

**FOOTBALL**  
**25-YARD LINE OVERTIME PROCEDURE**  
**WIAA ADAPTATION**  
**of the**  
**NCAA FOOTBALL 25-YARD LINE OVERTIME PROCEDURE**

**Note:** In the text that follows the word “inning” is used but alternate wording is given in the square brackets “[ ].”

**OVERVIEW**

The 25-yard line overtime procedure to resolve tied games adopted by the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association for the 2011 football season and beyond incorporates elements of the NCAA tie breaker system modified to comply with football rules published by the National Federation of State High School Associations.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Highlights of the WIAA adaptation of the collegiate method to resolve games tied at the end of regulation play are as follows:

- An inning [*extra period*] consists of two half-innings [*sets of plays*] with each team putting the ball in play as the offensive team.
  - Each team is given the opportunity to score points.
  - The ball is put in play from the opponent’s 25-yard line, first down and 10 yards to go.
  - Some penalties could relocate the ball from the 25-yard line to start play in an overtime period.
  - Penalties for fouls by the opponents of the scoring team on the last timed down of the second half do not carry over to overtime play.
  - Penalties for fouls by either team after the regulation game has ended could be enforced at the start of overtime play.
  - During each half inning [*a set of plays by one team*], the designations “Team A” and “Team B” are used, even for kicking situations.
    - There is only one coin toss no matter how many innings [*overtime periods*] are played.
    - The defensive team (Team B) can score—the ball remains live if team possession changes during a down.
    - The game clock is not used.
    - The 25-second timing rule for the snap does apply.
    - Each team is allowed only one timeout per overtime inning [*overtime sets of plays*].
    - Beginning with the third inning [*the third set of overtime plays*], teams must attempt two-point tries after scoring touchdowns. One-point (kick) tries can be attempted but no points can be scored.
      - If the defensive team (Team B) scores, the game is over and the try is not attempted.
      - The offensive team (Team A) may not have the ball for a new series (first and 10) if it again possesses the football after a change of team possession during the same half inning.
        - A team can attempt a field goal on any play from scrimmage and scrimmage kick rules apply, except that post scrimmage kick enforcement procedures do not apply.
        - The try after a touchdown is not attempted if the winner of the game has been determined.
        - National Federation football playing rules are used during overtime innings [*overtime periods*], although some exceptions apply.

NCAA rules on overtime play (“innings”) [*“extra periods”*] are covered in NCAA rule 3-1-3.

## DEFINITIONS

The word “inning” is used for the set of extra period overtime plays in which each team is given the opportunity to score.

Therefore, the team that is on offense first in the overtime set does so at the “top of the inning” and the team that is on offense second puts the ball in play at the “bottom of the inning.”

The word “inning” is used to minimize the number of words used to describe the overtime periods, such as “the first team on offense” and “the offense’s series of downs.” In addition, the words “series” and “period” have distinct meanings when used in the context of the regulation game (see rules 1-1-2 and 3-1-3, respectively). There is historic precedent for the use of the word “inning.” The 1881 rules for the then evolving game of football called for two *innings* of fifteen minutes to be played to resolve tied games.

## RULES

### 1. BREAK AFTER REGULATION PLAY.

Immediately after the conclusion of the fourth period of the regulation game, officials will instruct both teams to retire to their respective team areas. The officials will assemble at the 50-yard line and review the tie breaker procedures.

Officials will escort respective team captains to the center of the field for the coin toss.

### 2. FOULS WITH PENALTIES THAT CARRY OVER TO OVERTIME PLAY.

Fouls committed by either team after the fourth period of the regulation game has ended could be enforced at the succeeding spot to start an overtime inning [*start a set of overtime plays*].

Fouls by the opponent of a team that scores a **field goal** to tie the score or scores on a **Try** to tie the score during the last timed down of the second half could carry over to overtime play.

On downs that extend the fourth period fouls by the opponent of a team that scores a **field goal** to tie the score or scores on a **Try** to tie the score could carry over to overtime play.

### 3. FOULS WITH PENALTIES THAT DO NOT CARRY OVER TO OVERTIME PLAY.

Fouls by the opponents of the team that scores a **touchdown** on the last timed down of the second half do not carry-over to overtime play.

### 4. WINNING TEAM.

The team scoring the greater number of points during the regulation game and overtime innings [*overtime play*] is declared to be the winner. The try is not attempted following a touchdown that is scored when the winning team is determined in the second half of an inning [*the second set of plays for an overtime series*].

### 5. BREAK BETWEEN SUBSEQUENT OVERTIME INNINGS [*SETS OF PLAYS*].

Overtime innings [*overtime play for each team*] resume as soon as possible after complete innings [*overtime play for each team*] end. Captains’ options are exercised immediately after the inning [*overtime play for each team*] ends..

### 6. TEAM TIME-OUTS.

Each team is entitled to one time-out for each overtime full inning [*overtime play for each team*]. Time-outs not used during regulation periods may not be carried over into overtime play. Unused overtime time-outs may not be carried over to other extra periods. Time-outs taken between overtime innings are charged to the succeeding overtime inning.

## 7. RADIO AND TELEVISION TIMEOUTS.

Radio and television timeouts are permitted only between full innings of overtime play.

## 8. FIRST COIN TOSS.

Officials escort no more than four captains from each team to the center of the field for the coin toss. The referee tosses the coin after instructing captains of their options and determining which captain of the visiting team will call the fall of the coin. The options for the winner of toss are the following:

- Offense or defense, with the offense to start at the opponent's 25-yard line for the first half-inning [*first set of plays*].
- Designate which end of the field for the first full inning [*set of plays for each team*] of play.

The winner of the toss may not defer his choice. The loser of the toss then exercises the remaining option for the first inning [*first overtime period*].

## 9. TOSS CHOICE OPTIONS FOR SUBSEQUENT OVERTIME INNINGS.

There is only one coin toss, no matter how many overtime innings [*overtime periods*] are played.

The loser of the coin toss for the first overtime inning [*first overtime play for both teams*] has the first choice of the two options for subsequent even numbered innings [*sets of overtime play*]. The winner of the coin toss for the first overtime inning [*first overtime play for both teams*] has the first choice of the two options for the odd numbered innings [*sets of play for both teams*].

## 10. OVERTIME INNINGS [*SETS OF PLAY FOR BOTH TEAMS*].

Each team will put the ball in play by a scrimmage snap from its opponent's 25-yard line during its half inning [*its set of plays*]. The snap shall be from midway between the inbounds lines unless a captain of the offensive team, before the ready for play signal, selects a different ball location for the first play from scrimmage.

To start a half-inning [*a set of plays*] a team has the option to relocate the ball between the inbounds lines after a charged team timeout unless a foul by Team A or a double foul precedes the timeout.

## 11. TEAM HALF-INNINGS [*TEAM POSSESSION DURING ITS SET OF PLAYS*].

Each team retains the ball during a half inning [*the set of plays in which it snaps the ball*] until:

- It scores, or
- It fails to make a first down, or
- Team possession changes during a down so that Team A is not in possession of the ball at the end of the down.
- Team possession changes during a down so that even if Team A is in possession of the ball at the end of the

down it has not scored.

## 12. CONTINUING A SERIES OF DOWNS.

The offensive team for any half inning [*a set of plays during Team A's possession*] shall be awarded a new series of downs when any of the following events occurs:

- The penalty for a roughing the passer foul is accepted.
- The penalty for a roughing the snapper foul is accepted.
- The penalty for a roughing the kicker foul is accepted.
- The penalty for a foul for roughing the holder of scrimmage kick is accepted.
- The offensive team recovers a field goal attempt between the goal lines after the kicked ball has been touched beyond the neutral zone by a defensive team player.

The offensive team (Team A) may not have the ball for a new series (first and 10) if it again possesses the football after a change of team possession during the same half inning. That is, after Team A loses possession of the ball during a half-inning, it may not again have the ball, first and 10)

### **13. INADVERTENT WHISTLE.**

When an inadvertent whistle is sounded after Team B gains possession, the down is ended and is not replayed unless a foul that was committed before the change of team possession requires that the down be replayed with Team A snapping the ball.

### **14. TIMING.**

The game clock is not used.

However, the play clock is used and Team A must snap the ball from scrimmage within 25 seconds after the ball has been declared ready for play.

### **15. POST SCRIMMAGE KICK ENFORCEMENT.**

Post scrimmage kick enforcement procedures are not applicable in overtime innings [*overtime play*]. Fouls by the defensive team on scrimmage kicks (i.e., field goal attempts) are enforced from the previous spot with Team A retaining the ball.

### **16. RULES DURING PLAY.**

National Federation rules used during regulation play apply during overtime innings [*set of plays by both teams*], except:

- The 25-yard overtime procedure is used.
- Post scrimmage kick enforcement procedures do not apply.
- Rules 10-4-2c Exc. and 10-5-1j do not apply

### **17. FOULS BEFORE A CHANGE OF TEAM POSSESSION DURING A HALF INNING.**

Fouls committed by either team or by both teams before team possession has changed during a down are enforced as per National Federation rules. Fouls by both teams before team possession has changed are “double fouls.”

### **18. FOULS AFTER A CHANGE OF TEAM POSSESSION DURING A HALF INNING.**

Fouls that occur after Team B gains possession are penalized as follows:

- After a change of team possession during a half inning [*the set of downs by one team*] distance penalties for fouls by either team are declined by rule.
- Dead ball fouls, live ball fouls penalized as dead ball fouls, and flagrant fouls are enforced from the succeeding spot.
- A score is canceled by a team that commits a foul during the down.
- The down is not replayed if double fouls occur, no matter whether one or both fouls occur after Team B gains possession.

### **19. SCORING.**

The offensive team can score a touchdown, convert a try, score a field goal and score via a safety.

The defensive team can score via a touchdown or safety.

Beginning with the third inning [*third complete set of plays*] teams must attempt two-point tries after scoring touchdowns—one-point (kick) tries can be attempted but no points can be scored.

### **Overtime Play Situations**

During the top of the inning, Team A's field goal attempt is blocked and does not cross the neutral zone. Team A recovers the ball and runs for a touchdown. RULING: Six points for Team A. Team B begins its half inning after the try.

Team A's field goal attempt is blocked and does not cross the neutral zone. A1 recovers the ball and is tackled beyond the line to gain. RULING: Team A retains the ball to continue its half inning. First and 10.

On first, second or third down, Team A's field goal attempt is blocked and does not cross the neutral zone. A1 recovers the ball and is tackled short of the line to gain. RULING: Team A's ball, next down.

During the top of the inning, Team B gains possession and then loses possession to Team A, which (a) scores a touchdown; (b) does not score a touchdown. RULING: (a) The score counts and Team A will attempt the try. In (b), Team A's half inning ends and Team B begins its half inning. NOTE: Previously it was stated that in (a) Team A would not have the opportunity to attempt a try which has been updated.

During the top of the inning, Team A fumbles into Team B's end zone. Team B recovers and downs the ball in its end zone. RULING: Team A's half inning is ended. Team B begins its half inning.

During the top of the inning, B1 intercepts a forward pass on his six-yard line and downs the ball in his end zone. RULING: Safety: two points for Team A. Team A's half inning is over. Team B will put the ball in play, first and 10 on the 25-yard line at the same end of the field.

Team A's field goal attempt is untouched beyond the neutral zone until B1 muffs it at the five-yard line. A2 recovers at the three-yard line. RULING: Team A's half inning continues; first down for Team A at the three-yard line.

In the first half inning, Team A scores a touchdown. On the try, Team B intercepts a pass or recovers a Team A fumble. RULING: The ball is declared dead when Team B gains possession on a try. Team B starts its half inning at the 25-yard line.

After the end of the first half inning by Team A, Team B commits a dead-ball foul. RULING: Team B starts its half inning on the 40-yard line, first and 10.

During the top of the inning, A1 throws a forward pass and Team A is flagged for an illegal shift. B2 intercepts the pass, and B3 clips before B2 crosses Team A's goal line. RULING: Score not allowed. The fouls offset and the down is not repeated. Team A's half inning is ended, and Team B begins its half inning at the 25-yard line. The penalty is not carried over.

During the top of the inning, B1 intercepts a pass and carries the ball across Team A's goal line. During the run, B2 clips at midfield. RULING: No touchdown. Team A's half inning is ended, and Team B begins its half inning at the 25-yard line. The penalty is not carried over.

During the first half inning A1 has a clear field to the goal line when he makes an obscene gesture toward the nearest opponent. RULING: The score counts but A1 should be flagged for unsportsmanlike conduct. If Team B chooses to have the penalty enforced on the try, Team A will snap from the 18-yard line. If Team B chooses to have the penalty enforced at the start of its half inning, Team B begins its half inning on the 12 1/2-yard line, first and 10.

Play: On fourth down in the "top of the first inning" of overtime, K has the ball on the 20-yard line and lines up for a field goal attempt. K1 is called for holding at the 25 yardline. The kick is (a) successful, or (b) unsuccessful. Ruling: In (a), R will accept the penalty, which is enforced from the spot of the foul. The down is replayed. In (b), R will decline the penalty and begin its series from the 25-yard line. The penalty does not carry over.