. When the referee declares the ball ready for play, the game clock reads 6:22. **RULING:** Although there is no play to review, the replay official may interrupt the game before the ball is snapped and correct the clock error. He instructs the referee to announce that the game clock should be set to 7:35.

SECTION 4. Instant Replay Personnel, Equipment and Location

Personnel

ARTICLE 1. Instant replay personnel shall consist of the number of persons needed to operate the replay equipment within the necessary time constraints. A minimum of three persons shall be utilized to ensure that all plays are reviewed in an efficient and a timely manner. Such persons are normally referred to as replay official, communicator and technician. Additional persons may be used as needed.

Equipment

ARTICLE 2. ∇ The type of equipment used to carry out necessary instant replay duties shall be determined by each conference or member institution utilizing instant replay.

Location

ARTICLE 3. a. All equipment used in making a decision during the replay process and the personnel using that equipment shall be located in a separate, secure location in the press box. This room shall not be available or accessible to any person not directly involved in instant replay.

b. Additional telephonic equipment needed to allow instant reply personnel to communicate with the game referee when a game has been stopped for a play review shall be located on a side line near the field of play and preferably outside a team area. Such equipment shall provide the game referee and the replay official a secure and private means of communication.

SECTION 5. Initiating the Replay Process

Game Stop

ARTICLE 1. There are two methods to stop a game to review a ruling on the field.

a. The replay official and his crew shall review every play of a game. He may stop a game at any time before the ball is next legally put in play (Rule 12-3-3-k) whenever he believes that:

1. There is reasonable evidence to believe an error was made in the initial on-field ruling.
2. The play is reviewable.
3. Any reversal of an on-field ruling, which would result from indisputable video evidence, would have a direct, competitive impact on the game.

b. The head coach of either team may request that the game be stopped and a play be reviewed by challenging the on-field ruling.

1. A head coach initiates this challenge by taking a team time out before the ball is next legally put in play (Exception: Rule 12-3-3-k) and informing the referee that he is challenging the ruling of the previous play. If a head coach's challenge is successful, he retains the challenge, which he may use only once more during the game. Thus, a coach may have a total of two challenges if and only if his initial challenge is successful.
2. After a review has been completed, if the on-field ruling is reversed, that team's time out will not be charged.

3. After a review has been completed, and the on-field ruling is not reversed, the charged team time out counts as one of the three permitted that team for that half or the one permitted in that extra period.
 4. A head coach may not challenge a ruling in which the game was stopped and a decision has already been made by the replay official.
 5. If a head coach requests a team time out to challenge an on-field ruling and the play being challenged is not reviewable, the time out shall count as one of the three permitted his team during that half of the game or the one permitted in that extra period.
 6. A head coach may not challenge an on-field ruling if all the team's timeouts have been used for that half or in that extra period.
- **Approved Ruling 12-5-1**
 - I. Trailing 28-0 midway through the fourth quarter, Team A has third and 10 at its 20-yard line. Ball carrier A22 is downed, with his knee touching the Team A 29-yard line. Officials spot the ball at the Team A 29-yard line, although A22 had possibly extended the ball to the Team A 31-yard line when his knee hit the ground. **RULING:** In principle, this is a reviewable play, regarding a possible first down. However, given the score and the time, this play would not be reviewed due to the lack of a direct competitive impact on the game. If the head coach challenges the ruling, the challenge is honored because the rules allow for the play to be reviewed.
 - II. A head coach has not yet used his challenge when he decides to challenge a play that is reviewable. The challenge is successful, with the ruling on the field being reversed by the replay official. **RULING:** The team is not charged with a timeout. The head coach may challenge one more reviewable play during the game.

When to Stop a Game

- ARTICLE 2. a. A game may be stopped, either by the replay official or by a head coach's challenge at any time before the ball is next legally put in play (**Exception:** Rule 12-3-3-k).
- b. No game official may request that a game be stopped and a play be reviewed.

SECTION 6. Reviewing an On-field Ruling

Procedures

- ARTICLE 1. a. When a game is to be stopped either by the replay official or by a head coach's challenge, the designated officials on the field will be notified by a buzzer system or other appropriate means.
- b. The referee shall announce that the ruling on the field is being reviewed. If the game has been stopped due to a head coach's challenge, the referee will so indicate in his announcement.
 - c. All reviews shall be based upon video evidence provided by and coming directly from the televised production of the game or from other video means available to the replay official.
 - d. After the referee has conferred with the replay official and the review process has been completed, he shall make one of the following announcements:
 1. If the video evidence confirms the on-field ruling:
"After review, the ruling on the field is confirmed."
 2. If there is no indisputable (conclusive) evidence to reverse the onfield ruling:

"After review, the ruling on the field stands."

3. If the on-field ruling is reversed:

"After review, the ruling is [followed by a brief description of the video evidence].

Therefore, [followed by a brief description of what the reversal means]."

- e. If a ruling is reversed, the replay official shall supply the referee with all pertinent data as needed (next down, distance, yard line, position of the ball, clock status/adjustment) in order to resume play under the correct game conditions.

Time Restrictions

ARTICLE 2. a. There is no restriction on the number of times the replay official may stop a game to review an on-field ruling.

- b. Once a game has been stopped to review a play, regardless of how it was stopped, there is no time limit for the review process.

SECTION 7. Reversing an On-Field Ruling

Criterion for Reversal

ARTICLE 1. In order to reverse an on-field ruling, the replay official must see indisputable video evidence through one or more video replays provided to the monitor.