

Be The Referee

"Be The Referee" is a series of one-minute podcasts designed to help educate people on the rules of different sports, to help them better understand the art of officiating, and to recruit officials. "Be The Referee" features insights from MHSAA experts on officiating. These messages can be heard on This Week In High School Sports, which airs on over 100 radio stations and audio web outlets across Michigan.

Sept. 7, 2021 -- A quarterback is under heavy pressure and immediately throws the ball away. International grounding, right? Maybe. And maybe not.

What goes into an official deciding if grounding has occurred?

First, there is no such thing as a "tackle box" in high school football as it pertains to grounding. A quarterback scrambling outside of the tackle box who throws the ball away could still be penalized for grounding – even if it reaches the line of scrimmage.

Any pass can be penalized for grounding if there is no receiver in the immediate area. Behind the line, inside the tackle box – none of that matters – it only matters if there's a potential receiver nearby. If there is – no grounding. If there's not – there will be a flag on the field.