

# RULE 8

## Scoring

### SECTION 1. Value of Scores

#### Scoring Plays

ARTICLE 1. The point value of scoring plays shall be:

Touchdown	6 Points
Field Goal	3 Points
Safety (points awarded to opponents)	2 Points
Successful Try Touchdown	2 Points
Successful Try Field Goal	1 Point
Successful Try Safety	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. If the offended team is ahead at the time of forfeit the score stands (Rules 3-3-3-a and 3-3-3-b, and Rules 9-2-3-a and 9-2-3-b).

### 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. (**Exception:** Rule 4-2-4-e) (**A.R. 2-23-1:I**) (**A.R. 8-2-1:I-IV**)
  - 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 (**Exception:** Rules 7-2-2-a-2 and 8-3-2-d-5). (**A.R. 7-2-4:I**)
  - d. A free kick or scrimmage kick is legally caught or recovered in the opponent's end zone. (**A.R. 6-3-9:VI**)
  - e. The referee awards a touchdown under the provisions of Rule 9-1-5 Penalty or Rule 9-2-3 Penalty.
- **Approved Ruling 8-2-1**
    - I. The ball carrier is thrown or falls to the ground on his opponent's one-yard line, but his momentum causes him to slide across the goal line. **RULING:** Not a touchdown unless the ball's forward point was on, above or across the goal line when any part of the ball carrier's body except his hand or foot struck the ground (Rules 4-1-3-b and 5-1-3). [Cited by 2-9-2, 5-1-3-a, 8-2-1-a]
    - II. Ball carrier A1, while attempting to score, strikes the pylon located on the right intersection of the goal line and sideline with his foot. He is carrying the ball in his 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, 5-1-3-a, 8-2-1-a]

- III. Ball carrier A1, advancing in the field of play, becomes airborne at the two-yard line. His first contact with the ground is out of bounds three yards beyond the goal line. The ball, in possession of the ball carrier, passed over the pylon. **RULING:** Touchdown (Rule 4-2-4-e). [Cited by 2-9-2, 4-2-4-e, 5-1-3-a, 8-2-1-a]
- IV. The ball, in possession of airborne ball carrier A21, crosses the sideline above the one-yard line, penetrates the plane of the goal line extended 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-e). [Cited by 2-9-2, 4-2-4-e, 5-1-3-a, 8-2-1-a]
- V. 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 he releases 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.

## SECTION 3. Try Down

### How Scored

ARTICLE 1. The point or points shall be scored according to the point values in Rule 8-1-1 if the try results in what would be a touchdown, safety (**Exception:** Rule 8-3-4-a) or field goal under rules governing play at other times. (A.R. 8-3-1:I-III) (A.R. 8-3-2:I-III, V and VIII) (A.R. 10-2-5:X-XVIII)

- **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. Team B intercepts Team A's legal forward pass and returns the ball for a touchdown. **RULING:** Award Team B two points. Team B will receive the next free kick, or extra-period rules govern (Rule 8-3-2-a). [Cited by 8-3-1]
- III. B19 is the first player beyond the neutral zone to touch Team A's blocked PAT kick when he muffs the kick in the end zone. A66 recovers in the end zone. **RULING:** Award Team A two points. [Cited by 8-3-1]
- IV. During a try, after having gained possession on the one-yard line, Team B fumbles there and then recovers, and is downed in the Team B end zone. **RULING:** Safety. Award Team A one point (Rule 8-1-1).

### 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. 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, the try shall not be attempted unless the point(s) would affect the outcome of the game.
- 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 inbounds lines on the opponent's three-yard line or from any other point on or between the inbounds lines 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 ready-for-play signal. The ball may be relocated after a charged timeout to either team unless preceded by a Team A foul or offsetting penalties (Rules 8-3-3-a and 8-3-3-c-1).

- d. The try ends when:
1. Either team scores.
  2. The ball is dead by rule. **(A.R. 8-3-2:IV and 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:IX-XI)**
- **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 replay 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 he advances 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 is advanced by ball carrier B1 across Team A's goal line. **RULING:** Award Team B two points (Rule 8-3-1). [Cited by 8-3-1]
    - VI. 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 his 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]
    - VII. On a one-point try attempt, Team A's kick is blocked. The ball is recovered by B3 and advanced across Team A's goal line. During B3's run, B4 clips. **RULING:** No score, the try is ended, and the penalty is declined by rule (Rule 8-3-4-b). [Cited by 8-3-4-b]
    - VIII. On a try attempt, B1 intercepts Team A's legal forward pass in his end zone. He runs 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 declined by rule. (c) Award Team B two points, and the penalty is declined by rule. (Rules 8-3-1, 8-3-4-a and 8-3-4-b). [Cited by 8-3-1]
    - IX. On a try attempt, A1 muffs the hand-to-hand snap from the snapper and it is recovered by A2, who runs it into the opponent's end zone. **RULING:** Award Team A two points (Rule 2-11-2). [Cited by 8-3-2-d-5]
    - X. On a try attempt, A10 snaps the ball over the head of the holder or the holder muffs the ball. It is recovered by A3, who runs it into the end zone. **RULING:** Award Team A two points. [Cited by 8-3-2-d-5]
    - XI. On a try attempt, quarterback A2, running an option play, throws a backward pass that is muffed and recovered by A9, who runs it into the end zone. **RULING:** Award Team A two points. [Cited by 8-3-2-d-5]
    - XII. On a one-point try attempt, Team A's kick is blocked and B75 recovers at the two-yard line. As B75 attempts to advance, he fumbles and the ball rolls into the end zone, where B61 recovers and is downed. **RULING:** Safety. Award Team A one point (Rule 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 replayed, even if additional fouls occur after the change of possession. Any replay after offsetting fouls must be from the previous spot. **(A.R. 8-3-3:II)**

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

1. 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 enforced on the succeeding kickoff or from the succeeding spot in extra periods. **(A.R. 3-2-3:VII) (A.R. 8-3-2:II) (A.R. 8-3-3:I) (A.R. 10-2-5:XII-XIV)**
2. A replay after a penalty against Team B may be from any point on or between the inbounds lines on or behind the yard line where the penalty leaves the ball.

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 and III)**
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 replayed, these penalties are enforced on the replay (Rule 10-1-6) **(A.R. 3-2-3:VIII)**

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 replayed. [Cited by 8-3-3-b-1, 8-3-3-c-1]
- II. Both teams foul during a try after playing time has expired, and Team B had not gained possession. **RULING**: Replay at the previous spot. [Cited by 8-3-3-a]
- III. During a try, Team A advances the ball into Team B's end zone or completes a pass there, but Team A fouls during the run or behind its line before the pass. **RULING**: Any replay

is from the spot where the penalty leaves the ball. The privilege of replaying from any point between the inbounds lines applies only when a penalty is for a foul by Team B. [Cited by 8-3-3-c-1]

- 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 his face mask. **RULING:** (a) and (b) The fouls offset and the down is replayed.
- V. During a try, B79 is in the neutral zone at the snap. B20 intercepts a forward pass and A55 tackles him by pulling the face mask. **RULING:** The fouls offset and the down is replayed.

### Fouls During a Try After a Change of Team Possession

ARTICLE 4. a. Distance penalties against either team are declined by rule (*Exception:* Penalties for flagrant personal fouls, dead-ball fouls and live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls are enforced on the succeeding kickoff or at the succeeding spot in extra periods.) (**A.R. 8-3-4:I and II**)

- b. A score by a team committing a foul during the down is cancelled (**A.R. 8-3-2:VII**)
- c. If both teams foul during the down and Team B had not fouled before the change of possession, the fouls offset, the down is not replayed, and the try is over.

- **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 try is ended, and the penalty is declined by rule. [Cited by 8-3-4-a]
- II. B1 intercepts Team A's legal forward pass and runs it to midfield. During the run of the interception, B2 clips in the Team B end zone. **RULING:** The penalty is declined by rule. [Cited by 8-3-4-a]
- 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 slugs an opponent. B21 scores an apparent touchdown. **RULING:** A80 is disqualified. The score does not count, the fouls offset, the down is not replayed and the try is ended.
- IV. During a two-point try attempt, Team A is flagged for an illegal shift. B21 recovers a fumble and on the return, A80 slugs an opponent. B21 scores an apparent touchdown. **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.

### 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 replayed, these penalties are enforced before the replay (Rule 10-1-6). (**A.R. 10-2-5:XVI-XVII**)

### 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 for the kicking team if 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. The kick shall be a scrimmage kick but may not be a free kick.

- 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. 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. After an unsuccessful field goal attempt that has crossed the neutral zone, the ball, will next be put in play by Team B. If the ball is untouched by Team B after having crossed the neutral zone and is subsequently declared dead beyond the neutral zone, Team B will next snap it at the previous spot, or extra-period rules govern. If the previous spot was between Team B's 20-yard line and the goal line, Team B will next snap the ball on or between the inbounds lines at its 20-yard line, or extra-period rules govern. The snap shall be from midway between the inbounds lines on the 20-yard line, unless a different position on or between the inbounds lines is selected by Team B before the 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 penalties. Otherwise, all rules pertaining to scrimmage kicks apply. **(A.R. 6-3-4:III) (A.R. 8-4-2:I-X) (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 attempted field goal is touched by B1 at Team B's 10-yard line and rolls out of the end zone. **RULING:** Touchback. [Cited by 8-4-2-b]
- II. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's attempted field goal is touched and downed by Team B at the five-yard line. **RULING:** Team B's ball at Team B's five-yard line. [Cited by 8-4-2-b]
- III. 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]
- IV. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's untouched field goal attempt strikes the ground in the end zone and bounces out to the three-yard line where it is touched by B1. **RULING:** The ball is dead when it hits the ground in Team B's end zone. Team B's ball at Team B's 40-yard line (Rule 6-3-9). [Cited by 6-3-9, 8-4-2-b]
- V. 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]
- VI. Fourth and eight on Team B's 40-yard line. Team A's field goal attempt is blocked or touched at the line of scrimmage and goes out of bounds, untouched beyond the neutral zone, at Team B's 25-yard line. **RULING:** Team B's ball at Team B's 40-yard line. [Cited by 8-4-2-b]
- VII. 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]
- VIII. 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]
- IX. 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]
- X. 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 6-3-5 and 6-3-7). [Cited by 8-4-2-b]

## 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 incompleting forward pass, or becomes dead in the possession of a player on, above or behind his 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 and V**) (**A.R. 7-2-4:I**) (**A.R. 8-5-1:I-III, VIII and XI**) (**A.R. 8-7-2:V**) (**A.R. 9-4-1:IX**).

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

#### *Exceptions:*

1. When a Team B player intercepts a forward pass, fumble or backward pass or catches a scrimmage or free kick between his five-yard line and the goal line and the ball carrier's original momentum carries him into the end zone, where the ball is declared dead in his team's possession, the ball belongs to Team B at the spot where the pass or fumble was intercepted or the kick was caught (**A.R. 8-5-1:V-VII**).
  2. When a Team B player recovers an opponent's fumble, backward pass, scrimmage kick or free kick between his five-yard line and the goal line and the ball carrier's original momentum carries him into the end zone, where the ball is declared dead in his team's possession, the ball belongs to Team B at the spot where the fumble, backward pass or kick was recovered (**A.R. 8-5-1:V**).
  3. When, after a change of team possession, a Team A player intercepts an illegal forward pass, or intercepts or recovers a fumble or backward pass between Team A's five-yard line and the goal line, and the ball carrier's original momentum carries him into the end zone, where the ball is declared dead in his team's possession, the ball belongs to Team A at the spot where the illegal forward pass, fumble or backward pass was intercepted or recovered.
- b. An accepted penalty for a foul leaves the ball on or behind the offending team's goal line. (*Exception:* Rules 3-1-3-g-3 and 8-3-4-a). (**A.R. 8-5-1:IV**) (**A.R. 10-2-2:VIII and IX**)
    - **Approved Ruling 8-5-1**
      - I. A10, after receiving the snap in his own end zone, is downed with the ball resting on his 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, 8-5-1-a]
      - II. The ball is snapped to a Team A player who punts from his own end zone. The ball goes out of bounds behind the kicker's goal line. **RULING:** Safety (Rule 8-7-1). [Cited by 5-1-1-d, 8-5-1-a, 8-7-2-a]
      - III. 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]
      - IV. B1 intercepts a legal forward pass (not a try) deep in his end zone, and advances but does not get out of the end zone where he is 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]

- V. B1 intercepts a pass or fumble or catches a scrimmage or free kick between his five-yard line and the goal line, and his momentum carries him into the end zone. The ball is declared dead in Team B's possession in the end zone. **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-1, 8-5-1-a-2]
- VI. B1 intercepts a pass or fumble or catches a scrimmage or free kick between his five-yard line and the goal line, and his momentum carries him into the end zone. B1 then advances into the field of play from the end zone. **RULING:** If the ball is declared dead in his possession, it is Team B's ball at the dead-ball spot. [Cited by 8-5-1-a-1]
- VII. B1 intercepts a pass or fumble or catches a scrimmage or free kick between his five-yard line and the goal line, and his momentum carries him 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-a-1]
- VIII. 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]
- IX. Team A's backward pass or fumble strikes the ground and is dead in Team A's end zone in possession of Team A, or is muffed out of bounds from Team A's end zone. **RULING:** Safety. Team A's impetus caused the ball to be behind Team A's goal line. [Cited by 8-7-2-a]
- X. Team A intends to punt from behind its goal line, but A36 muffs the ball. After A36 recovers the ball, he strikes 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, 4-2-4-d and 4-2-4-e). [Cited by 2-31-3, 4-2-4-d]
- XI. B40 intercepts a pass on Team B's four-yard line. His momentum is taking him into the end zone when he fumbles 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]
- XII. With time running out in the fourth quarter and the ball on their one yard line, Team A inform the referee that they intend to "take a knee". After the snap, quarterback A10 kneels down with the ball on, above or behind his own goal line. **RULING:** Safety (Rule 8-5-1-a) – no exemption for "take a knee" plays. Teams are recommended not to attempt "take a knee" plays close to their own goal line.

### 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 inbounds lines 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 his own goal line and the attacking team is responsible for the ball being there (Rules 7-2-4-a and 7-2-4-b) (**A.R. 6-3-9:IV**) (**A.R. 7-2-4:I**) (**A.R. 8-6-1:I and II**) (**A.R. 10-2-2:XXV**).



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:IV**)

• **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 (Rule 7-2-4-b). [Cited by 2-31-3, 7-2-4-c, 8-6-1-a]
- II. B1 intercepts Team A's legal forward pass in his own end zone, after which A1 snatches the ball from his 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]

### Snap After a Touchback

ARTICLE 2. After a touchback is declared, 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 inbounds lines by a snap (*Exception:* Extra-period rules). The snap shall be from midway between the inbounds lines on the 20-yard line, unless a different position on or between the inbounds lines is selected by the team designated to put the ball in play before the 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 penalties.

## 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. (**A.R. 6-3-4:I**)

### 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:IV**) (**A.R. 8-5-1:II, III, VIII, IX and XI**) (**A.R. 8-7-2:I-IX**).

- b. Initial impetus is considered expended and the responsibility for the ball's progress is charged to a player:
  1. If he kicks a ball not in player possession or bats a loose ball after it strikes the ground (*Exception:* The original impetus is not changed when a loose ball is batted or kicked in the end zone). (**A.R. 8-7-2:V**)
  2. If the ball comes to rest and he gives it new impetus by any contact with it.
 

*Exceptions:*

    1. Rules 6-1-4-a and 6-3-4-a; (**A.R. 6-3-4:I-IV**)
    2. The original impetus is not changed when a ball at rest in the end zone is moved when touched by an official or a player.

c. A loose ball retains its original status when there is new impetus.

- **Approved Ruling 8-7-2**

- I. A fumble occurring in the field of play crosses the goal line and is recovered in the end zone. **RULING:** The impetus is charged to the player who fumbled. [Cited by 8-7-2-a]
- II. A Team B player intercepts a legal forward pass in his own end zone, attempts to run it out, but is tackled and downed behind his goal line. **RULING:** Touchback (Rule 8-6-1-a). [Cited by 8-7-2-a]
- III. A Team B player catches a kick in his end zone, then fumbles and, in attempting to recover the ball, muffs it out of bounds behind his own goal line. **RULING:** Touchback (Rule 8-6-1-a). [Cited by 8-7-2-a]
- IV. Ball carrier A1, advancing toward Team B's goal line, fumbles when B1 bats the ball from his hand or tackles him 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 8-7-2-a]
- V. 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, 8-7-2-b-1]
- VI. 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]
- VII. Team A free kicks from its 30-yard line. The ball is rolling on the ground on Team B's three-yard line when B10 kicks the ball, forcing it out of bounds in the end zone. **RULING:** The result of the play is a safety for Team A due to the new impetus by Team B. Foul for illegally kicking the ball. An accepted penalty will make it Team A's ball on the Team A 45-yard line, where the free kick will be repeated (Rules 9-4-4 and 10-2-2-d-4). [Cited by 8-7-2-a, 9-4-4]
- VIII. Fourth and five on Team B's 20-yard line. A30 fumbles at Team B's 16-yard line. The ball rolls to the 10-yard line where B40, attempting to recover the loose ball (either at rest or still rolling), muffs it out of bounds at (a) Team B's five-yard line or (b) Team B's 18-yard line. **RULING:** In either instance, it is a fumble out of bounds. Since Team A did not make the line to gain before the fumble, it is Team B's ball first and 10, at (a) Team B's 16-yard line since the fumble was forward, or (b) Team B's 18-yard line (Rules 5-1-4-f and 7-2-4-b). [Cited by 5-1-4-f, 7-2-4-c, 8-7-2-a]
- IX. Fourth and five on Team B's 20-yard line. A30 fumbles at Team B's 16-yard line. The ball rolls to the 10-yard line (either at rest or still rolling), where B40 bats the loose ball (a) backward and out of bounds at Team B's five-yard line or (b) forward and out of bounds at Team B's 18-yard line. **RULING:** In each instance, it is a fumble out of bounds. In (a) the bat is legal and it is Team B's ball, first and 10 at Team B's 16-yard line, since Team A did not make a first down. The clock starts on the snap. In (b), illegal batting, penalise Team B from the spot of the fumble, Team A's ball first and goal (Rules 5-1-4-f and 7-2-4-b). The clock starts on the ready for play signal. [Cited by 5-1-4-f, 7-2-4-c, 8-7-2-a]