

## IX. LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL REGULATIONS

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.
  - It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. The game officials may give teams a "courtesy" neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A player who gains possession of the ball in the air is considered in bounds, as long as the first foot or a body part other than the hand, contacts the ground in the field, while maintaining possession.
4. Substitutions may be made during any dead ball period.
5. The defense may not simulate the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. Other unfair acts would be; not returning five (5) eligible players to the field of play after halftime, a team or officials' time out prior to the 'Ready to Play' signal by the referee. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on the Head Coach.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.

Play is ruled "dead" when:

- a. The ball hits the ground.
  - If the ball hits the ground as a result of a snap, backwards pitch or lateral, the ball will be placed where the ball hit the ground.
- b. The ball-carrier's flag is pulled.
- c. The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.
- d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
- e. The ball-carrier's knee, shin, leg, forearm or arm hits the ground.
- f. The ball-carrier's flag falls out.
- g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of 1 or 0 flag(s).
- h. The 7 second pass clock expires.
- i. Inadvertent whistle
- j. Ball-carrier leaves their feet to dive, jump or hurdle a player.  
(Exception: A PLAYER CAN DIVE TO CATCH A PASS OR PULL A FLAG)

NOTE: Fumbles / loss of possession: Ground contact must be made for the play to be dead at that spot. A fumble is loss of possession by a player, resulting in the ball contacting the ground.

8. If an inadvertent whistle occurs, the team in possession has two options:
  - Take the ball where the whistle blew and the down will count
  - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage

If an IW occurs on the last play of the half or game, the offense will be awarded one untimed down and given those two options.

9. A team is allowed to use a timeout to question an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct, the team will be charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the timeout will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced.