

MPSSAA

“MERCY” RULE FOR FOOTBALL

Maryland has adopted the following rule regarding the use of running time. After the first half, any time the score differential reaches 35 points or more the following changes, and only these changes, will be made regarding rules determining when the clock will and will not be stopped.

- A. Once a 35-point differential exists in the second half, the clock will **only** be stopped when:
- (1) A player is injured or apparently injured.
 - (2) A charged (team) time-out occurs.
 - (3) A score occurs that reduces the point spread to less than 35 points.
 - (4) A period ends.
- B. The use of this rule does not preclude the use of Rule 3-1-3 which reads, “A period or periods may be shortened in any emergency by agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee. By mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee, any remaining period may be shortened at any time or the game terminated.”.

MPSSAA FOOTBALL OVERTIME, 10-YARD LINE PROCEDURE

- A. Review 10-yard procedure in pre-game conference.
- B. Referee and Umpire meet with head coach and captain(s) of each team in the center of the field.
- C. Referee explains 10-yard overtime procedure with emphasis on options of the toss.
- D. Instruct visiting team captain to give “heads” or “tails” choice before the coin toss. Referee repeats choice so that umpire hears selection.
- E. Toss winner shall choose whether to be on offense or defense, or choose the end of the field at which the ball will be put in play.
- F. Referee will indicate winner of toss by placing a hand on his shoulder. Then position offensive captain facing goal toward which ball will be advanced and defensive captain facing his opponent and opposite goal line. Give first-down signal toward goal being used.
- G. Each team shall be permitted one timeout during each overtime period (previously unused timeouts cannot be used in overtime).
- H. If B gains possession, the ball is dead and the series is over.
- I. If the game remains tied after any overtime period, repeat the same procedure however, there is no coin toss. First choice is alternated in all extra overtime periods.