

Rule 13 Non-Player Conduct

Section 1 Non-Player Conduct

NON-PLAYER FOULS

Article 1 There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct by a substitute, coach, attendant, or any other non-player (entitled to sit on a team's bench) during any period or timeout (including between halves).

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES

- (1) "Loud speaker" coaching from the sidelines is not permissible.
- (2) A player may communicate with a coach provided the coach is in his prescribed area during dead-ball periods.

ATTENDANTS ON FIELD ONLY ON TEAM TIMEOUTS

Article 2 Either or both team attendants and their helpers may enter the field to attend their team during a team timeout by either team. No other non-player may come on the field without the Referee's permission, unless he is an incoming substitute (5-2-2).

During any team timeout, all playing rules continue in force. Representatives of either team are prohibited from entering the field unless they are incoming substitutes, or team attendants or trainers entering to provide for the welfare of a player, and any game-type activities are prohibited on the Field of Play.

BENCH CREDENTIALS

Article 3 With the exception of uniformed players eligible to participate in the game, all persons in a team's bench area must wear a visible credential clearly marked "BENCH." For all NFL games—preseason, regular-season, and postseason the home club will be issued a maximum of 27 credentials and the visiting club will be issued a maximum of 25 credentials for use in its bench area. Such credentials must be worn by coaches, players under contract to the applicable club but ineligible to participate in the game, and team support personnel (trainers, doctors, equipment men). From time to time, persons with game services credentials (e.g., oxygen technicians, ball boys) and authorized club personnel not regularly assigned to the bench area may be in a team's bench area for a brief period without bench credentials. Clubs are prohibited from allowing into their bench areas any persons who are not officially affiliated with the club or otherwise serving a necessary game day function.

RESTRICTED AREAS

Article 4 All team personnel must observe the zone restrictions applicable to the bench area and the border rimming the playing field. The only persons permitted within the solid six-foot white border (1-1) while play is in progress on the field are game officials. For reasons involving the safety of participating players whose actions may carry them out of bounds, officials' unobstructed coverage of the game, and spectators' sightlines to the field, the border rules must be observed by all coaches and players in the bench area. Violators are subject to penalty by the officials.

MOVEMENT ON SIDELINES

Article 5 Coaches and other non-participating team personnel (including uniformed players not in the game at the time) are prohibited from moving laterally along the sidelines any further than the points that are 18 yards from the middle of the bench area (i.e., 32-yard lines to left and right of bench areas when benches are placed on opposite sides of the field). Lateral movement within the bench area must be behind the solid six-foot white border (see Article 4 above).

NON-BENCH AREAS

Article 6 Clubs are prohibited from allowing into the non-bench areas of field level any persons who have not been accredited to those locations by the home club's public relations office for purposes related to news media coverage, stadium operations, or pregame and halftime entertainment. The home club is responsible for keeping the field level cleared of all unauthorized persons. Photographers and other personnel accredited for field-level work must not be permitted in the end zones or any other part of the official playing field while play is in progress.

Penalty: For illegal acts under Articles 1 through 6 above: Loss of 15 yards from team for whose supposed benefit foul was made. (Unsportsmanlike Conduct.)

Enforcement is from:

- a) the succeeding spot if the ball is dead.
- b) whatever spot the Referee, after consulting with crew, deems equitable, if the ball was in play.

For a flagrant violation, the Referee may exclude the offender or offenders from the playing field enclosure for the remainder of the game.

PALPABLY UNFAIR ACT (NON-PLAYER)

Article 7 A non-player shall not commit any act which is palpably unfair.

Penalty: For a palpably unfair act, see 12-3-3. The Referee, after consulting the crew, shall make such ruling as he considers equitable (15-1-6 and Note). (Unsportsmanlike Conduct.)

Note: Various actions involving a palpably unfair act may arise during a game. In such cases, the officials may award a distance penalty in accordance with 12-3-3, even when it does not involve disqualification of a player or substitute. See 17-1.

Article 8 Non-player personnel of a club (e.g., management personnel, coaches, trainers, equipment men) are prohibited from making unnecessary physical contact with or directing abusive, threatening, or insulting language or gestures at opponents, game officials, or representatives of the League.

Penalty: Loss of 15 yards. (Unsportsmanlike Conduct.) Enforcement is from:

- a) the succeeding spot if the ball is dead;
- b) the previous spot if the ball was in play; or
- c) whatever spot the Referee, after consulting with the crew, deems equitable. (Palpably Unfair Act.)

Note: Violations which occur before or during the game may result in disqualification in addition to the yardage penalty. Any violation at the game site on the day of the game, including postgame, may result in discipline by the Commissioner.