



COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC

REFEREE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS: INSTANT REPLAY

In reviewing video of many games over the last couple of seasons, I have observed a wide variation in referees' announcements when instant replay is used. For the past few years Rule 12 has prescribed the exact language that is to be used, but over time many referees have "strayed off the reservation." When you receive your 2011-12 rule book within the next few weeks you will see that the language has been clarified. Thus it seems like a good time for me to remind the referees of their responsibilities in this matter and to draw attention to the new wording that you will see in the rule book.

Here is the new language in Rule 12-6-1-b and d:

b. If the review is initiated by the replay official, the referee shall announce:

"The ruling on the previous play is (brief description). The play is under further review."

If the game has been stopped due to a head coach's challenge, the referee shall announce:

"The (name of institution) head coach has challenged the ruling of (state the ruling). The play is under further review."

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 further review, the ruling on the field is confirmed."

2. If there is no indisputable (conclusive) evidence to reverse the on-field ruling:

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

3. If the on-field ruling is reversed (Rule 12-7):

"After further review, the ruling is [followed by a brief description of the video evidence]. Therefore, [followed by a brief description of what the reversal means]."

Note this change: When the officials on the field are “buzzed” by the instant replay official, the referee’s first announcement is the ruling on the field. This is new, and it has been introduced because often in the past there has been confusion or uncertainty as to the ruling on the field and what is being reviewed. The referee then announces, as in the past, “the play is under further review.”

It is important for everyone to understand that if the ruling on the field is either confirmed or allowed to stand, by rule the referee is only to make either of two simple announcements:

*“After further review the ruling on the field is confirmed”; or
“After further review the ruling on the field stands.”*

That’s it.

Nothing else may be said.

Only if the replay official reverses the ruling on the field may there be a description of what has taken place. The referee should announce the decision by the replay official and what happens next. For example, if an on-field ruling of a second-down completed pass is overturned, the referee would announce, “After further review the ruling is that the pass was incomplete. It will be third down at the (team and number) yard line.” This announcement should be brief, concise, and complete enough so that there is no question about the result of the replay official’s decision.