

PLAY CLOCK: CHANGES TO THE RULES

The new rules for 2018 include changes regarding the play clock. These are changes to Rule 3-2-4-c-7 and -8. After a touchdown is scored the 40-second play clock will be started before the try, just as on a normal play during the game. Also, on a kickoff, including on a free kick after a safety, when the ball becomes dead, the 40-second play clock will be started before the first play from scrimmage. In the past for these situations, the 25-second play clock would start on the signal by the Referee. Under the new rules, there will be no signal from the Referee, because the play clock operator will start the 40-second clock just as on any other play in the game.

Situation 1 – Following a Free Kick to start the each half, Free Kick after a touchdown, Free Kick after a successful field goal and Free Kick after a safety. At the end of the Free Kick down the Play Clock is set to 40 seconds and will start when the down ends just as on a normal play during the game.

Situation 2 – Team A scores a touchdown on a pass or run play or Team B scores on a turnover. Once the officials signal the score, the play clock is set to 40 seconds. Team A now has 40 seconds to attempt the try. If the play clock dips below 25 seconds before Replay confirms the touchdown, the Referee will “pump up” the running play clock to 25 and it will continue to run. (similar to the shot clock in basketball when the ball hits the rim) The play clock operator must alert of this situation.

RELOCATION OF THE BALL- must be requested before the play clock reaches 25.

If Team A requests that the location of the try be moved to a different location within the hash marks before the play clock reaches 25 seconds, the play clock continues to run. If the relocation request is communicated to the officials before the play clock dips below 25, but the ball is not relocated until after the play clock dips below 25, the Referee will “pump up” the running play clock to 25. The play clock operator must alert of this situation.

Situation 3 – Team A’s try is either successful or unsuccessful. The play clock is set to 25 seconds and starts when the Referee signals the ball is ready for play on the ensuing kick off.

Situation 4 – After a successful or unsuccessful Field Goal. The play clock is set to 25 seconds and starts on the Referee’s signal

Situation 5 – After a touchback. Play Clock is set to 25 seconds and starts on the Referee’s signal.

Situation 6 – After a safety. Play Clock is set to 25 seconds and starts on the Referee’s signal.