

2014 Practice Test

- Officials must have a football sense, this in conjunction with a thorough understanding of the rules will make for a smoothly run game. Officials are expected to exercise good judgment in applying the rules.

- The protection and welfare of the player(s) is paramount and with this there can be no compromise.

- Preventive officiating is discouraged. Officials are not coaches and are not allowed to use actions or words to prevent fouls from happening.

- The pre-game conference should be a lecture, rather than an interactive process

- During every time out, officials should check with one another regarding the number of time outs each team has remaining.

- The purpose of the pre-game conference is to allow the crew to coordinate their coverage and to help the crew mentally prepare for the game.

- The officials shall enter the field together 20 minutes before the scheduled game time.

- If there is no field clock, the Back Judge shall time the game.

- The Linesman shall provide the clip man with two clips.

- During an altercation, only the head coaches may enter the field to stop the altercation.

- Proper concentration and seeing the ball will prevent most inadvertent whistles.

- During a pass play, if the passer is near the line of scrimmage when he throws the ball, it is permissible to mark this spot with a bean bag.

- Only the Referee and the Line Judge should note the time on the clock during dead ball intervals.

- A request for a Coach-Referee conference for a possible misinterpretation or misapplication of a rule(s) must be made prior to the ball becoming live following the play which is to be reviewed.

- When an offensive team is using an unbalanced line, the Umpire will indicate to both wing officials the number of players of the offensive team who are on the line of scrimmage on the “loaded or heavy side,” exclusive of the snapper.

- The Umpire's whistle should rarely be the first whistle at the end of a play.

- When a player or coach is disqualified, the calling official should call the league office and file the disqualification report on the Arbiter as soon as possible after the game.

- The Linesman and Line Judge, should be alert for quick plays into the line and assist in marking forward progress always with the downfield foot.

- Wing officials should not turn their backs on plays out of bounds, but drop a bean bag on the out of bounds spot and follow the action out of bounds.

- The Referee shall verbally alert defenders when the passer has released the ball.

- When thunder is heard within 30 seconds of a visible lightning strike, or a cloud-to-ground lightning strike is seen, then the game should be suspended. The crew should wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is seen before resuming the game.

- On scrimmage kick plays, the Linesman should hold his position after the snap and know if the ball crosses the neutral zone, then move slowly downfield.

- During goal line plays, the Umpire is often the first official to signal touchdown.

- When a penalty is being administered, the Linesman should be near his sideline and then go to the yard line where the penalty enforcement will end.

- Each team shall begin the game with 11 players.

- A state association may require officials to arrive on the field earlier than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled game time.

- The referee's decision to forfeit a game may be overturned by the commissioner after review of a properly filed protest.

- It is permissible to use college or professional fields with hash marks marked at the distance specified by their respective codes, and with advertising and/or commercial markings.

- Last play of the game. QB12 is scrambling around and is about to get tackled. As he is going down, he throws the ball forward in a high arc toward the middle of the field. The referee throws his flag. A35 catches the pass after it has been tipped by several defenders and runs for a touchdown. The flag is for an illegal forward pass because the QB had no idea where he was and threw the pass in desperation. He got lucky that his teammate caught the ball. **RULING:** This is not an illegal forward pass. The referee's interpretation of an illegal forward pass is incorrect. Crew members should step up and help the referee if he attempts to rule this an illegal forward pass.

- After the coach and the Referee have an argument about an untimed down right before half time, for the remainder of the game ,the Referee after throwing his flag looks over at the coach and asks him, “how do you like that call?” This is the proper SCFOA mechanic. RULING: The answer is obviously not true. Yet we still have officials who abuse their power and relationship with the coaches and players and are totally disrespectful to the game of football. If you cannot control your ego, maintain your composure and hold yourself to a higher standard, then stop officiating. All it takes is one bad official with a poor attitude to wreck the game for everyone.

- The L is responsible for submitting the penalty report by noon on the Monday following the game. Failure to do so may result in the suspension of that official.

- Teammates A32 and A98 are having words in the huddle. They then begin to push and shove each other. A32 swings at A98 and hits him on the side of the helmet. A98 retaliates. **RULING:** Both players are flagged for UNS.

- A84 catches a pass and runs toward B's goal line. As he approaches the 7 yard line he raises his arm toward the sky and points his index finger skyward and proceeds to cross the goal line for a TD.

RULING: Unsportsmanlike Conduct.

- The Umpire shows up for his game injured. He is not sure he can work the entire game, so he brings his own substitute.

COMMENT: We are not to bring our own substitutes. If you are not sure you can work the entire game, turn it back in and allow the League Office to assign an official. Bringing your own replacement is a good way to be excused from future assignments for the remainder of the year.

- As the teams are leaving the field, all officials except the Umpire properly leave the field. The Umpire seeks out the visiting team coaches and sarcastically tells them that they have so much rules knowledge and that his district needs officials and they should sign up. During the game he makes disparaging remarks to players of both teams that are reported to the coaches.
COMMENT: This will get you suspended for the remainder of the year and may result in rejection of your application in future years. We are held to a higher standard and must live up to it.

- As A23 is advancing for a touchdown from B's 10 yard line, B52 blindsides A98 at B's 15 yard line. The covering official rules that the contact was unnecessary.

RULING: The penalty for the foul may be enforced from the succeeding spot and A's touchdown counts. We cannot ignore fouls that are unnecessary and not part of the game. We must be alert before, during and after the play.

- All fouls that are observed should be flagged.

- During a legal forward pass which crosses the neutral zone, A1 is illegally in motion at the snap. B32 intercepts the pass and during his return B90 clips A4. RULING: The illegal motion and clipping are live ball fouls. Because the foul by B90 occurred after the change of possession (clean hands), they do not automatically constitute a double foul. The captain of team B (the team last in possession) may accept or decline the penalty for A's foul. If accepted, this creates a double foul and the down is replayed. If declined, then the penalty for B's foul is enforced if accepted by A.

- First and 10 from A's 30. A1 advances to B's 40 where he fumbles. A2 recovers and advances to the B 10 yard line where he is downed. While the ball was loose following A1's fumble, B1 held A1, and during the advance by A2, B2 grabbed A2's facemask.
RULING: This is a multiple foul and the captain of team A may accept either penalty or decline both and take the results of the play. If the penalty is accepted for B1's foul it will be enforced from the end of A1's run where he fumbled (important to have a bean bag down). It would be first and 10 from B's 30. If the penalty for B2's foul is accepted, it would be enforced from the end of A2's run. In this case it would be first and goal for team A from the 5 yard line

- In attempting to tackle A1, B32's helmet comes completely off. A1 does not go down and runs for a touchdown.

RULING: Touchdown for A. Play is not stopped and the ball does not become dead if the helmet comes off any other player other than the player in possession of the ball. B1 must leave the field for one play.

- On a kick try for point, Team A lines up in a water bucket formation with six linemen spread wide to the left all on the line of scrimmage with the snapper #88 over the ball. Spread wide to the right, off of the line of scrimmage is #84. At the snap, the holder rises and throws a complete pass to the snapper #88 in the end zone.
RULING: This is a legal play. It meets the requirements of 7-2-5-b-exception 2.

- K punts to R. R32 signals for a fair catch at his 40 yard line and muffs the ball as he attempts to catch it. The ball is rolling on the ground at the R45 yard line when R89 bats the ball backward toward his own goal line. R12 recovers the kick while grounded on the 43 yard line. RULING: R89 has illegally batted a loose ball. This is a PSK foul. Penalize 15 yards from the EOK. R 1/10 @ R-28.

- Time expires for halftime and the Visiting team band is still playing. Both teams have to wait for the band to finish and leave the field before they can begin the mandatory 3:00 minute warm-up period. RULING: The Referee flags the Visiting team for unsportsmanlike conduct and penalizes them 15 yards on the kickoff.

- 4th and 15 from Team B's 20 yard line. Team A's field goal attempt sails wide right. During the play B55 commits a personal foul against A90 at the LOS. RULING: Enforce from previous spot. A 1/10 @ B-10.

- QB from a shotgun formation walks slowly toward the line, veers off and is now walking parallel to the LOS hollering a change of play to his left guard, tackle, and tight end. He then turns, walking parallel to the LOS and walks behind these linemen, past the snapper and is doing the same with the right side linemen when the ball is snapped to the running back. He was the only one moving, he was not moving forward and all else was legal.

RULING: As long as the QB remained motionless for at least 1 second prior to his movement, this more than likely a legal play. There is no way to determine that a snap was intentional or snapped too early and thus penalize this under the “attempt to deceive” rule. It would be hard to sell.

- QB from a shotgun walks slowly toward the line, veers off and is now walking parallel to the LOS hollering a change of play to his left guard, tackle, and tight end. He then turns, walking parallel to the LOS and walks behind these linemen, past the snapper and is doing the same with the right side linemen. He then begins using hand gestures, hollering toward his coaches or both (all directed toward the coaches on his sideline) when the ball is snapped to the running back. He was the only one moving, he was not moving forward and all else was legal except he is communicating with the coaches on the sideline.
RULING: This would be seen as an attempt to deceive (an unfair act) and thus an unsportsmanlike foul.

- First and 10 from the Team B 15 yard line. A35 runs to B10 yard line and fumbles. While the ball is loose, an official blows his whistle. RULING: A can replay the down or take the ball where possession was lost.

- 3rd and 7 on the A-45. A12 drops back to pass and throws a legal forward pass to A84 who catches it at the B-45 yard line. A84 runs to the B-41 yard line where he is contacted by B23. A84 fumbles the ball which rolls out of bounds at the B-39. A12 is roughed by B56.

RULING: The penalty is enforced from the dead ball spot which is where the ball rolled out of bounds. First and 10 for Team A at the B24 yard line.

- If any quick and/or abrupt motion by the offense causes the defense to encroach, then it is a false start on the offense.

- Pants must cover the knees. The official should send the player out of the game until he is wearing proper equipment.

- A player enters the field wearing number “00”.
RULING: The player should be sent out of the game until he is wearing legal equipment.

- K punts the ball and it hits the pylon in flight or on while rolling. RULING: Touchback.

- After being waved off the ball by the referee, it is permissible for the umpire to turn his back to the LOS while going to his position.

- Team A center rotates the ball, turning the laces toward the right (or left). RULING: Snap infraction.

- Team A center properly snaps the ball but the ball rolls back toward the quarterback.
RULING: Snap infraction.

- When an official is out of position because he is lazy or out of shape, it is permissible to guess if a foul has been committed or not.

- Anytime a major foul is called, the Head Coach should be notified of the player's number and infraction. This is especially true for Unsportsmanlike Conduct fouls since a 2nd one will result in that player being ejected. DO NOT ASSUME that the coach knows who the foul was on.

- Referees, take time to explain to the Head Coach on any situation that requires it and make sure he understands it. He may not like it, but make sure it is understood. We are not in such a hurry that we cannot communicate in a considerate manner and explain our ruling to him. Be sure to inform the other Head Coach as well. Do it at the sideline, don't try to explain it by yelling from the middle of the field.

- DO NOT under any circumstance belittle a coach with such remarks as: if you don't like the call, send the game film to the League Office; If you don't like how I call a game, mark me off; one more word and you're gone! Gentlemen we must be above such things. If you cannot control your emotions, you can and will be replaced until you can do so. (Yes, we did have someone say this to a coach this week).

- On Free Kicks the Umpire is to stay with the kicker. The Umpire does not stay in the middle of the field while the kicker lines up in a different location.

- Team A punter muffs the snap at the A-10. The ball rolls to the A-5 where he picks up the loose ball and legally kicks it. The kick is blocked at the A-5. Several players from both teams muff the ball and it eventually rolls into and out of the back of A's end zone. **RULING:** Touchback or safety depending on who touched it last.

- Both teams enter the field at the beginning of the game with similar colored jerseys.
RULING: The visiting team must change to a white jersey or forfeit the game.

- The referee is responsible for personally notifying both head coaches when a player or coach is ejected.

- A55 is leading a sweep around the right end. Corner back B42 turns his back to avoid contact just before A55 blocks him. A55's initial contact is in the center of B42's back. **RULING: Illegal block in the back.**

- A 1/10 @ A-40. A14 takes the snap from under center and throws a quick pass from the A-39 towards wide receiver A88 who is standing at the A-37. B42 blocks A88 in the chest prior to the ball arriving. The ball goes out of bounds at the A-36. RULING: Defensive pass interference. A 1/10 @ B-45.

- Coaches may step out as far as the 9-yard marks in between plays as long as they get off the field before the ball is snapped.

- When visible 25-second clocks are in use, both must be operational or neither may be used.

- Officials may not wear a full beard, but 2 or 3 days growth is ok.

- The R and the U should count the offense and signal their confirmation to each other on 1st down, but they can assume the count is still good on the other downs.

- When players go out of bounds at the end of a play, the covering wing official should mark the spot while turning and watching the action out of bounds.

- When A makes the line to gain, only the covering official should give the timeout signal. No other officials should “echo” his signal.

- The referee is the only official responsible for knowing if the clock is to start on the ready or on the snap following a measurement, penalty enforcement, or an injured player.

- A 4/3 @ B-33. QB A11 adjusts the volume of his cadence and jerks his head. B99 jumps in the neutral zone. RULING: Encroachment.

- 9-yard marks are required on the field of play.

- Pylons may be orange, red or green in color.

- The uprights shall extend a maximum of 10 feet above the crossbar.

- Each team shall provide at least one legal game ball to the referee.

- A kicking tee may elevate the ball no more than 3 inches above the ground.

- B1 was guilty of kick catching interference at the 50. During penalty administration, the captain chose to snap the ball at the A-35. During the next play, an inadvertent whistle was blown, and the team in possession chose to replay the down. The team in possession makes a request to free-kick the ball. **RULING:** This request must be granted.

- Wearing a memorial patch on a jersey for a team member who passed away requires the written approval of the state association.

- If forearm pads are worn, then they must be anchored on each end with athletic tape.

- Sticky substances of a foreign nature shall not be used on any equipment except gloves that were manufactured that way and have the NOCSAE seal.

- Tinted eyewear worn on the face and under the face mask is legal.

- Still photographs may be shown to players during an outside 9-yard mark conferences.

- The defensive coordinator is the only coach on the field during a legal conference in the middle of the field. During the conference, the coach takes a phone call on his cell phone from another coach in the press box and puts the conversation on speaker phone so team members can join in the conversation.
RULING: UNS foul charged to the head coach.

- A targeting foul should always be considered a
flagrant foul.

- A83 leaps to receive a forward pass. As he is about to regain his balance, B45 launches and drives into him above the shoulder area with his helmet or shoulder. RULING: A personal foul by B45 for targeting and initiating contact with a defenseless opponent above the shoulders. B45 is disqualified.

- A legal free-kick formation requires 4 players to be on one side of the ball and 6 players to be on the other side of the ball from the time of the RFP until the time when the ball is kicked.

- A 3/9 @ B-19. The score is A-14, B-17 in the 4th quarter with 11 seconds left on the clock. Team A is out of time outs. A legal forward pass is completed to A88 at the B-5, and A88 is tackled inbounds at the B-4 with 1 second remaining. Team B was guilty of participating with 12 players. The ball is placed at the B-2, and Team A lines up for a field goal. The referee starts the clock on the RFP, but the clock expires before A can snap the ball. RULING: Untimed down for Team A.

- A 3/20 @ A-10. A14 throws a legal forward pass to A88 who is tackled at the A-12. B99 tackled A14 by the face mask during the pass. RULING: Since this was a loose ball play, enforce the face mask from the previous spot making it A 3/5 @ A-25.

- R28 muffs a kickoff at the R-5. In order to prevent the ball from being recovered by Team K, R40 kicks the ball out of the back of the end zone. RULING: The result of the play is a touchback since the ball retained the status of a kick. If the penalty for illegally kicking the ball is accepted, then it is enforced from the previous spot. The down will be replayed at the R-45.

- A 1/10 @ A-20. A34 runs the ball around right end to the A-21 as B99 closes in. Both players lower their heads and helmet to helmet contact is made. A34's helmet comes off as he falls to the ground. RULING: Illegal helmet contact foul by B99. Penalize 15 yards from the EOR. A34 does not have to sit out one play.

- A 1/10 @ A-20. A64 is pass blocking B99 when A64's helmet comes off at the A-18. A64 continues his contact with B99 and pushes him past the QB. The QB throws a pass to A88 for a touchdown. RULING: A64 is guilty of illegal participation. A 1/21 @ A-9. A64 must sit out one play.

- A 1/10 @ B-11. A55 initiates a block with B99 by contacting the bottom of the face mask and pushing B99's helmet off his head. B99 stops participating. QB A14 can't find an open receiver, so he runs towards the right sideline. There are no B players between A14 and the end zone. B99 runs towards A14 and guides him out of bounds at the B-5 without touching him. RULING: Double Foul.

- A35 is seen entering the game while wearing a blue towel with a visible Nike swoosh.
RULING: The official should call an official's time out and have A35 remove the towel.

- A free kick from the A-40. The ball is kicked high in the air and is coming down near the B-45. B15 runs into the neutral zone and blocks A88 at the A-47. A55 then blocks B18 at the A-49. B17 catches the kick and is tackled immediately at the B-46. RULING: Illegal block by A55.

- A player loses possession by either a fumble or a muff.

- It is encroachment if the snapper assumes his position over the ball with his head in the neutral zone.

- Team B players may be anywhere on or behind their line of scrimmage

- A loose ball becomes dead when it touches anything inbounds other than a player, a substitute, a replaced player, an official, authorized equipment or the ground.

- If a kick try is blocked and the ball is recovered behind the neutral zone, the ball may be advanced by K for a score.

- The RFP has been given and the snapper has one hand on the ball. A55 lines up on the end of his line of scrimmage with one hand on the ground. A55 then slowly stands up, moves to a wider position, and puts his hand back down. **RULING:** Players on the line of scrimmage numbered 50-79 may not shift to a new position once they are set.

- While A8 is holding the ball for a place kick, B81 bats the ball from his possession.
RULING: Fumble.

- It is legal for B98 to trip runner A41.

- Spearing must involve an attempt to punish an opponent by intentionally contacting him with the helmet.

- It is a foul for illegal use of hands if the runner grasps a teammate.

- Interior linemen can receive a handoff behind the line without restriction.

- If the ball is fumbled forward and out of bounds, it is returned to the spot of the fumble.

- The dead ball spot is always the spot under the foremost point of the ball when it becomes dead by rule.

- When an airborne player makes a catch, forward progress is the furthest point of advancement after he possesses the ball if contacted by a defender.

- Following a touchback, Team A requests the ball to be placed on the right hash mark. After the RFP, Team A takes a timeout. While returning to the field, A11 asks the umpire to put the ball in the middle of the field.
RULING: Legal.

- The ankle of the wrist are considered part of the foot or hand, respectively and do not make a runner down.

- B45 is returning a punt. As he is about to be tackled, B45 attempts to hand the ball to B23 who is in front of him, but B23 muffs the ball which falls to the ground and rolls out of bounds. RULING: Illegal Forward Handing.

- A pass thrown backward and out of bounds to stop the clock is an illegal pass.

- If the ball is beyond the neutral zone when it leaves the passer's hand on a forward pass, it is an illegal pass.

- A forward pass has gone beyond the neutral zone if at any time during the pass, some part of the ball is beyond the neutral zone.

- A forward pass is legal if it is the first pass thrown by Team A during a scrimmage down with both feet of the passer in or behind the neutral zone, before a change of team possession.

- The snapper can be an eligible receiver.

- A player who is eligible at the snap become ineligible if he goes out of bounds intentionally and returns.

- Ineligible receivers may not legally go beyond the neutral zone until the pass has gone beyond the neutral zone.

- On a play where a forward pass crosses the neutral zone, A76 is guilty of being an ineligible receiver downfield if he runs two yards beyond the line and does not block anyone.

- If A11's forward pass is deflected by A82 to A63 behind the neutral zone and A63 catches it, there is no foul.

- If a player possesses the ball while airborne and is driven out of bounds by a defensive player prior to touching the ground inbounds, it may be ruled a catch.

- After the ball is thrown, as long as the passer is standing still or fading back, no defensive player shall charge into him unless contact is unavoidable.

- Catchability should be considered when determining if pass interference has occurred.

- A14 is in shotgun formation. He receives the snap and immediately spikes the ball to conserve time late in the 4th quarter. RULING: Penalize 5 yards from the spot of the pass. Loss of down. Clock starts on the snap.

- The penalty for defensive pass interference is 15 yards and the down is replayed.

- When a punt is used following a safety, the kick must be made from within two steps beyond Team K's free kick line.

- Any kicker may recover a free kick if it has touched the ground and has also gone beyond the plane of Team R's free kick line.

- The kicker or place kick holder may be blocked as soon as a free kick touches the ground or any other player.

- A legal scrimmage kick can only be made from behind the neutral zone before team possession has changed.

- Team R may recover any scrimmage kick anywhere between the goal lines and advance.

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- During a scrimmage kick, touching by Team R is ignored if the ball is muffed into R33 by K55, but it will be first touching.

- It is a safety if R44, in an effort to block K10's field goal attempt, leaps high in the end zone and tips the ball between the uprights above the crossbar.

- A fair catch of a free kick cannot be made in the neutral zone.

- K41 can commit kick catching interference without making physical contact with the ball or R22.

- During a scrimmage kick, if a kicking team member contacts the receiver as a result of being legally blocked by a Team R player into the receiver, there is no foul for interference.

- No player of Team R may advance the ball after a valid, invalid, or illegal fair catch signal.

- R28 muffs a kickoff at the R-5. In order to prevent the ball from being recovered by the opponents, R40 kicks the loose ball out of the back of the end zone. RULING: If the penalty is accepted, the down will be replayed at the R-45.

- If the penalty is enforced for a foul which occurred during the last timed down of a period, but time expires before the next down, Team A is entitled to an untimed down.

- If any foul by either team occurs after the last timed down of either half, it is penalized from the succeeding spot on the kickoff or overtime.

- A clock stopped during a period for an official's timeout will start with the RFP signal unless a free kick follows.

- If A6 intentionally grounds a forward pass in an effort to save loss of yardage, after enforcement, the referee shall start the clock with the RFP signal.

- The head coach may come on the field and request the nearest official to grant a time-out.

- The referee may call an official's timeout to allow K13 time to put on his kicking shoe or put on a different numbered jersey.

- In a double tight end formation, both tight ends are in the blocking zone if at least one foot is no more than 4 yards from the snapper.

- No member of the kicking team shall initiate contact (block) with an opponent until the legal kick has traveled 10 yards; the kicking team is eligible to recover a free kicked ball; or the receiving team initiates a block within the neutral zone.

- An offensive player may legally clip an opponent to get to a loose ball that he can legally touch.

- If a player accidentally drives his helmet into an opponent, it is a foul.

- It is a foul for a horse collar tackle if a ball carrier is immediately pulled down by the back of his collar by a middle linebacker who was standing 2 yards immediately in front of the snapper.

- An assistant coach is flagged for bumping into an official in the restricted area while the ball is live. Subsequently a different coach is observed in the restricted area while the ball is live. The penalty for both fouls is 15 yards.

- If a player refuses to comply with a game official's directive, the player will be disqualified.

- Batting a fumble in flight is a foul.

- Holding an unauthorized conference is considered unsportsmanlike conduct and carries a 15-yard penalty.

- A field goal may be scored by a dropkick or placekick, either from scrimmage or during a free kick following a fair catch or awarded fair catch or safety.

- It is a touchback if A28 fumbles on Team B's 5 and B11's muff forces the loose ball into Team B's end zone and out of bounds beyond the end line.

- If K1 holds R1 in K's end zone to prevent R1 from recovering a blocked punt, it will be a safety if R accepts the penalty.

- If K17's punt is blocked by R71 and strikes the ground and is then forced into Team K's end zone by R27, it is a touchback if K21 recovers and is downed there.

- A team member entering the field to fill a player vacancy remains a substitute until he is on his team's side of the neutral zone.

- Illegal substitution, which occurs simultaneously with the snap, is enforced from the previous spot.

- A substitute who goes on the field, but is unable to complete the substitution prior to the ball becoming live, may return to his team box legally, provided he leaves the field on his team box side and is off the field when the ball is snapped.

- It is not a foul if potential punter K27 accidentally steps on the end line following the snap but is inbounds when he catches the high snap and then punts the ball.

- If A88 voluntarily goes out of bounds and returns to blok B41, it is illegal participation, a foul during the down and the “all-but-one” enforcement principle is used.

- No player shall intentionally go out of bounds during a down and intentionally touch the ball.

- If a team member who is entering to fill a player vacancy is on the opponent's side of the neutral zone at the snap, it is illegal participation if he touches the ball.

- If the 12th player is in the defensive formation at the snap, the foul is illegal participation and is enforced from the succeeding spot.