



**2018 Football Mechanics  
Manual**

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## **Mission Statement**

Provide appropriately qualified officials through proper recruiting, development, instruction, evaluation, and assigning.

Establish a method of accomplishing the above that is effective and will become the standard method of doing things for years to come.

Provide leadership that strives to promote professionalism, teamwork, enthusiasm, honesty, and integrity.

## **Kern County Official's Association Football Unit**

Mark Roberts: Instructional Chair, Assigning, Evaluations

Guy Cook: Class Administrator, Beginning Officials Instruction, Class Administrator

Steve Laird: Youth League Liaison, recruiting Coordinator

Ken Williams: Testing and Video Instruction Coordinator

### **Positional Facilitators**

Mark Roberts – Referees

Rick Rodriguez - Umpires

Ken Williams - Flanks

Bill Solan – Back Judges

### **KCOA Board of Directors**

Steve Laird – President

Ken Williams – Vice President

Guy Cook – Treasurer

Brian Landis – Secretary

## **Chain of Command Protocol**

Chain of Command: 1. Instructional Chair. 2. Grievance and Appeals Committee. 3. KCOA Board of Directors

**Social Media Policy: No member may use it to announce or discuss games officiated by the KCOA**

### **Class Requirements**

To maintain eligibility to officiate high school football, officials must attend eight class sessions. There will be eight two-hour regular class meetings and two make-up meetings, for a total of ten class meetings. You must attend the eight regular class meetings. If you are unable to attend a regular class meeting only then, will you be able to attend a make-up meeting. We will no longer be offering any combination of eight class meeting out of the ten.

You must remember to sign in at the beginning of every class for your attendance to be counted.

KCOA dues must be paid BEFORE the first games of the year in week one. **Wednesday, August 15<sup>th</sup>.**

Must be a member of the KCOA in good standing.

***If you are not able to attend the minimum number of required classes, you must submit a letter to the football sports committee explaining your reasons for not attending class. The sports committee will then make a recommendation to the board either allowing or denying you the privilege of officiating regular season games. Officials not attending the required number of classes are not eligible for postseason games unless official attends the classes in another unit and it is verifiable.***

### **Pay Scale**

	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
Varsity Referee	\$79	\$80
Varsity other	\$72	\$73
JV/Frosh Referee	\$63	\$64
JV/Frosh other	\$58	\$59

**Procedure to follow when you don't get paid:** Call the school's AD. Give them the teams and date of game. Be polite and tactful, you are representing the KCOA. Do this at least two times before you call Mark. If you still have not been paid within 4 weeks, call Mark. Garces and Taft use a central paymaster. Please be extra patient with them.

## **Locker Room Etiquette**

- We are representatives of the KCOA. Leave the locker room better than you found it. The schools do not have to provide us showers or food, so don't be rude when they don't have these. All they have to provide is a secure place to dress and store your belongings.
- We know the ladies do not like it when we put our underwear on their desks so don't do it.
- If you have any issues with a locker room, game site, or AD, please DO NOT complain to them about it. Contact Mark.

## **Dress Code to the game**

- Collared shirts.
  - o NO T-SHIRTS!
- Slacks or nice jeans.
  - o No shorts whatsoever!
  - o No jeans with holes.
- Nice shoes; i.e. dress shoes or clean tennis shoes.
  - o No sandals or flip flops
- No hats.
- Facial hair. Not the best idea to have facial hair. Look professional.

## **Official Game Uniform**

**Hats:** White, for referees. Black with white piping for other positions.

**Shirts:** 2 inch or 2 ¼ inch striped shirts - Undershirt must be black, NO WHITE. *Certain officials may need to think about getting extra-long shirts.*

**Placards:** Position letter placards on back of shirt for varsity games. **Required for 2018**

**Pants:** Black only. 1 ½ inch white stripe down sides. Pants will be worn on ALL high school level games, i.e., frosh/soph, JV, and Varsity.

**Towels:** Black only. May have the KCOA logo on it. Only umpire is to have a towel. No reason for other officials to carry a towel and it looks sloppy.

**Shorts:** Black only. No stripes. Must be official's shorts. No gym shorts, casual shorts, or workout shorts. No "Dickies" brand black shorts.

**Belt:** Black.

**Shoes:** Black. You may have some white/silver/gray on them but must be predominately black. CLEAN and shined if leather!

**Socks:** Black only. When wearing black shorts for youth games, black socks are required.

**Bean Bags:** Black, white, or blue.

**American Flag:** Sublimated on the shirt above the pocket.

**Sunglasses:** Allowed during games **except varsity** but must be placed in an inconspicuous place when not being worn, i.e. on belt or in pocket.

**Gloves:** Black or predominately black.

**Whistles & Lanyards:** Black only. Pink is allowed during October only.

Pink equipment during the month of October. **The entire crew must be the same.**

## **Ejection Procedures**

*Instructional chair must be contacted in person or by phone the night of the game in which the ejection occurred. E-mails and texts are not considered a phone call. You must verbally speak with the instructional chair. A factual, written report, (see attached ejection report) must be completed within 24 hours of the ejection. The Ejection Report form (auto fill) can be found on-line at <https://www.kcoafootball.com/forms.html>. Only electronic forms will be accepted, do not hand write the ejection report. Once completed, email to the instructional chair. The instructional chair will then forward the report to the relevant athletic directors and the CIF.*

Our job is not to teach the kids how the game is to be played or the coaches how it is to coach. Our job is to keep coaches and players in the game until they do something **BY RULE** that disqualifies them from the game.



# Referee (R) 5 Man Mechanics

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## Summary

### *Position*

- In the backfield. 12 to 14 yards behind the line of scrimmage (LOS) on the passing arm side of the QB no wider than the widest offensive linemen or the hash marks, whichever are narrower.

### *General Responsibilities*

- Oversees management of the game
- Watches center, guard, tackle opposite him
- Watches for false starts and encroachment penalties
- Counts offensive players on field and confirms with HL
- Signals first down
- Starts clock and chops ball ready for play
- Signals all penalties

### *Run Plays*

- Watches for false starts at LOS
- Watches RB until he reaches LOS
- Trails play into side zones and out of bounds
- Will return to field with players from out of bounds

### *Pass Plays*

- Watches QB until after he releases ball as a passer
- Watches for illegal contact (roughing) against the passer after he has released the ball
- Watches for holding by offensive linemen
- Determines if QB is a runner or a passer

### *Scrimmage Kicks*

- Observes the snap for the punt was clean and not errant
- Observes blocking at the LOS
- Observes any and all contact on the punter
- Has reverse goal line

## Pre-game Responsibilities

### ***Contacting the School***

Crew chief must notify the host school's athletic director at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled game. Verify when crew will be arriving and where they will be dressing and parking. Verify start time for games and any special events planned for the evening. Crew chief must then notify each member of his crew at least 48 hours prior to scheduled game with the same information.

### ***Pre-game Crew Meeting***

Game officials should arrive at the game site at least one hour before the scheduled game time. The crew chief should report directly to game management to assure them that game officials are present. Crew chief will hold a thorough pregame discussion with crew.

### ***Pre-game On Field Duties***

- Entire crew is to be on the field at least 30 minutes before kickoff. Once crew arrives on the field they are to do the following:
- Referee coordinates the inspection of the playing field and pylons. Walk field and examine for any hazards that need attention before start of game. Make sure all field markings are correctly placed
- Meet with each head coach separately starting with the home coach.
- Verify that all players are legally and properly equipped.
- Secure the numbers of all captains.
- Ask coach for any unusual plays or formations.
- Secure the name of coach that will be responsible for sideline control and report that name to the appropriate flank official.
- Notify coach of length of halftime and ask where they will be located during halftime.
- Ask the coach what they would like to do if they win the coin-toss.
- Check game balls.

***This meeting is not for the coach to start discussing with you what he sees the other team doing on game film.***

## Coin-Toss

- Get home team captains five minutes prior to kickoff. Meet them on their sideline at the 50-yard line. Escort captains to center of field. Have them keep their backs to their sideline and referee faces the clock.
- Discuss sportsmanship and fair play with captains.
- Instruct visiting team captain to call "heads" or "tails" before you toss the coin. Repeat captain's choice to umpire before tossing the coin. When tossing the coin the white hat can choose to either catch the toss or let it land on the ground.
- After making toss and determining winner, ask winning captain what they would like to do, (if it is not the choice the coach told you, try and guide the captain to the choice the coach told you.)
- If the winning captain chooses to receive or kick or defer, if winning captain defers, tap that captain on the shoulder while facing the press box and give the incomplete signal. Give opposing captain the appropriate remaining options.
- After all is complete, stand beside captain of team receiving kick off and give the catch or reception signal.
- Dismiss captains to their sidelines.
- Have the remaining crew members, including the box, join at the middle of the field to confirm coin toss and get crew ready to take their proper positions for the kick off.

## General Field Mechanics

### Whistle Mechanics:

- After the snap, drop the whistle from your mouth.
- Always see the ball down, possession, or forward progressed stopped before blowing your whistle.
- When ball becomes dead, covering official should sound whistle quickly and loudly.
- Use bean bag to mark spot if an inadvertent whistle is blown.
- When the ball becomes dead, if you have a penalty to report, sound your whistle with short loud bursts until you gain the referee's attention.

### Ball Mechanics:

- Ball person should ALWAYS be stationed directly behind flank official at all times with at least one extra game ball. Anytime a new ball is needed, the official should be able to turn around and have another ball handed to him immediately. Ball persons must run up and down sideline with official to always be ready to hand ball to official.
- If pass is thrown deep and incomplete, flank official of offensive team gets ball from ball person and relays to umpire while ball person retrieves incomplete pass from the field or the back judge. This is the only time a ball person should enter the field of play.
- After all scoring kicks, ball person will hand ball to back judge and retrieve kicked ball and return to his sideline.
- Ball persons are there to do a job, not "watch game" and "mess around" with friends or team mates. They are not to have a cell phone.
- Only game officials who actually see touchdown should give touchdown signal.
- Game officials not observing touchdown do not mirror signal.

### If a free kick following safety:

- Each game official assumes same relative position and has same duties as on kickoff.
- Ball may be put in play by drop kick, place kick or punt.
- Back judge begins timing one-minute interval after referee signals score or no score.
- Game officials hustle up sidelines to free-kick position and then fill out game cards.
- Be ready and in position to mark ball ready-for-play within the one minute.

## Penalties and use of Flags

Two penalty flags should be carried. Primary flag tucked in front of pants. Secondary flag tucked in back pocket out of sight.

On dead ball fouls, flag should be thrown in the air. If an encroachment or false start, it should be thrown to the offending team's side of the field. ***When it is an obvious false start or encroachment the calling official will move***

***quickly towards Referee and signal to him the foul. If both teams moved and it is a close decision, then covering officials will still need to come into middle of the field to discuss with Umpire and Referee.***

On live ball fouls flag should be thrown out in front of the calling official to a location or a spot of the foul.

Do not throw a flag in an aggressive manner.

***All officials are to carry a game card and are to write down all of their foul calls on the game card. Penalty information should include, quarter, time, foul, team, offending player, accepted or declined. All officials are to write down every personal foul and unsportsmanlike foul called by every official.***

## Declaring the ball ready for play

- The referee moves to a position that is visible to clock operator.
- Check that the crew, especially back judge timing the play clock, are in position and ready to officiate.
- Show next down on hand, blow whistle while using a chopping down motion with right or left hand if marking ready for play and winding arm in circular motion if starting the clock.
- The umpire will stand over the ball until the referee marks it ready for play or released by the referee.
- In no-huddle situations, the umpire will stay over ball until referee releases him and referee will blow ball ready for play once umpire is in position.

## Coach-Referee Conference

- Allows for review of possible misapplication or misinterpretation of rules by game officials.
- Allows for corrections to be made in case of an error.
- Request for conference must be made prior to the ball becoming live following the play which is to be reviewed unless period has officially ended.
- Time-out is granted and charged to team requesting conference.
- Referee, accompanied by HL or LJ, and coach confer at sideline directly in front of team box.
- If rule is determined to have been applied correctly, time out remains charged to team. If team has no time outs remaining, they are charged with a delay of game penalty in this situation.
- If rule has been misapplied, correction shall be made immediately. Time out is not charged to team. Referee will review and explain situation to opposing coach.
- *This is not for a coach to voice his complaints about calls or to ask you to watch for things the other team is doing.*

***Flank officials are to communicate with the coach that conferences are only for misapplications of rules and that he will be charged a time out or delay of game if the rule has been applied correctly.***

## Coach Disqualification Procedure

- Referee, accompanied by HL or LJ, will provide coach with reason.
- Any coach receiving two unsportsmanlike fouls is disqualified and must vacate stadium area.
- If severe enough, can be disqualified on first unsportsmanlike foul.
- Coach is to vacate the stadium area, this means he must go to the locker room or team bus.

- If coach does not vacate stadium area: inform coach that it could lead to his team forfeiting the game. Contact game administration for assistance. Do not continue game until coach has vacated stadium area.
- Opposite flank official shall notify opposing coach of disqualification.

## Reminders

***Coach must be notified by referee or calling official of all unsportsmanlike fouls against him or his team such as:***

- Improper conduct towards a game official.
- A player not wearing proper equipment.
- More than three coaches in the 2-yard restricted area prior to ball becoming live.
- Having anyone in the restricted area during live ball.

## Radio Use

More and more crews are choosing to use radio communication devices during game play. This is an excellent way to keep up to date with current trends in officiating as well as enhance communication between officials during the game. Below are the KCOA guidelines for radio use during games.

They are not a toy and must be used in a manner that enhances communication during the game.

All personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls must still be communicated to the Referee personally and not through the radio.

## Sidelines and Team Box Area

**First violation by team:**

Referee will signal sideline warning, then go to offending sideline and communicate with coach the need for his cooperation in keeping the sidelines clear and safe. Also inform coach that this first call is only a warning and that each subsequent occurrence will result in distance penalties of 5 yards and then 15 yards. All officials are to record time and period of sideline warnings.

***Non-Team Personnel:***

***All non-team personnel must be outside the team box area and behind the dashed restraining line. NO EXCEPTIONS. All non-team personnel are to refrain from making any comments relating to the official's performance or calls/non-calls during the game. If this occurs, inform the Referee and the Referee may ask game administration, i.e. the athletic director, to remove them from the sidelines to a place away from the field. The athletic director does not have to move them and there is no penalty to his team for the actions of the non-team personnel or the refusal to remove them.***

***We must be tactful and professional in our communication in these situations.***

## Team Altercations

- Attempt to stop the altercation.
- If unable to stop altercation, step back and record the uniform number(s) of each player involved and other team personnel.

- Flank officials should try and prevent coaches and players from entering field. Record the uniform number of any player leaving the bench area to enter the playing area during the altercation.
- At no time should you attempt to physically restrain or separate players or coaches.
- Once order is restored, send all players and coaches to their respective team boxes. Confer with other officials to determine any possible disqualifications or penalties.

## Overtime Procedures

- Hold coin-toss at center of field, using the coin-toss mechanics.
- 3-minute intermission between 4<sup>th</sup> period and OT with 2-minute intermission between all subsequent OTs.
- Coin-Toss winner will have choice of whether to be on offense or defense or end of field. Choice will alternate for all succeeding OTs.
- Each team starts 1<sup>st</sup> & 10 at the 25-yard line except for a succeeding spot foul. Succeeding spot fouls carry over from the end of regulation to OT and to each OT possession.
- Only one time out per team per OT. Time outs do not carry over.
- OT is untimed with the exception of the 25 second play clock.
- Both teams get a chance to score on offense, but should the defense score, the game is over.
- Once the defense gains possession the ball is dead, and the offenses' series is over.
- The offense may have the ball placed anywhere between the hash marks to begin their possession.
- A FG may be tried on any down. PSK does not apply in OT.
- A 1<sup>st</sup> down may be gained or awarded. 1<sup>st</sup> down awards are for: Roughing the passer, kicker, holder, snapper, or if the kicking team recovers a kick that was touched by R beyond the neutral zone and before the ball crosses the goal line.
- It is possible for a safety to be awarded to the offense against the defense if a new force was applied to the ball causing it to enter the end zone.
- Live or dead ball foul on a TD must be enforced on the try. There is no carry over in OT. Fouls that would carry over after end of a period do not carry over during OT.
- If game is still tied after 1 OT, the offense must go for 2 points on all tries.

## Kick Off

### Pre-Kick

- Opposite the press box, at the goal line, as wide as the numbers.
- Count K players.
- Check positions of other officials.
- When all other officials have given ready signal by holding their hand straight up above their head, blow the ball ready for play. Verify that at least four K players are on each side of the kicker at the time of the kick.

### Responsibilities:

- The kick breaking the plane of the goal line.
- The ball being touched by R and thus winding the clock.
- The return man touching his knee to the ground while fielding a grounded or bouncing kick.
- Once ball is being returned, work towards the center of the field while observing action directly in front of returner while moving up the field.
- Have progress up to the 15-20-yard line on your side of the field.
- If kick is on opposite side of field serve as clean up behind and to the side of runner.
- Mark spot if kick goes out of bounds in your area.

- Be cognizant of kick caught inside of 5-yard line and player is downed in end zone, or ball goes out of bounds there, rule on whether player's momentum took him into end zone and mark spot of catch with bean bag.
- On anticipated short or onside kicks: Move to 5-10-yard line in middle of field and observe any action between hash marks and out to the side zones.
- Stop the clock when ball becomes dead.

## Scrimmage Plays

### Keys and Priority of keys:

- Strength of formation – determined by the number of eligible receivers on a particular side of the offensive formation. It has nothing to do with the number of lineman on each side of the center, but rather the number of eligible receivers outside the tackles at the snap. If there is no strong side, strength of formation is to the line judge's side of field.
- Trips – Three or more receivers outside the offensive tackles on the same side of field.
- Motion: If motion occurs, the strength of the formation is not determined until the snap. The officials must be prepared to change their keys as motion occurs.

## Running Plays

### After ball is spotted:

- Move to a position that is visible to the clock operator.
- Chop the ball ready for play.
- Observe legality of substitutions in and out of huddle.
- Move 12-15 yards behind LOS and no wider than widest lineman, (tackle or TE), on passing arm side of the QB.
- Able to view tackle on the far side of formation and all backs.
- Count offensive players.
- Watch for snap infractions and false starts, illegal shifts and motion.

### After the snap:

- If ball goes towards you.
- Retreat and follow ball into side zone while watching point of attack.
- Trail runner all the way to out of bounds if necessary.
- Bring runner or QB back onto field with you if they have gone into team bench area.

### Things to watch for at point of attack:

- Holding by the offense.
- Action on QB after pass or handoff.
- Initial direction of backward or forward pass when ball is thrown as a quick out.
- Out of bounds spot behind neutral zone.

### When ball becomes dead:

- Be certain of ball status before blowing whistle. Only blow whistle if no other official has a whistle.
- Move toward spot of progress.
- Show number of next down on your hand above your head.

- You don't have to move all the way to spot of progress, but you need to get in a position to be seen by press box and all other officials before chopping the ball ready for play for the next down.
- If a first down, move to new spot, point first down, chop (wind clock if necessary), ready for play.

#### **Areas of responsibility:**

- Keep play boxed in.

#### **Before blowing whistle:**

- See ball and make sure runner is down, progress is stopped, or pass is incomplete.
- Keep eyes on area of responsibility you are covering.

#### **When ball becomes dead in your area:**

- Watch for dead ball fouls.

#### **If there is a fumble, the covering official should:**

- Drop bean bag at spot of fumble unless fumble is behind line of scrimmage.
- Rule on possession. If unable to determine possession, stop the clock.
- If defense recovers, official should immediately signal time out then indicate defense has recovered by pointing in the direction that team is going.
- If offense recovers, official should indicate number of next down his hand and wind the clock if we have stopped it.
- If ball becomes dead before the fumble, official should blow whistle immediately to indicate down has ended.

#### **If ball goes out of bounds:**

- Continue to watch action.
- Referee or back judge get players out of bounds and lead them back onto the field.
- Assist in relay of ball to umpire.
- Other officials should also signal time out and check clock to make sure it has stopped.
- Be alert for substitution infractions.
- When first down, signal time out and make sure clock has stopped.
- On 4<sup>th</sup> down plays, signal time out after play.

## **Passing Plays**

#### **After ball is spotted:**

- Move to a position that is visible to the clock operator.
- Chop the ball ready for play.
- Observe legality of substitutions in and out of huddle.
- Move 12-15 yards behind LOS and no wider than widest lineman, (tackle or TE), on passing arm side of the QB.
- Be able to view tackle on the far side of formation and all backs.
- Count offensive players.
- Watch for snap infractions and false starts, illegal shifts and motion.

#### **After the snap:**

- Read blocks of opposite guard and tackle.
- Observe all blocks behind neutral zone.
- As QB retreats, move away at an approximate 45-degree angle to remain wider and deeper than QB.

- Pay special attention to contact with the QB.
- After the ball is thrown, continue to observe QB not the flight of the ball.
- Verbally alert pass rushers when ball is gone.
- Observe direction of pass either forwards or backwards.
- Responsible for intentional grounding with assistance from flank officials.
- Continue to observe action behind neutral zone before leaving area.
- Responsible for QB until he crosses neutral zone. If play goes into a side zone, trail the play.

## Scrimmage Kicks

### After ball is spotted:

- Check down and distance with HL.
- Declare ball ready for play
- Position on **kicking leg** side of punter, 5-8 yards wider than player on end of line, and 8-10 yards deeper than punter.
- Be in position to watch ball and all backs.
- Count K players and confirm with HL.
- Signal to crew that team is in a legal kicking formation by giving the squirrel cage or rolling your hands over your head.

### After the snap:

- Watch for fouls behind the neutral zone and near the kicker.
- Watch for blocked kick and rule on recovery.
- After ball has been kicked across neutral zone, watch line play.
- Move downfield slowly, cleaning up behind play.
- Be ready to pick up runner if he breaks a long return. Goal line is your responsibility.
- Kick out of bounds in flight – line up covering official with spot the ball crossed sideline by using an outstretched arm over your head and then give a downward chopping motion when official gets to spot.

## FGs & PATs

### FG attempt by free kick after a fair catch or awarded fair catch.

#### Positions:

- Same as FG or PAT.

### After ball is spotted:

- Position: 2-3 yards to rear and 3-5 yards to side of potential kicker, facing holder and able to see holder receive ball.
- Count K players and indicate to flank official that you have counted the kicking team.
- Signal to crew that K is in a scrimmage-kick formation with squirrel cage signal above your head.

**After snap:**

- Watch for fumble by holder.
- Cover as usual if run or pass.
- Assist in sideline coverage if run or pass develops to your side.
- Signal score or if no score give incomplete signal twice after receiving signal from game officials ruling on kick.
- Rule on roughing kicker or holder.
- If PAT is blocked, immediately blow whistle and give the incomplete signal twice.
- If field goal is blocked, ball remains live unless it breaks the plane of the goal line or is recovered by K beyond the LOS.

## Goal Line

- Position and cover same as scrimmage play.
- Do not give touchdown signal from behind runner.
- After checking with crew, if no foul occurred, give touchdown signal while facing the press box to verify score.

## Administering Penalties

**When ball is dead following a foul:**

- Give time-out signal twice.
- Get full information from game official who called foul.
- Give preliminary signal to press-box side of field only.
- Give options to captain of offended team.
- When captain's most advantageous choice is obvious, quickly inform him/her.
- Make note of enforcement spot for penalty.
- As umpire marks off penalty yardage, give final signal for foul to press-box side of field only.
- If foul is a pre-snap foul only signal foul to press box one time.

**When penalty is declined:**

- Go to spot of ball.
- Give foul signal followed by penalty-declined signal twice to press box.

**When there is a double foul:**

- Signal each foul, facing press box.
- Follow this with penalty-declined signal twice.
- When two penalties are enforced, give proper signals following each enforcement.
- When penalty is to be enforced on kickoff after a score:
  - Indicate proper foul signal.
  - Point to offending team.
  - Indicate scoring signal.
  - Point toward succeeding spot.
- Accepted penalty for foul by either team during the last timed down of a period, play continues with an untimed down except for fouls listed in Rule 3-3-4.

**When dead-ball fouls occur after fourth down:**

- Signal dead ball.
- Signal the dead-ball foul(s).
- Signal first down.

**Calling official:****After calling foul and ball has been declared dead:**

- Blow whistle and give time-out signal twice.
- Make sure another game official is covering spot of foul.
- Identify foul.
- Identify offending team including jersey color and offense/defense or kicking/receiving team.
- Identify offending player's number or position.

- Indicate spot of foul, end of run or end of kick.
- Indicate status of ball when foul occurred.
- Assist with locating captains.
- Recover penalty markers and ball.

**Enforcement:**

- Stay clear of spot of foul.
- If spot is different, go to enforcement spot.
- When umpire begins enforcement, check for correctness and distance.

**When a disqualifying foul is called:**

- Game official who called foul shall identify offending player and report his/her number and type of infraction to referee, coach and other members of officiating crew.
- Emphasize disqualification is for remainder of game.
- If there are double disqualifying fouls, referee may designate another game official to assist in reporting foul to coaches.
- The game official shall not place a hand on offending player while accompanying or escorting him/her to sideline.

**All Game Officials:**

- Record player's number and name if known.
- Observe all other players.
- Record all unsportsmanlike penalties

## Measuring First Downs

- Give time-out signal twice – follow by tapping hands on chest.
- Signal linesman to bring the line-to-gain indicator onto field.
- Motion players away from ball.
- In side zone, measure before ball is taken inbounds.

- If line-to-gain not reached in side zone, use the line-to-gain indicator to accurately place ball at inbounds spot.
- If ball has gone out of bounds, measure to point where ball crossed sideline.
- Inside edge of forward indicator marks line-to-gain.

**When measurement is completed:**

- Signal number of next down.
- Spot ball at proper place.
- Wait for line-to-gain crew to return to position.
- If new series awarded to opponent of team which was in possession when ball became dead:
- Place ball so that foremost point, when it became dead, becomes rear point when the direction is changed.

**After measurement:**

- Declare ball ready-for-play if ball was out of bounds.
- If not out-of-bounds, signal clock to start with ready-for-play and then start clock twice.
- If first down for Team B, clock will start on snap.

## Time Out Procedure

- Blow whistle.
- Signal “time-out” while facing press box.
- If time-out is charged to a team, indicate by moving both arms three times in a horizontal motion toward that team.
- If official’s time-out, indicate by tapping chest with both hands.

**Duties:**

- Check number of time-outs remaining for each team.
- Check time remaining with back judge.
- Check down with linesman.
- Notify coach and captain after a third time-out has been charged.
- When notified by back judge that 45 seconds have expired, signal linesman and line judge by pointing directly at them to give their team a 15-second warning.

- Inform each team huddle of down and time remaining in period.
- Declare ball ready-for-play.

#### **All Game Officials:**

- Record time-out, number of player who called it, time on clock and period.
- Do not visit with players.
- Restrict discussion to captain.
- Do not huddle in a group.
- Confirm number of remaining time-outs with other officials.

## **Injury Time Out Procedure**

**Summon appropriate health-care professional(s) and/or coach(es) on field.**

#### **Duties:**

***Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play for the remainder of that day. All officials should record the player's team, jersey number, quarter and time of injury.***

Be ready to assist appropriate health-care professional(s) and/or coach(es) in securing additional medical help, if needed.

Do not allow coaches to discuss game strategy with players during an injury timeout.

Attempt to keep players a significant distance away from the seriously injured player(s). Direct players and coaches toward respective team bench area.

Once the appropriate health-care professional(s) begins to work on an injured player, all members of the officiating crew should control the total playing field environment and team personnel and allow the appropriate health-care professional(s) to perform services without interruption or interference. Always ensure adequate lines of vision between the appropriate health-care professional(s) and all available emergency personnel.

Players and coaches should be appropriately controlled to avoid dictating medical services to the appropriate health-care professional(s) on the time taken to perform such services.

***Do not stand over or near the player after medical personnel or trainers have arrived. Move away from injured player and do not try and see what is happening.***

## End of Period Procedure

### If a scoreboard clock is not used:

- Take official's time-out twice – follow by tapping hands on chest with approximately four minutes remaining in second and fourth period.
- When time expires, and ball becomes dead, blow whistle and repeat time-out signal.

### If scoreboard clock is used:

- When facing clock, be responsible for knowing when time expires.

### If time expires prior to snap:

- Blow your whistle to prevent snap, if possible.
- If ball is snapped immediately after time has expired, blow whistle loud and long, and give time-out signal twice. Following delay to insure no foul, no obvious timing error, no request for coach-referee conference, and no other irregularity has occurred, hold ball in one hand over head to signal official end of period.

## Between Periods

- Record down, distance, and yard line nearest foremost point of ball while meeting with umpire and linesman in center of field.
- Measure distance from the nearest yard line to foremost point of ball and estimate distance from hash mark.
- In spotting ball, check again with linesman and umpire.
- When notified by back judge that 45 seconds have expired, signal linesman and line judge to give their team's 15-second warning.
- When notified by back judge that 60 seconds have expired, from near the ball announce down and distance.
- Declare ball ready-for-play.
- Limit of three team attendants are permitted on field.
- Either legal type coach-player conferences may be held.

## Between Halves

- Responsible for ensuring three minutes are placed on the clock for the mandatory warm-up period prior to start of second half after the intermission time has elapsed.
- Signal time to start clock to time intermission.
- Discuss situations in dressing room or another private place.
- Determine which team has choice for second half.
- Leave field together.
- Assemble in dressing room or another private place.
- Discuss the overtime procedure, if applicable.
- Return to field at least five minutes before the second half is to begin.
- Start second half on time.



# Referee (R) 4 Man Mechanics

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## Kick Off

### Diamond Mechanics

#### Before kick:

- Position: Middle of field on goal line.
- Count R players.
- Check positions of other game officials.
- After ready signs have been received from other game officials, declare the ball ready for play and blow whistle.
- If short free kick is anticipated:
- Take position 10 yards behind deepest receiver in middle of field.
- Be alert to assist other game officials.

#### After kick:

- Kick down the middle:
- Signal clock to start when kick is legally touched other than first touching by K.
- Pick up runner and follow until releasing to covering official.

#### Deep kick:

- If kick is caught inside 5-yard line and player is downed in end zone, or ball goes out of bounds there, mark spot of catch with bean bag and rule on whether player's momentum took him/her into end zone.

#### Kick outside the inbounds lines:

- Move cautiously with play.
- Observe action of other players in vicinity of runner.
- Serve as clean-up behind, to side of, and around runner.
- Kick out of bounds—determine if R had touched or last touched ball inbounds.

## Free Kick Following a Safety

- Each game official assumes same relative position and has same duties as on kickoff.
- Ball put in play by drop kick, place kick or punt.

### Scoring kick after a fair catch or awarded fair catch:

- Position: Behind and directly between uprights.
- Determine whether kick is successful.

## Scrimmage Plays

**Strength of the Formation:** - determined by the number of eligible receivers on a particular side of the offensive formation. It has nothing to do with the number of linemen on each side of the center, but rather the number of eligible receivers outside the tackles. If there is no strong side, strength is declared to the LINE JUDGE'S side.

**TIGHT END** - The end man on the line of scrimmage lined up no more than four yards from the nearest offensive lineman.

**BACK IN BACKFIELD** - A player in the backfield between the tackles at the snap.

**TRIPS** (Three or more receivers outside the offensive tackles.)

In four-person coverage, the keys are fairly straightforward. Each wing official is responsible for action by the players entering his/her zone. The key for each of these game officials would be the action of the first player into that zone.

## Running Plays

### After ball is spotted:

- Move to a position that is visible to the clock operator.
- Chop the ball ready for play.
- Observe legality of substitutions in and out of huddle.
- Move 12-15 yards behind LOS and no wider than widest lineman, (tackle or TE), on your side of the field.
- On passing arm side of the QB.
- Able to view tackle on the far side of formation and all backs.
- Count offensive players.
- Watch for snap infractions and false starts, illegal shifts and motion.

**After the snap:**

- If ball goes towards you. Retreat and follow ball into side zone while watching point of attack. Trail runner all the way to out of bounds if necessary. Bring runner or QB back onto field with you if they have gone into team bench area.

**Things to watch for at point of attack:**

- Holding by the offense.
- Action on QB after pass or handoff.
- Initial direction of backward or forward pass when ball is thrown as a quick out.
- Out of bounds spot behind neutral zone.

**When ball becomes dead:**

- Be certain of ball status before blowing whistle. Only blow whistle if no other official has a whistle.
- Move toward spot of progress. Show number of next down on your hand above your head. You don't have to move all the way to spot of progress, but you need to get in a position to be seen by press box and all other officials before chopping the ball ready for play for the next down.
- If a first down, move to new spot, point first down, chop (wind clock if necessary), ready for play.

## Passing Plays

**After ball is spotted:**

- Move to a position that is visible to the clock operator.
- Chop the ball ready for play.
- Observe legality of substitutions in and out of huddle.
- Move 12-15 yards behind LOS and no wider than widest lineman, (tackle or TE), on passing arm side of the QB.
- Be able to view tackle on the far side of formation and all backs.
- Count offensive players.
- Watch for snap infractions and false starts, illegal shifts and motion.

**After the snap:**

- Read blocks of opposite guard and tackle.
- Observe all blocks behind neutral zone.
- As QB retreats, move away at an approximate 45 degree angle to remain wider and deeper than QB.
- Pay special attention to contact with the QB.
- After the ball is thrown, continue to observe QB not the flight of the ball.
- Verbally alert pass rushers when ball is gone.
- Observe direction of pass either forwards or backwards.
- Responsible for intentional grounding with assistance from flank officials.
- Continue to observe action behind neutral zone before leaving area.
- Responsible for QB until he crosses neutral zone. If play goes into a side zone, trail the play.

## Scrimmage Kicks

### After ball is spotted:

- Check down and distance with HL.
- Declare ball ready for play
- Position on line judge side of punter, 5-8 yards wider than player on end of line, and 8-10 yards deeper than punter.
- Be in position to watch ball and all backs.
- Count K players and confirm with HL.
- Signal to crew that team is in a legal kicking formation by giving the squirrel cage or rolling your hands over your head.

### After the snap:

- Watch for fouls behind the neutral zone and near the kicker.
- Watch for blocked kick and rule on recovery.
- After ball has been kicked across neutral zone, watch line play.
- Move downfield slowly, cleaning up behind play.
- Be ready to pick up runner if he breaks a long return. Goal line is your responsibility.
- Kick out of bounds in flight – line up covering official with spot the ball crossed sideline by using an outstretched arm over your head and then give a downward chopping motion when official gets to spot.

## FGs & PATs

### FG attempt by free kick after a fair catch or awarded fair catch.

#### Positions:

- Same as FG or PAT

#### FG or PAT:

#### After ball is spotted:

- Position: 2-3 yards to rear and 3-5 yards to side of potential kicker, facing holder and able to see holder receive ball.
- Count K players and indicate to flank official that you have counted the kicking team.
- Signal to crew that K is in a scrimmage-kick formation with squirrel cage signal above your head.

#### After snap:

- Watch for fumble by holder.
- Cover as usual if run or pass.

- Assist in sideline coverage if run or pass develops to your side.
- Signal score or if no score give incomplete signal twice after receiving signal from game officials ruling on kick.
- Rule on roughing kicker or holder.
- If PAT is blocked, immediately blow whistle and give the incomplete signal twice.
- If field goal is blocked, ball remains live unless it breaks the plane of the goal line or is recovered by K beyond the LOS.

## Goal Line

- Position and cover same as scrimmage play.
- Do not give touchdown signal from behind runner.
- After checking with crew, if no foul occurred, give touchdown signal while facing the press box to verify score.

## Administering Penalties

### When ball is dead following a foul:

- Give time-out signal twice.
- Get full information from game official who called foul.
- Give preliminary signal to press-box side of field only.
- Give options to captain of offended team.
- When captain's most advantageous choice is obvious, quickly inform him/her.
- Make note of enforcement spot for penalty.
- As umpire marks off penalty yardage, give final signal for foul to press-box side of field only.
- If foul is a pre-snap foul only signal foul to press box one time.

### When penalty is declined:

- Go to spot of ball.
- Give foul signal followed by penalty-declined signal twice to press box.

**When there is a double foul:**

- Signal each foul, facing press box.
- Follow this with penalty-declined signal twice.
- When two penalties are enforced, give proper signals following each enforcement.
- When penalty is to be enforced on kickoff after a score:
  - Indicate proper foul signal.
  - Point to offending team.
  - Indicate scoring signal.
  - Point toward succeeding spot.
- Accepted penalty for foul by either team during the last timed down of a period, play continues with an untimed down except for fouls listed in Rule 3-3-4.

**When dead-ball fouls occur after fourth down:**

- Signal dead ball.
- Signal the dead-ball foul(s).
- Signal first down.

**When ball becomes dead:**

- Give time-out signal twice.
- Blow whistle.
- Verbally report information to referee.
- Give no visible signal.
- Make mental note as to whether clock should be started on ready or on snap.
- Observe pre-snap foul.
- Blow whistle, toss penalty marker into air and give time-out signal twice immediately.
- See that umpire assesses penalty properly in all respects.

**Calling official:****After calling foul and ball has been declared dead:**

- Blow whistle and give time-out signal twice.
- Get referee's attention by giving short blasts of whistle.
- Make sure another game official is covering spot of foul.
- Verbally report all information fully to referee.
- Identify foul.
- Identify offending team including jersey color and offense/defense or kicking/receiving team.
- Identify offending player's number or position.
- Indicate spot of foul, end of run or end of kick.
- Indicate status of ball when foul occurred.
- Assist with locating captains.
- Recover penalty markers and ball.

**Enforcement:**

- Stay clear of spot of foul.
- If spot is different, go to enforcement spot.
- When umpire begins enforcement, check for correctness and distance.
- Avoid visiting while penalty is assessed.

**When a disqualifying foul is called:**

- Game official who called foul shall identify offending player and report his/her number and type of infraction to referee, coach and other members of officiating crew.
- Emphasize disqualification is for remainder of game.
- If there are double disqualifying fouls, referee may designate another game official to assist in reporting foul to coaches.
- The game official shall not place a hand on offending player while accompanying or escorting him/her to sideline.
- Record player's number and name if known.
- Observe all other players.
- Record unsportsmanlike penalties

## Measurements

- Give time-out signal twice – follow by tapping hands on chest.
- Signal linesman to bring the line-to-gain indicator onto field.
- Motion players away from ball.
- In side zone, measure before ball is taken inbounds.
- If line-to-gain not reached inside zone, use the line-to-gain indicator to accurately place ball at inbounds spot.
- If ball has gone out of bounds, measure to point where ball crossed sideline.
- Inside edge of forward indicator marks line-to-gain.

### When measurement is completed:

- Signal number of next down.
- Spot ball at proper place.
- Wait for line-to-gain crew to return to position.
- If new series awarded to opponent of team which was in possession when ball became dead:
- Place ball so that foremost point, when it became dead, becomes rear point when the direction is changed.

### After measurement:

- Declare ball ready-for-play if ball was out of bounds.
- If not out-of-bounds, signal clock to start with ready-for-play and then start clock twice.
- If first down for Team B, clock will start on snap.

## Time Out Procedure

- Blow whistle.
- Signal “time-out” while facing press box.
- If time-out is charged to a team, indicate by moving both arms three times in a horizontal motion toward that team.
- If official’s time-out, indicate by tapping chest with both hands.

## Duties:

- Check number of time-outs remaining for each team.
- Check time remaining with back judge.
- Check down with linesman.
- Notify coach and captain after a third time-out has been charged.
- When notified by back judge that 45 seconds have expired, signal linesman and line judge by pointing directly at them to give their teams 15-second warning.
- Inform each team huddle of down and time remaining in period.
- Declare ball ready-for-play.
- Record time-out, number of player who called it, time on clock and period.
- Do not visit with players.
- Restrict discussion to captain.
- Do not huddle in a group.
- Confirm number of remaining time-outs with other officials.

## Injury Time Out Procedure

**Summon appropriate health-care professional(s) and/or coach(s) on field.**

### Duties:

***Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play for the remainder of that day. All officials should record the player's team, jersey number, quarter and time of injury.***

Be ready to assist appropriate health-care professional(s) and/or coach(s) in securing additional medical help, if needed.

Attempt to keep players a significant distance away from the seriously injured player(s). Direct players and coaches toward respective team bench area.

Once the appropriate health-care professional(s) begins to work on an injured player, all members of the officiating crew should control the total playing field environment and team personnel and allow the appropriate health-care professional(s) to perform services without interruption or interference. Always ensure adequate lines of vision between the appropriate health-care professional(s) and all available emergency personnel.

Players and coaches should be appropriately controlled to avoid dictating medical services to the appropriate health-care professional(s) on the time taken to perform such services.

Coaches are not allowed on the field to discuss strategy with their team during an injury time out.

***Do not stand over or near the player after medical personnel or trainers have arrived. Move away from injured player and do not try and see what is happening.***

## End of Period Procedure

### **If a scoreboard clock is not used:**

- Take official's time-out twice – follow by tapping hands on chest with approximately four minutes remaining in second and fourth period.
- When time expires, and ball becomes dead, blow whistle and repeat time-out signal.

### **If scoreboard clock is used:**

- When facing clock, be responsible for knowing when time expires.

### **If time expires prior to snap:**

- Blow your whistle to prevent snap, if possible.
- If ball is snapped immediately after time has expired, blow whistle loud and long, and give time-out signal twice.
- Following delay to insure no foul, no obvious timing error, no request for coach-referee conference, and no other irregularity has occurred, hold ball in one hand over head to signal official end of period.

## Between Periods

- Record down, distance, and yard line nearest foremost point of ball while meeting with umpire and linesman in center of field.
- Measure distance from the nearest yard line to foremost point of ball and estimate distance from hash mark.
- In spotting ball, check again with linesman and umpire.
- When notified by line judge that 45 seconds have expired, signal linesman and line judge to give their team's 15-second warning.
- When notified by line judge that 60 seconds have expired, from near the ball announce down and distance.
- Declare ball ready-for-play.

## Between Halves

- Responsible for ensuring three minutes are placed on the clock for the mandatory warm-up period prior to start of second half after the intermission time has elapsed.
- Signal time to start clock to time intermission.
- Discuss situations in dressing room or another private place.
- Determine which team has choice for second half.
- Assist referee with halftime intermission responsibilities.
- Leave field together.
- Assemble in dressing room or another private place.
- Discuss the overtime procedure, if applicable.
- Start second half on time.



# Umpire (U) 5 Man Mechanics

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## Summary

### *Position*

- In the defensive backfield, 5-8 yards behind the defensive line over the center shading the opposite side of the formation from the referee

### *General Responsibilities*

- Spot the ball
- Watch for pre-snap infractions by the center and all linemen
- Watch for false starts and encroachment with contact at LOS
- Penalty enforcement
- Counts defensive players on field and confirms with LJ and BJ
- Informs referee of first down, complete or incomplete pass, first touching and fair catch, touchdown

### *Run Plays*

- Watch for false starts and encroachment with contact, pre-snap infractions at LOS
- Monitor interior linemen
- Watch for holding and illegal blocking at the LOS
- Spot ball at forward progress
- Watch behind or in front of the runner beyond the LOS

### *Pass Plays*

- Watch for false starts and encroachment with contact, pre-snap infractions at LOS
- Monitor interior linemen
- Watch for ineligible receiver(s) are down field
- Watch for holding and illegal blocking at the LOS
- Spot ball at forward progress
- Assist with short or slant passes over the middle
- Turn with pass
- Watch behind or in front of the runner beyond the LOS

### *Special Teams*

- Watch for false starts and encroachment with contact, pre-snap infractions at LOS
- Monitors interior linemen
- Watches for holding and illegal blocking at the LOS
- Rules on penalties involving blockers and defenders on trick or broken plays
- Observes the center to insure there is no contact when protected

# Pre-game Responsibilities

## Pre-game On Field Duties

- Accompany the referee and meet with each head coach separately starting with the home coach.
- Referee will verify that all players are legally and properly equipped. Inspect any casts, braces or splints that might be considered unsafe for play
- Secure the numbers of all captains and long snappers
- Document remaining referee questions and coaches' answers
- Check game balls.

*This meeting is not for the coach to start discussing with you what he sees the other team doing on game film.*

## On-Field Responsibilities

*All crew members should be on the field no less than 30 minutes before kick-off. The following areas of responsibility are in no particular order. These responsibilities should be addressed based on several factors including but not limited to;*

- Teams being on the field
- Coach on the field

### **Responsibilities**

- Walk the entire field from goal post to goal post observing the field surface for any potential hazards that might cause injury to yourself, your crew or any players. If any are found, inform the referee.
- Check the goal post pad to insure it is properly installed and fastened
- Check the pylons to insure they are in acceptable condition and in correct position (**reference Field Diagram**)
- Observe team player equipment noting any illegal equipment and notify referee, player and coach if required
- Observe offensive formation etc.
- Keep area between 45-yard lines clear of players and other team personnel

### **Coin Toss**

- Get visiting team captains five minutes prior to kickoff. Meet them on their sideline at the 50-yard line. Escort captains to the center of the field. Have them keep their backs to their sideline and umpire faces the referee
- Listen as the referee discusses sportsmanship and fair play with captains.
- Listen and write down the visiting team captain's choice for the coin toss. Verbally repeat back captain's choice
- Ensure accuracy of coin toss
- Have the remaining crew members, including the box, join at the middle of the field to confirm coin toss and get crew ready to take their proper positions for the kick off.

### **Whistle Mechanics**

- Progress – Short loud burst
- Penalty – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee's attention
- Timeout – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee's attention
- Touchdown or Safety – Long loud burst

# General Field Mechanics

## Kick Off / Free Kick Mechanics

### *Position*

- At R's 30-yard line on press box side of field
- On-side kick; bump up to R's restraining line

### **Pre-kick Responsibilities**

- Insure sideline is clear so all officials have room to work
- Count K and confirm with BJ by extending your arm out in front of you, confirm acknowledgement
- Insure your sideline is clear of coaches and players
- Key on players on your side of the field, within a 20-yard belt (20 - 40-yard line)
- Have bean bag in hand to mark spot as necessary
- Signify you are ready by raising an arm over-head with an open hand. Hold until referee has given the ready for play signal
- Do not let play start with more or less than 11 receiving team players

### **After Kick**

- Quickly observe flight of ball to determine the general direction/location of where it will land
- Observe K / R as they initiate blocks in your area.
- Rule on all infractions observed in your area, keep officiating!
- Wind the clock should the ball be touched, muffed or possessed by R in your area
- If kick is out of bounds untouched by R, toss flag as close to the out of bounds spot as possible, sound whistle and give time out signal twice. Assist the BJ in offering the coach with options
- When the ball becomes dead and you have the spot, square up and hold forward progress.
- When the ball becomes dead by rule in your area, sound whistle and give time out signal twice
- When the ball becomes dead outside your area, mirror time out signal twice
- In the event of a short kick, be prepared to determine if the kick was grounded or pop up kick
- Signal for ball from flank official and hustle to spot ball. It is a reasonable expectation to have the ball set and ready for the referee within 7-10 seconds after the end of every play.

## **Pre-Snap Mechanics**

At a minimum perform the following pre-snap mechanics

- Spot and remain over the ball, facing the referee until he blows ready for play or he releases you.
- Mark the position of the ball between hash marks with indicator on one hand. Down should be marked with indicator on other hand.
- Indicate current number of down on your hand over your head. Hold and confirm that the down indicator is displaying the correct down, if not, have the HL fix it
- Once released by referee, circle around to the HL side of field to your position, hustle but do not over hustle
- Position yourself 5 to 8 yards behind the defensive line over the center shading to the opposite side of the formation from the referee

## General Field Mechanics cont...

- Count defense and confirm with LJ and BJ verbally and by holding a closed fist and arm extended out in front of you
- Insure there are at least 5 players numbered 50-79 on the offensive line. Observe numbering exception
- Be aware of the neutral zone at all times, especially after the referee has given the ready for play signal. Be prepared to rule on false start or encroachment prior to snap
- As the huddle breaks, observe the formation and determine who is on the LOS
- Once the formation is set, key the center, guard and tackle opposite your position.
- Watch for disconcerting actions by the defense
- Watch defensive players in the free blocking zone before the snap
- Observe the snapper's action
- **Spit out your whistle** once the ball has been legally snapped

## Scrimmage Play Mechanics

### Running Play after the Snap

- Key center, guard and tackle, if they fire out to block, expect run play.
- Watch for illegal blocks and illegal use of hands at the snap
- Watch point of attack around the ball carrier while paying attention to the free blocking zone.
- Should the play go away from you, move with play, watching initial line play and action around the runner. Remain inside working out to insure the play remains boxed in.
- Should the play go up the middle, react and adjust accordingly. Get out of the way while trying to maintain an eye on the play. Continue to watch action on runner and point of attack. Watch for illegal use of the hands, arms and other fouls near the neutral zone and runner.
- Blow whistle for progress **ONLY** if covering officials have not blown their whistle within a reasonable amount of time or if the covering official is not in the proper position.
- Hustle to recover the ball, it is a reasonable expectation to have the ball set and ready for the referee within 7-10 seconds after the end of every play.

### Pass Play after Snap

- Key center, guard and tackle, if they stand upright to block or take a step back to block, expect pass play
- When you read forward pass, step forward to the LOS. Verbally alert lineman when ball has been thrown by QB
- Watch for illegal blocks and illegal use of hands at the snap
- Watch for ineligible receivers downfield
- Assist in determining whether QB's feet were in or behind neutral zone when pass was thrown. Drop penalty marker at spot of pass
- Watch action of players in and behind the neutral zone
- Assist in covering short passes over the middle and quick slants to the middle. **Do not rule on pass interference!**
- Know where a forward pass first touches anything.
- If the ball is tipped at the line, signal by flicking fingers and insure your referee knows it was tipped
- Mark the spot of all fumbles that occur in your area
- Verbally alert the referee as to the result of the play. Complete or incomplete
- Hustle to recover the ball, it is a reasonable expectation to have the ball set and ready for the referee within 7-10 seconds after the end of every play.

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Scrimmage Kicks - Punt

Position 8 to 10 yards deep keeping snapper in view. **Follow Pre-snap Mechanics listed above**

### Scrimmage Kicks after Snap

- Watch action against snapper
- Watch blocking at the LOS
- Be alert for a fake run or pass play
- If the ball is tipped at the line, signal by flicking fingers and insure your referee knows it was tipped
- As ball is kicked, **turn with the action**, and observe players and blocking going down the field
- Once the ball is possessed by R, officiate a run play or fair catch
- Know the result of the play and report to referee. If it was a fair catch, inform referee, if it was first touching by K, inform the referee
- Hustle to recover the ball, it is a reasonable expectation to have the ball set and ready for the referee within 7-10 seconds after the end of every play.

### Scrimmage Kicks – Field Goal and PAT

Position 4 to 7 yards deep keeping snapper in view. **Follow Pre-snap Mechanics listed above including, check for use of numbering exception**

- Step towards LOS keying interior lineman
- Check action on snapper
- Be alert for determining if kick crosses neutral zone
- If the ball is tipped at the line, signal by flicking fingers and insure your referee knows it was tipped
- Be ready to assist the referee in covering short or blocked kick
- Be alert for action on or by outside offensive lineman and up back blocking on referee's side
- Shift observation to contact between defensive players and blockers behind LOS
- Assist in goal-line coverage if run develops to referee's side

### Goal Line Plays

Position 8 to 10 yards deep keeping snapper in view. **Follow Pre-snap Mechanics listed above**

- Observe run or pass play as listed above
- After the snap, key blocking at the interior line. Observe low blocks are legal.
- When runner has made a quick thrust into the line, be sure ball is not moved forward after it is declared dead
- If the flank official is signaling the ball short of the goal-line, pay close attention to spotting the ball to insure accuracy. If needed, hand the ball to the flank official for them to spot the ball themselves
- If you observe the ball break the plane of the goal-line and the flank officials have not signaled touchdown, have a prepared verbal response to inform the flank official of the location / status of the ball. For example, "I have the ball!" This informs the flank official that you have the ball crossing the goal-line

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Measurements

- Once the referee has signaled for a measurement, move into a position to receive the front stake from the chain crew member
- When the lineman states ready, tighten the line-to-gain chain by pulling the front stake up, out and down towards the ball. Hold this position until referee has reached his decision
- Observe for any kinks in the chains
- If the measurement results in a first down, continue to hold the front stake and proceed with the referee to “reset” the ball on the nearest hash mark. Once in position, repeat the steps listed above so referee can properly place the ball. Once the ball is set, return the front stake to the chain crew member. Wait for box and chains to get reset and confirm they are correct
- If the measurement does not result in a first down and the referee is going to re-set, move with the referee and repeat the steps listed above. Once complete, return the front stake to the chain crew member. Wait for box and chains to get reset and confirm they are correct

### Timeouts

- Maintain your position over the ball
- Note and record the time, quarter, down, distance and location of ball
- Confirm with crew the number of time outs remaining for each team
- Continue to monitor Team A until referee is ready to start play

### Between Quarters

- Secure ball and insure it is spotted at the appropriate spot
- Note and record the down, distance and yard-line of the ball, location in relationship to the goal post and hash marks
- Move the ball to the corresponding line in the other half of the field and wait for the HL to re-set the chains and box. Insure they are located properly and that the chains are extending downfield in the correct direction

### Between the Half

- Secure the ball and hand to referee to signal end of period

### Two Point Conversion

- Officiate as normal goal line play

### Penalties

- How to throw your flag
  1. For pre-snap dead-ball fouls – Toss flag to offending side of field
  2. For personal / UNS fouls – Toss flag high into the air
  3. For live ball fouls – Toss flag at spot of the foul

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Penalties cont...

- How to report a foul
  1. Sound your whistle with short loud bursts to gain the referee's attention
  2. If you have the progress spot, hold spot until another official has your spot
  3. When reporting a foul, go slow and gather your thoughts before you speak
  4. At a minimum, report type of foul, number and team. Be prepared to provide additional information such as enforcement yardage and spot, down, decline or accept, result of the play. Example would be: "I have a block in the back on number 89 on the offense, 10-yard penalty from my flag and we will repeat the down"
  
- Administering Penalties
  1. Secure the ball
  2. Make note of enforcement spot for penalty
  3. Confirm with referee the type of penalty, enforcement spot and prescribed yardage for penalty enforcement
  4. Once confirmed, get the attention of the HL and proceed together with the penalty enforcement
  5. On properly marked fields, avoid stepping off distance between yard lines, except to the first and the final yard line
  6. Move briskly, use an arm signal to indicate each yard line you cross

### Mechanics every official should do!

- Always be aware of the clock. You should periodically check the clock as follows;
  1. Is the clock running when it is supposed to?
  2. Is the clock stopped when it is supposed to be?
  3. When a time out is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  4. When a penalty is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  5. Cover the end of the run / ball or other officials flag. If you are the off official on penalties, you should either cover the end of the run / ball or the reporting officials flag

### Radio Use

More and more crews are choosing to use radio communication devices during game play. This is an excellent way to keep up to date with current trends in officiating as well as enhance communication between officials during the game. Below are the KCOA guidelines for radio use during games.

They are not a toy and must be used in a manner that enhances communication during the game.

All personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls must still be communicated to the Referee personally and not through the radio.



# Umpire (U) 4 Man Mechanics

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## Summary

### *Position*

- In the defensive back field, 5-8 yards behind the defensive line over the center shading the opposite side of the formation from the referee

### *General Responsibilities*

- Spots the ball
- Watches for pre-snap infractions by the center and all linemen
- Watches for false starts and encroachment penalties
- Penalty enforcement
- Counts defensive players on field and confirms with LJ
- Informs referee of first down, complete or incomplete pass, first touching and fair catch, touchdown

### *Run Plays*

- Watch for false starts or encroachments, pre-snap infractions at LOS
- Monitor interior linemen
- Watch for holding and illegal blocking at the LOS
- Spot ball at forward progress
- Watch behind or in front of the runner beyond the LOS

### *Pass Plays*

- Watch for false starts or encroachments at LOS
- Monitor interior linemen
- Watch for ineligible receiver(s) are down field
- Watch for holding and illegal blocking at the LOS
- Spot ball at forward progress
- Assist with short or slant passes over the middle
- Turn with pass
- Watch behind or in front of the runner beyond the LOS

### *Special Teams*

- Observes LOS for false starts and encroachment
- Monitors interior linemen
- Watches for holding and illegal blocking at the LOS
- Rules on penalties involving blockers and defenders on trick or broken plays
- Observes the center to insure there is no contact when protected

## Pre-game Responsibilities

### Pre-game On Field Duties

- Accompany the referee and meet with each head coach separately starting with the home coach.
- Referee will verify that all players are legally and properly equipped. Inspect any casts, braces or splints that might be considered unsafe for play
- Secure the numbers of all captains.
- Document remaining referee questions and coaches' answers
- Check game balls.

*This meeting is not for the coach to start discussing with you what he sees the other team doing on game film.*

### On-Field Responsibilities

*All crew members should be on the field no less than 30 minutes before kick-off. The following areas of responsibility are in no particular order. These responsibilities should be addressed based on several factors including but not limited to;*

- Your team being on the field
- Coach on the field

#### **Responsibilities**

- Walk the entire field from goal post to goal post observing the field surface for any potential hazards that might cause injury to yourself, your crew or any players. If any are found, inform the referee.
- Check the goal post pad to insure it is properly installed and fastened
- Check the pylons to insure they are in acceptable condition and in correct position (*reference Field Diagram*)
- Observe team player equipment noting any illegal equipment and notify referee, player and coach if required
- Observe offensive formation etc.
- Keep area between 45-yard lines clear of players and other team personnel

#### **Coin Toss**

- Get visiting team captains five minutes prior to kickoff. Meet them on their sideline at the 50-yard line. Escort captains to the center of the field. Have them keep their backs to their sideline and umpire faces the referee
- Listen as the referee discusses sportsmanship and fair play with captains.
- Listen and write down the visiting team captain's choice for the coin toss. Verbally repeat back captain's choice
- Ensure accuracy of coin toss
- Have the remaining crew members, including the box, join at the middle of the field to confirm coin toss and get crew ready to take their proper positions for the kick off.

#### **Whistle Mechanics**

- Progress – Short loud burst
- Penalty – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee's attention
- Timeout – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee's attention
- Touchdown or Safety – Long loud burst

## Pre-game Responsibilities cont....

### Kick Off / Free Kick Mechanics – Diamond Mechanics

#### *Position*

- Take charge of the ball
- Wait for kicking team (kicker) at K's 40-yard line or succeeding spot after penalty enforcement
- Instruct the kicker to wait for the referee's whistle. Point to the location of the referee (Center of field at goal line)
- Instruct the kicker that if he is not sure if the referee has sounded his whistle, tell him to look at you and you will inform him as to the status of the whistle. (Point to where you will be)
- Count all K players and confirm with LJ, insure there are at least 4 players on each side of the kicker. If there are not at least 4 players, do not move, instruct kicker to fix the formation.
- Insure all K players, except the kicker, are between the 40 and 35 yard-line and not touching any line. If they are not positioned correct, do not move. Correct the formation
- After the formation is correct by rule, move to a position on kicking leg of kicker, behind the kicking team in clear view of the referee. Raise your hand and wait for referee to sound his whistle
- If the ball falls off the tee, sound whistle and repeat previous steps
- Watch for any infractions involving K's restraining line. Encroachment by K is a dead ball foul. Whistle play dead immediately
- Responsible for signaling to press box any dead ball rule infractions, succeeding spot fouls and any live ball rule infractions that cause a re-kick. Mark off penalty enforcement

#### *After Kick*

- Quickly observe flight of ball to determine the general direction/location of where it will land
- Observe K / R as they initiate blocks in the middle of the field
- Rule on all infractions observed in your area, keep officiating!
- Move up the field approximately 10 yards
- Responsible for reverse goal line
- When the ball becomes dead and you have the spot, square up and hold forward progress.
- When the ball becomes dead by rule in your area, sound whistle and give time out signal twice
- When the ball becomes dead outside your area, mirror time out signal twice
- In the event of a short kick, be prepared to determine if the kick was grounded or pop up kick
- Signal for ball from flank official and hustle to spot ball. It is a reasonable expectation to have the ball set and ready for the referee within 7-10 seconds after the end of every play.

# General Field Mechanics

## Pre-Snap Mechanics

At a minimum perform the following pre-snap mechanics

- Spot and remain over the ball, facing the referee until he blows ready for play or he releases you.
- Mark the position of the ball between hash marks with indicator on one hand. Down should be marked with indicator on other hand.
- Indicate current number of down on your hand over your head. Hold and confirm that the down indicator is displaying the correct down, if not, have the HL fix it
- Once released by referee, circle around to the HL side of field to your position, hustle but do not over hustle
- Position yourself 5 to 8 yards behind the defensive line over the center shading to the opposite side of the formation from the referee
- Count defense and confirm with LJ and BJ verbally and by holding a closed fist and arm extended out in front of you
- Insure there are at least 5 players numbered 50-79 on the offensive line. Observe numbering exception
- Be aware of the neutral zone at all times, especially after the referee has given the ready for play signal. Be prepared to rule on false start or encroachment prior to snap
- As the huddle breaks, observe the formation and determine who is on the LOS
- Once the formation is set, key the center, guard and tackle opposite your position.
- Watch for disconcerting actions by the defense
- Watch defensive players in the free blocking zone before the snap
- Observe the snapper's action
- **Spit out your whistle** once the ball has been legally snapped

## Scrimmage Play Mechanics

### Running Play after the Snap

- Key center, guard and tackle, if they fire out to block, expect run play.
- Watch for illegal blocks and illegal use of hands at the snap
- Watch point of attack around the ball carrier while paying attention to the free blocking zone.
- Should the play go away from you, move with play, watching initial line play and action around the runner. Remain inside working out to insure the play remains boxed in.
- Should the play go up the middle, react and adjust accordingly. Get out of the way while trying to maintain an eye on the play. Continue to watch action on runner and point of attack. Watch for illegal use of the hands, arms and other fouls near the neutral zone and runner.
- Blow whistle for progress **ONLY** if covering officials have not blown their whistle within a reasonable amount of time or if the covering official is not in the proper position.
- Hustle to recover the ball, it is a reasonable expectation to have the ball set and ready for the referee within 7-10 seconds after the end of every play.

## General Field Mechanics

### Pass Play after Snap

- Key center, guard and tackle, if they stand upright to block or take a step back to block, expect pass play
- When you read forward pass, step forward to the LOS. Verbally alert lineman when ball has been thrown by QB
- Watch for illegal blocks and illegal use of hands at the snap
- Watch for ineligible receivers downfield
- Assist in determining whether QB's feet were in or behind neutral zone when pass was thrown. Drop penalty marker at spot of pass
- Watch action of players in and behind the neutral zone
- Assist in covering short passes over the middle and quick slants to the middle. **Do not rule on pass interference!**
- Know where a forward pass first touches anything.
- If the ball is tipped at the line, signal by flicking fingers and insure your referee knows it was tipped
- Mark the spot of all fumbles that occur in your area
- Verbally alert the referee as the result of the play. Complete or incomplete
- Hustle to recover the ball, it is a reasonable expectation to have the ball set and ready for the referee within 7-10 seconds after the end of every play.

### Scrimmage Kicks - Punt

Position 8 to 10 yards deep keeping snapper in view. ***Follow Pre-snap Mechanics listed above***

### Scrimmage Kicks after Snap

- Watch action against snapper
- Watch blocking at the LOS
- Be alert for a fake run or pass play
- If the ball is tipped at the line, signal by flicking fingers and insure your referee knows it was tipped
- As ball is kicked, ***turn with the action***, and observe players and blocking going down the field
- Once the ball is possessed by R, officiate a run play or fair catch
- Know the result of the play and report to referee. If it was a fair catch, inform referee, if it was first touching by K, inform the referee
- Hustle to recover the ball, it is a reasonable expectation to have the ball set and ready for the referee within 7-10 seconds after the end of every play.

# General Field Mechanics

## Scrimmage Kicks – Field Goal and PAT

Beyond end line and behind your upright where you feel most comfortable and have best coverage of upright while keeping snapper in view. ***Follow Pre-snap Mechanics listed above including, check for use of numbering exception***

- Be prepared to rule on the kick being good or not good. U will have the whistle. Inform the flank by “yes, yes” or “no,no”.
- If kick is good, verbally inform the flank “yes, yes”, take two steps towards the field of play and give touchdown signal simultaneously with the flank
- If kick is not good, verbally inform the flank “no,no”, take two steps towards the field of play and give timeout signal twice simultaneously with the flank

## Goal Line Plays

Position 8 to 10 yards deep keeping snapper in view. ***Follow Pre-snap Mechanics listed above***

- Observe run or pass play as listed above
- After the snap, key blocking at the interior line. Observe low blocks are legal.
- When runner has made a quick thrust into the line, be sure ball is not moved forward after it is declared dead
- If the flank official is signaling the ball short of the goal-line, pay close attention to spotting the ball to insure accuracy. If needed, hand the ball to the flank official for them to spot the ball themselves
- If you observe the ball break the plane of the goal-line and the flank officials have not signaled touchdown, have a prepared verbal response to inform the flank official of the location / status of the ball. For example, “I have the ball!” This informs the flank official that you have the ball crossing the goal-line

## Measurements

- Once the referee has signaled for a measurement, move into a position to receive the front stake from the chain crew member
- When the lineman states ready, tighten the line-to-gain chain by pulling the front stake up, out and down towards the ball. Hold this position until referee has reached his decision
- Observe for any kinks in the chains
- If the measurement results in a first down, continue to hold the front stake and proceed with the referee to “reset” the ball on the nearest hash mark. Once in position, repeat the steps listed above so referee can properly place the ball. Once the ball is set, return the front stake to the chain crew member. Wait for box and chains to get reset and confirm they are correct
- If the measurement does not result in a first down and the referee is going to re-set, move with the referee and repeat the steps listed above. Once complete, return the front stake to the chain crew member. Wait for box and chains to get reset and confirm they are correct

# General Field Mechanics

## Timeouts

- Maintain your position over the ball
- Note and record the time, quarter, down, distance and location of ball
- Confirm with crew the number of time outs remaining for each team
- Continue to monitor Team A until referee is ready to start play

## Between Quarters

- Secure ball and insure it is spotted at the appropriate spot
- Note and record the down, distance and yard-line of the ball, location in relationship to the goal post and hash marks
- Move the ball to the corresponding line in the other half of the field and wait for the HL to re-set the chains and box. Insure they are located properly and that the chains are extending downfield in the correct direction

## Between the Half

- Secure the ball and hand to referee to signal end of period

## Two Point Conversion

- Officiate as normal goal line play

## Penalties

- How to throw your flag
  4. For pre-snap dead-ball fouls – Toss flag to offending side of field
  5. For personal / UNS fouls – Toss flag high into the air
  6. For live ball fouls – Toss flag at spot of the foul
- How to report a foul
  1. Sound your whistle with short loud bursts to gain the referee's attention
  2. If you have the progress spot, hold spot until another official has your spot
  3. When reporting a foul, go slow and gather your thoughts before you speak
  4. At a minimum, report type of foul, number and team. Be prepared to provide additional information such as enforcement yardage and spot, down, decline or accept, result of the play. Example would be: "I have a block in the back on number 89 on the offense, 10-yard penalty from my flag and we will repeat the down"

# General Field Mechanics

## *Penalties cont...*

- Administering Penalties
  1. Secure the ball
  2. Make note of enforcement spot for penalty
  3. Confirm with referee the type of penalty, enforcement spot and prescribed yardage for penalty enforcement
  4. Once confirmed, get the attention of the HL and proceed together with the penalty enforcement
  5. On properly marked fields, avoid stepping off distance between yard lines, except to the first and the final yard line
  6. Move briskly, use an arm signal to indicate each yard line you cross

## **Mechanics every official should do!**

- Always be aware of the clock. You should periodically check the clock as follows;
  1. Is the clock running when it is supposed to?
  2. Is the clock stopped when it is supposed to be?
  3. When a time out is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  4. When a penalty is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  5. Cover the end of the run / ball or other officials flag. If you are the off official on penalties, you should either cover the end of the run / ball or the reporting officials flag



# Headlinesman (HL) 5 Man Mechanics

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## Summary

### *Position*

- On the sideline opposite the press box, looking directly down the line of scrimmage (LOS). 1-2 yards off the sideline into the restricted area.

### *General Responsibilities*

- Oversees LOS with LJ
- Watches player in motion away from HL
- Directs the chain crew
- Watches for false starts and encroachment penalties
- Rules on sideline plays on his half of field
- Counts offensive players on field and confirms with referee
- Determines when and if the runner is out of bounds
- Informs referee of the current down
- Controls sideline to insure all officials have room to work

### *Run Plays*

- Watches for false starts or encroachments at LOS
- Monitors sideline on plays run to his half of the field
- Determines when and if runner is out of bounds
- Marks runners forward progress
- Watches the runner beyond the LOS to his side of the field
- Watches behind the play for runs to opposite side of field

### *Pass Plays*

- Watches his receiver key on routes behind the neutral zone and routes downfield
- Monitors receivers and defenders on his side of the field
- Watches for pass interference
- Rules on inbounds or out of bounds on catches to the sideline
- Rules on catch or no catch on passes in his side of field or end line threatened

### *Special Teams*

- Observes LOS for false starts and encroachment
- Rules on penalties involving blockers and defenders on trick or broken plays
- Observes the punt has crossed the LOS
- Observes blocking at the LOS

# Pre-game Responsibilities

## Instructing the Chain Crew

### *Chain Crew Box Holder Instructions*

- Hold box at forward point of ball as indicated by HL
- **DON'T MOVE BOX** or change down number unless HL has instructed you to (provide signal for movement)
- Operate box six feet or two yards off the sideline
- After a touchdown, you will set up at the spot for the PAT (1 or 2 in the box)
- On a kickoff, wait at the receiving team's 25-yard line
- At the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters, on the direction of the HL, you will take the box to the same yard line on the other side of the 50. Confirm you line up with the ball
- If there is a measurement, at the direction of the HL, leave the current down showing and move the box to the front stake

### *Chain Crew Stake Holder Instructions*

- **DON'T MOVE CHAINS** unless HL has motioned or instructed you to
- Operate chains six feet or two yards off the sideline
- On 1<sup>st</sup> and Goal, lay the chains on the ground off the side line and out of the way
- On a kickoff, wait at the receiving team's 25-yard line, lay the chains down
- At the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters, on the direction of the HL, you will take the chains and flip them to the same yard line on the other side of the 50.
- If there is a measurement, at the direction of the HL, jog the stake onto the field. If you have the lead stake, hand it to the covering official. If you have the trailing stake, continue to hold it, do not pull tight until instructed to do so

### *Clip Instructions*

- **DO THE FOLLOWING IN ORDER ON EVER FIRST DOWN**
  1. Place new clip at yard stripe nearest back stake
  2. Change the dial or slide on the clip indicating your stripe
  3. Remove the old clip
  4. Stand next to downfield stake
  5. Verbally assist chain crew with movement throughout the team box. Verbally state "Chains moving" or "Chains coming through"

### *Chain Crew Safety and Instructions*

- Pay attention to the action on the field
- Move back and/or drop chains when action comes into your area
- Keep chains taut at all times
- Be alert for penalties. If you are told to move, but you see a flag, inform the HL
- Please, make no remarks to players or coaches
- Please, make no comments about officiating
- Absolutely no cell phones allowed

## Pre-game Responsibilities cont....

### Instructing the Ball Person

At a minimum, provide the following instructions to each ball person on your side of the field

- Introduce yourself and write down their name(s) on your game card
- Instruct them to have two (2) game balls. If their team is on offense one (1) ball will be on the field the other one will be with them. If their team is on defense, they should have two (2) balls with them
- Instruct them on the ball mechanics in the event of an incomplete pass
- Instruct them on the ball mechanics in the event of a score
- Instruct them to never go on the field to retrieve the ball, an official will relay it to them
- Instruct them on where they are to be positioned during the game
  1. Kick Off: standing at the receiving team's 25-yard line holding their game ball(s)
  2. Scrimmage Play: Standing next to the box
  3. Field Goal / Kick Try: Standing behind the goal post far enough back to retrieve the kicked ball

### Head Coach Pre-game

This is one of the most critical responsibilities in your pre-game. Defining the expectations for both the coach and yourself will greatly impact your ability to appropriately officiate on your side-line as well as affect your crew chief's ability to manage the game properly.

*Keep this one thought in mind; when you shake your coaches hand, they are passing on to you control and responsibility for the safety of their players. It can be looked at as a "relinquishing of power", which should not be taken lightly. Throughout the week, this coach has had full control and now he must pass that control on to the officials. Under no circumstances should this trust be broken or abused.*

At a minimum, provide the following instructions to the head coach on your side of the field

- Remove any sunglasses you might be wearing and look the coach in the eyes
- Shake his / her hand and introduce yourself in your full name. "Hi Coach, Forest Gump, I will be the official on your sideline today / tonight"
- Insure you obtain the coaches full name and write it down on our game card
- Address the coach by name when speaking to him; "Coach Brown"
- Discuss what you expect from the coach during the game;
  - ❖ Sideline Control – During dead ball action there can be 1-3 coaches in the **restricted area**, once the huddle has broken or the coach(es) have successfully called their play, **all coaches and players** must vacate the restricted area. During live ball action **absolutely, no coaches or players** will be allowed in the restricted area
- Discuss what the coach can expect from you regarding penalty information. "Coach I will get you the information regarding the penalty, it might take me a play or two, but I will get you the information." FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THIS!
- Ask the coach who will be calling the time out. State that you will listen for whomever gives the signal
- Ask the coach who their ball person will be
- Ask the coach who, if any, will be assisting him / her with controlling their sideline

## Pre-game Responsibilities cont....

- Finish by affirming that this will be a great game, that you will work diligently with him on information and with his sideline to insure everyone is safe and say “Thank you Coach Brown”
- Please do not entertain any negative talk about the other team, school administration or other officials. Always be positive and affirming

### On-Field Responsibilities

*All crew members should be on the field no less than 30 minutes before kick-off. The following areas of responsibility are in no particular order. These responsibilities should be addressed based on several factors including but not limited to;*

- Your team being on the field
- Coach on the field
- Chain Crew on the field

### Responsibilities

- Walk your sideline from goal post to goal post observing the field surface for any potential hazards that might cause injury to you, chain crew or team. If any are found, inform the referee.
- Check the goal post pad to insure it is properly installed and fastened
- Check the pylons to insure they are in acceptable condition and in correct position (*reference Field Diagram*)
- Check to see if game administration has placed the chains and box on the field
- Check condition of chains and box. Insure the chains are 10 yards in measurement. (*this can be performed with the chain crew or another official in the chain crews absence*)
- Perform pre-game instructions to chain crew (*see Instructing the Chain Crew section*)
- Instruct ball person (*see Instruct ball person section*)
- Meet with the head coach (*see Head Coach Pre-game section*)
- Observe team player equipment noting any illegal equipment and notify umpire if required
- Observe offensive formation etc.
- Keep area between 45-yard lines clear of players and other team personnel

### Coin Toss

- Record the results of the toss and the options. If your team won and deferred be prepared to obtain your coaches second half option before they leave the field for half time

### Whistle Mechanics

- Progress – Short loud burst
- Penalty – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee’s attention
- Timeout – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee’s attention
- Touchdown or Safety – Long loud burst

# General Field Mechanics

## Kick Off / Free Kick Mechanics

### *Position*

- At R's 30-yard line opposite the press box
- On-side kick; at R's restraining line

### **Pre-kick Responsibilities**

- Insure chain crew / ball person are in proper position
- Count R and confirm with referee by extending your arm out in front of you, confirm acknowledgement
- Insure your sideline is clear of coaches and players
- Key on players on your side of the field, within a 20-yard belt (20 – 40-yard line)
- Have bean bag in hand to mark spot as necessary
- Signify you are ready by raising an arm over-head with an open hand. Hold until referee has given the ready for play signal
- Do not let play start with more or less than 11 receiving team players

### **After Kick**

- Quickly observe flight of ball to determine the general direction/location of where it will land
- Observe K / R as they initiate blocks in your area.
- Rule on all infractions observed in your area, keep officiating!
- Wind the clock should the ball be touched, muffed or possessed by R in your area
- If kick is out of bounds untouched by R, toss flag as close to the out of bounds spot as possible, sound whistle and give time out signal twice. Assist the BJ in offering the coach with options
- When the ball becomes dead and you have the spot, square up and hold forward progress.
- When the ball becomes dead by rule in your area, sound whistle and give time out signal twice, signal for the box/chain crew, and set up
- When the ball becomes dead outside your area, mirror time out signal twice, signal for the box/chain crew, and set up
- Signal for ball person and provide the umpire with the game ball or retrieve ball and hand to ball person

## **Pre-Snap Mechanics**

At a minimum perform the following pre-snap mechanics

- At the start of every play, be in a position outside the sideline. Straddling the LOS
- Know the down and distance at the start of every play
- Indicate current number of down on your hand over your head. Hold until referee has given the ready for play signal
- Insure the chains are properly set and that the correct down is displayed on the box
- Count offense and confirm with referee verbally and by holding a closed fist and arm extended out in front of you

## General Field Mechanics cont...

- Watch for substitutions
- Be aware of the neutral zone at all times, especially after the referee has given the ready for play signal. Be prepared to rule on false start or encroachment prior to snap
- As the huddle breaks, observe the formation and determine who is on the LOS
- Show receivers and ends that your foot is the line of scrimmage and let them adjust. If they ask you if they are on or off the line you may answer them but do not tell them to move in either direction
- Once the formation is set, determine widest offensive man on your side is in the backfield or on the LOS, and if any receivers are covered up. Give clear and proper signals
- Give proper signal if widest offensive man on your side is in the backfield by extending your backfield arm up and into the backfield
- If the LJ gives you the same signal, acknowledge it by point to him. Also start counting the offensive backs (Might be 5)
- Observe man in motion away from you, even if he reverses direction
- Give proper signal if your man moves on the line after he is signaled back by crossing your backfield arm over your chest
- Observe if your pre-snap key (receiver) is being “pressed” by the defense. If he is, be prepared to rule on any infractions. If not, continue to key on Tackle / End on your side of the field at the snap
- ***Spit out your whistle*** once the ball has been legally snapped

## Scrimmage Play Mechanics

### Running Play after the Snap

- Observe Tackle to your side of the field – how is he blocking? Run or Pass?
- Spy the Quarterback to confirm run or pass play
- On runs up the middle, stay on the LOS, do not move until the runner to advance a minimum of 7 yards, then you move
- On short gains, 7-15 yards, a side to side shuffle will suffice. Always watch the field of play!
- On medium gains, 15-20 yards, start with a shuffle but progress into a more aggressive movement to maintain the 7-yard cushion between you and the runner. ***Do not over-run the play!*** If the play begins to slow, slow yourself, but always maintain a controlled purposeful movement
- On long gains, 20+ yards, start with the shuffle, as the play progresses you will need to progress with it to maintain the 7-yard cushion, be prepared to run but not over-run
- The only reason a Headlinesman will leave the LOS is because the action on the field has forced him to move, either downfield or into the backfield
- On sweeps, move back into the offensive backfield and let the play go in front of you. Maintain the 7-yard cushion
- On every run play watch forward progress. Forward progress should be determined as follows;
  - ❖ One on one, give the runner the opportunity to elude the defender
  - ❖ Two on one, give the runner the opportunity to elude the defender, however, once he is wrapped up, progress has stopped
  - ❖ Three (or more) on one, once the runner’s movement is being determined by the force of the defenders, progress has stopped

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *Running play after the snap cont....*

- Square up your movement to the ball to mark forward progress as you move up and down the sidelines. **Do not round off your movement!**
- On progress, hold your spot until the ball has been spotted
- Watch point of attack on plays to your side of the field, clean up behind the play on runs to the opposite side of the field
- If the ball goes out of bounds on your sideline, get the spot and hold it. Do not shag the ball or lose the progress spot. In 5-man mechanics, the referee or BJ will assist. In 4-man mechanics, the referee will assist. In the event there is no assistance, drop a bean bag at the spot and retrieve the ball
- If the ball goes out of bounds on your sideline, get the spot and hold it, turn with the players going out of bounds, continuing to hold the spot. Other officials will assist in retrieving the out of bounds player(s)
- Signal for box to move to your spot
- If first down is achieved, signal for box and chain crew to move to your spot
- Personally mark location for the box to be set by extending one foot back towards the box, tapping your leg and instructing that this is the spot to mark
- Verbally instruct the box on the down. "Give me two in the box", make the box confirm back verbally, "Two in the box"
- Keep track of the down by changing your down indicator at the same time, every play
- Once the ball is spotted, box and/or chains have moved prepare for pre-snap mechanics

### **Pass Play after Snap**

- Observe Tackle to your side of the field – how is he blocking? Run or Pass?
- Spy the Quarterback to confirm run or pass play
- On a quick stand up pass, you may have to rule on forward or backwards. You must signal if a pass is backwards by punching a closed fist into the offensive backfield
- If a backwards pass is incomplete, it is a loose ball (fumble) and the play remains live. Be prepared to rule on team in possession
- Every pass play begins with your pre-snap key, but every pass play develops into zone coverage
- In 5-man mechanics it is not necessary to go down field immediately if you read pass
- Hold the LOS and allow the play to develop while observing receivers in your zone
- If your sideline is threatened, you should move down field to help with outside to inside pass coverage. Determine if the receiver or defender was out of bound at any time during the play. Determine if the catch is in-bounds or out of bounds
- If you pre-snap key was in press coverage, pay close attention at the snap to rule on infractions
- You must have clear understanding on what constitutes pass interference
- If receivers in your zone extend 10 or more yards down field, move downfield maintaining a 7-10-yard cushion, always keeping your head on a swivel between your key and the quarterback
- You should not come back towards the LOS if the QB scrambles. Hold your spot and officiate. Allow the play to develop. Be prepared to move should the play end near your spot
- If the pass is incomplete in your area, stop moving and give a clear and controlled "incomplete" signal

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *Pass play after the snap cont...*

- If the pass is incomplete out of your area, give a clear and controlled “time out” signal twice
- If the pass is incomplete and your sideline is on offense, be prepared to relay a new ball to the umpire
- If the result of the play is a change of possession and you are the covering official, be prepared to rule on team in possession and provide first down signal
- Once the pass is complete, it becomes a run play. See Running plays after the snap

### **Scrimmage Kicks - Punt**

- Stay on the LOS until the kick crosses the neutral zone
- Before the kick, watch for contact of defensive end with offensive backs
- In the case of an errant snap, help officiate behind the line
- Mark the spot of rolling kicks going out-of-bounds with a bean bag
- Move cautiously down the field, floating 10 – 15 yards, watching the blocking in front of the ball, until the play transitions to your area then watch the point of attach

### **Scrimmage Kicks – Field Goal**

- If the referee has his back to you, you are to go under the upright
- If your position is under the upright, be prepared to rule on the kick being good or not good. BJ will have the whistle. Inform the BJ by “yes, yes” or “no,no”.
- If kick is good, verbally inform the BJ “yes, yes”, take two steps towards the field of play and give touchdown signal simultaneously with the BJ
- If kick is not good, verbally inform the BJ “no,no”, take two steps towards the field of play and give timeout signal twice simultaneously with the BJ
- If your position is on the LOS, confirm with the referee the number of lineman outside the center on your side of the field on your hand and extend it to the backfield
- You have the entire LOS, be prepared to rule on false start and encroachment
- Assist the referee on roughing the holder
- In case of an errant snap, help officiate behind the line
- In case the play becomes broken, stay on the LOS and officiate as running play
- If the kick is blocked in or behind the neutral zone, officiate as running play. Any team can recover and advance
- Once it is obvious the field goal is good or not good, pinch in and make your presence known

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Goal Line Plays

- When the line to gain is the goal line, instruct the chains to lay down and provide the box with a bean bag to mark spot of the ball for each down
- Be at the goal line when the runner and the ball break the plane. You do not need to be on the sideline – step back at least 2-yards. Give yourself clear sight
- On plays 10-6 yards in – Move with the play, but be at the goal line when the runner and the ball break the plane
- On plays 5-yards and in – First move is immediately to the goal line and officiate back to the ball
- If you know the ball was dead before it crossed the goal line, do not allow a score to stand. Pinch in and identify the location of the ball. **Sell your call!**
- Do not give the touchdown signal unless you see the ball in possession break the goal line. Pinch in on all goal line plays
- On Reverse-goal line – First move is immediately to the goal line and officiate back up field. If the ball becomes dead in the end zone possessed by the offense, it is a safety. **Signal Safety!** If the ball becomes dead in the end zone possessed by the defense, it is a touch down. **Signal Touch Down!**

### Measurements

- Once the referee has signaled for a measurement, move the down box to the forward stake before moving the chains. Key old down on box
- Grab the clip and jog onto the field with the chains
- Take the clip and place it on the yard-line marked by the LJ foot
- Continue to hold the clip tight while the chains are pulled taunt
- If the measurement results in a first down, drop the clip and instruct the back stake to set itself on the backside of the box. Once set, pull chains taunt and reset the clip and change the number on the box to 1
- If the measurement does not result in a first down, continue to hold the clip and reset on the yard-line / hash marked by the LJ foot. Once the referee has re-spotted the ball, jog to your sideline and re-set the clip to the proper yard line. Personally mark location for the box to be set by extending one foot back towards the sideline. Have the box reset on your mark

### Timeouts

- Cover the team on your sideline during a time out
- Take a position between your team and the ball, looking back towards the sideline
- Notify the coach on the number of timeouts remaining
- Do not use this time to discuss with players and coaches
- Mark down the quarter, time, down, distance and ball location
- At the 45 second mark, notify team to come out of the timeout.
- Once team has maneuvered back to the field, assume your position on the sideline

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Injury Time Outs

***Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play for the remainder of that day. All officials should record the player's team, jersey number, quarter and time of injury.***

Be ready to assist appropriate health-care professional(s) and/or coach(es) in securing additional medical help, if needed.

Do not allow coaches to discuss game strategy with players during an injury timeout.

Attempt to keep players a significant distance away from the seriously injured player(s). Direct players and coaches toward respective team bench area.

Once the appropriate health-care professional(s) begins to work on an injured player, all members of the officiating crew should control the total playing field environment and team personnel and allow the appropriate health-care professional(s) to perform services without interruption or interference. Always ensure adequate lines of vision between the appropriate health-care professional(s) and all available emergency personnel.

Players and coaches should be appropriately controlled to avoid dictating medical services to the appropriate health-care professional(s) on the time taken to perform such services.

***Do not stand over or near the player after medical personnel or trainers have arrived. Move away from injured player and do not try and see what is happening.***

### Between Quarters

- Note and record the down, distance and location of the ball. Also, record the yard line of the clip
- Reverse the chains and assistants (be sure clip is attached and in proper location on yard line), then move to the corresponding line in the other half of the field. Hold the clip at the correct yard line while assistants tighten the chains, and set them
- If the quarter ends on a first down just set the chains as a normal first down
- Check your team for nine-yard line rule
- Notify team and coach on your side of the field when to be back on the field

### Between the Half

- Remind assistants to be back and ready to go with 3 minutes remaining before kickoff
- Direct chain crew, box and ball person to wait at the 25 yard-line on the receiving end of the field
- Get the coaches second half choice if they won the coin toss and deferred

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Try for Points

- If the back of the referee is facing you, move under the goal post
- Instruct the box to put 1 in the box and spot the 3 yard-line
- You have the upright, BJ will have cross bar and opposite upright.
- BJ has the whistle
- Position is under the upright, be prepared to rule on the kick being good or not good by informing the BJ by “yes, yes” or “no,no”.
- If kick is good, verbally inform the BJ “yes, yes”, take two steps towards the field of play and give touchdown signal simultaneously with the BJ
- If kick is not good, verbally inform the BJ “no,no”, take two steps towards the field of play and give timeout signal twice simultaneously with the BJ
- If the play becomes broken, hustle to your corresponding pylon and be prepared to rule on the plane of the goal line

### Two Point Conversion

- Officiate as normal goal line play

### Penalties

- How to throw your flag
  7. For pre-snap dead-ball fouls – Toss flag to offending side of field
  8. For personal / UNS fouls – Toss flag high into the air
  9. For live ball fouls – Toss flag at spot of the foul

### Penalties cont...

- How to report a foul
  5. Sound your whistle with short loud bursts to gain the referee’s attention
  6. If you have the progress spot, hold spot until another official has your spot
  7. When reporting a foul, go slow and gather your thoughts before you speak
  8. At a minimum, report type of foul, number and team. Be prepared to provide additional information such as enforcement yardage and spot, down, decline or accept, result of the play. Example would be: “I have a block in the back on number 89 on the offense, 10-yard penalty from my flag and we will repeat the down”
- Enforcement of Penalties
  7. After all foul information is reported, march off the penalties with the umpire
  8. Always instruct the box to move with you
  9. If a first down is gain through the penalty, move the chain and box simultaneously with you and set as a normal first down

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### **Mechanics every official should do!**

- Always be aware of the clock. You should periodically check the clock as follows;
  6. Is the clock running when it is supposed to?
  7. Is the clock stopped when it is supposed to be?
  8. When a time out is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  9. When a penalty is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  10. Cover the end of the run / ball or other officials flag. If you are the off official on penalties, you should either cover the end of the run / ball or the reporting officials flag



# Headlinesman (HL) 4 Man Mechanics

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## Summary

### *Position*

- On the sideline opposite the press box, looking directly down the line of scrimmage (LOS). 1-2 yards off the sideline into the restricted area.

### *General Responsibilities*

- Oversees LOS with LJ
- Watches player in motion away from HL
- Directs the chain crew
- Watches for false starts and encroachment penalties
- Rules on sideline plays on his half of field
- Counts offensive players on field and confirms with referee
- Determines when and if the runner is out of bounds
- Informs referee of the current down
- Controls sideline to insure all officials have room to work

### *Run Plays*

- Watches for false starts or encroachments at LOS
- Monitors sideline on plays run to his half of the field
- Determines when and if runner is out of bounds
- Marks runners forward progress
- Watches the runner beyond the LOS to his side of the field
- Watches behind the play for runs to opposite side of field

### *Pass Plays*

- Watches his receiver key on routes behind the neutral zone and routes downfield
- Monitors receivers and defenders on his side of the field
- Watches for pass interference
- Rules on inbounds or out of bounds on catches to the sideline
- Rules on catch or no catch on passes in his side of field or end line threatened

### *Special Teams*

- Observes LOS for false starts and encroachment
- Rules on penalties involving blockers and defenders on trick or broken plays
- Observes the punt has crossed the LOS
- Observes blocking at the LOS

# Pre-game Responsibilities

## Instructing the Chain Crew

### *Chain Crew Box Holder Instructions*

- Hold box at forward point of ball as indicated by HL
- **DON'T MOVE BOX** or change down number unless HL has instructed you to (provide signal for movement)
- Operate box six feet or two yards off the sideline
- After a touchdown, you will set up at the spot for the PAT (1 or 2 in the box)
- On a kickoff, wait at the receiving team's 25-yard line
- At the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters, on the direction of the HL, you will take the box to the same yard line on the other side of the 50. Confirm you line up with the ball
- If there is a measurement, at the direction of the HL, leave the current down showing and move the box to the front stake

### *Chain Crew Stake Holder Instructions*

- **DON'T MOVE CHAINS** unless HL has motioned or instructed you to
- Operate chains six feet or two yards off the sideline
- On 1<sup>st</sup> and Goal, lay the chains on the ground off the side line and out of the way
- On a kickoff, wait at the receiving team's 25-yard line, lay the chains down
- At the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters, on the direction of the HL, you will take the chains and flip them to the same yard line on the other side of the 50.
- If there is a measurement, at the direction of the HL, jog the stake onto the field. If you have the lead stake, hand it to the covering official. If you have the trailing stake, continue to hold it, do not pull tight until instructed to do so

### *Clip Instructions*

- **DO THE FOLLOWING IN ORDER ON EVER FIRST DOWN**
  6. Place new clip at yard stripe nearest back stake
  7. Change the dial or slide on the clip indicating your stripe
  8. Remove the old clip
  9. Stand next to downfield stake
  10. Verbally assist chain crew with movement throughout the team box. Verbally state "Chains moving" or "Chains coming through"

### *Chain Crew Safety and Instructions*

- Pay attention to the action on the field
- Move back and/or drop chains when action comes into your area
- Keep chains taut at all times
- Be alert for penalties. If you are told to move, but you see a flag, inform the HL
- Please, make no remarks to players or coaches
- Please, make no comments about officiating
- Absolutely no cell phones allowed

## Pre-game Responsibilities cont....

### Instructing the Ball Person

At a minimum, provide the following instructions to each ball person on your side of the field

- Introduce yourself and write down their name(s) on your game card
- Instruct them to have two (2) game balls. If their team is on offense one (1) ball will be on the field the other one will be with them. If their team is on defense, they should have two (2) balls with them
- Instruct them on the ball mechanics in the event of an incomplete pass
- Instruct them on the ball mechanics in the event of a score
- Instruct them to never go on the field to retrieve the ball, an official will relay it to them
- Instruct them on where they are to be positioned during the game
  4. Kick Off: standing at the receiving team's 25-yard line holding their game ball(s)
  5. Scrimmage Play: Standing next to the box
  6. Field Goal / Kick Try: Standing behind the goal post far enough back to retrieve the kicked ball

### Head Coach Pre-game

This is one of the most critical responsibilities in your pre-game. Defining the expectations for both the coach and yourself will greatly impact your ability to appropriately officiate on your side-line as well as affect your crew chief's ability to manage the game properly.

*Keep this one thought in mind; when you shake your coaches hand, they are passing on to you control and responsibility for the safety of their players. It can be looked at as a "relinquishing of power", which should not be taken lightly. Throughout the week, this coach has had full control and now he must pass that control on to the officials. Under no circumstances should this trust be broken or abused.*

At a minimum, provide the following instructions to the head coach on your side of the field

- Remove any sunglasses you might be wearing and look the coach in the eyes
- Shake his / her hand and introduce yourself in your full name. "Hi Coach, Forest Gump, I will be the official on your sideline today / tonight"
- Insure you obtain the coaches full name and write it down on our game card
- Address the coach by name when speaking to him; "Coach Brown"
- Discuss what you expect from the coach during the game;
  - ❖ Sideline Control – During dead ball action there can be 1-3 coaches in the **restricted area**, once the huddle has broken or the coach(es) have successfully called their play, **all coaches and players** must vacate the restricted area. During live ball action **absolutely, no coaches or players** will be allowed in the restricted area
- Discuss what the coach can expect from you regarding penalty information. "Coach I will get you the information regarding the penalty, it might take me a play or two, but I will get you the information." FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THIS!
- Ask the coach who will be calling the time out. State that you will listen for whomever gives the signal
- Ask the coach who their ball person will be
- Ask the coach who, if any, will be assisting him / her with controlling their sideline

## Pre-game Responsibilities cont....

- Finish by affirming that this will be a great game, that you will work diligently with him on information and with his sideline to insure everyone is safe and say “Thank you Coach Brown”
- Please do not entertain any negative talk about the other team, school administration or other officials. Always be positive and affirming

### On-Field Responsibilities

*All crew members should be on the field no less than 30 minutes before kick-off. The following areas of responsibility are in no particular order. These responsibilities should be addressed based on several factors including but not limited to;*

- Your team being on the field
- Coach on the field
- Chain Crew on the field

### Responsibilities

- Walk your sideline from goal post to goal post observing the field surface for any potential hazards that might cause injury to you, chain crew or team. If any are found, inform the referee.
- Check the goal post pad to insure it is properly installed and fastened
- Check the pylons to insure they are in acceptable condition and in correct position (*reference Field Diagram*)
- Check to see if game administration has placed the chains and box on the field
- Check condition of chains and box. Insure the chains are 10 yards in measurement. (*this can be performed with the chain crew or another official in the chain crews absence*)
- Perform pre-game instructions to chain crew (*see Instructing the Chain Crew section*)
- Instruct ball person (*see Instruct ball person section*)
- Meet with the head coach (*see Head Coach Pre-game section*)
- Observe team player equipment noting any illegal equipment and notify umpire if required
- Observe offensive formation etc.
- Keep area between 45-yard lines clear of players and other team personnel

### Coin Toss

- Record the results of the toss and the options. If your team won and deferred be prepared to obtain your coaches second half option before they leave the field for half time

### Whistle Mechanics

- Progress – Short loud burst
- Penalty – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee’s attention
- Timeout – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee’s attention
- Touchdown or Safety – Long loud burst

# General Field Mechanics

## Kick Off / Free Kick Mechanics

### *Position*

- At K's Free Kick line opposite the press box
- On-side kick; at R's restraining line

### **Pre-kick Responsibilities**

- Insure chain crew / ball person are in proper position
- Count R and confirm with referee by extending your arm out in front of you, confirm acknowledgement
- Insure your sideline is clear of coaches and players
- Key on players on your side of the field, within a 20-yard belt (20 – 40-yard line)
- Have bean bag in hand to mark spot as necessary
- Signify you are ready by raising an arm over-head with an open hand. Hold until referee has given the ready for play signal
- Do not let play start with more or less than 11 receiving team players

### **After Kick**

- Quickly observe flight of ball to determine the general direction/location of where it will land
- Observe K / R as they initiate blocks in your area.
- Rule on all infractions observed in your area, keep officiating!
- Wind the clock should the ball be touched, muffed or possessed by R in your area
- If kick is out of bounds untouched by R, toss flag as close to the out of bounds spot as possible, sound whistle and give time out signal twice. Assist the BJ in offering the coach with options
- When the ball becomes dead and you have the spot, square up and hold forward progress.
- When the ball becomes dead by rule in your area, sound whistle and give time out signal twice, signal for the box/chain crew, and set up
- When the ball becomes dead outside your area, mirror time out signal twice, signal for the box/chain crew, and set up
- Signal for ball person and provide the umpire with the game ball or retrieve ball and hand to ball person

## **Pre-Snap Mechanics**

At a minimum perform the following pre-snap mechanics

- At the start of every play, be in a position outside the sideline. Straddling the LOS
- Know the down and distance at the start of every play
- Indicate current number of down on your hand over your head. Hold until referee has given the ready for play signal
- Insure the chains are properly set and that the correct down is displayed on the box
- Count offense and confirm with referee verbally and by holding a closed fist and arm extended out in front of you

## General Field Mechanics cont...

- Watch for substitutions
- Be aware of the neutral zone at all times, especially after the referee has given the ready for play signal. Be prepared to rule on false start or encroachment prior to snap
- As the huddle breaks, observe the formation and determine who is on the LOS
- Show receivers and ends that your foot is the line of scrimmage and let them adjust. If they ask you if they are on or off the line you may answer them but do not tell them to move in either direction
- Once the formation is set, determine widest offensive man on your side is in the backfield or on the LOS, and if any receivers are covered up. Give clear and proper signals
- Give proper signal if widest offensive man on your side is in the backfield by extending your backfield arm up and into the backfield
- If the LJ gives you the same signal, acknowledge it by point to him. Also start counting the offensive backs (Might be 5)
- Observe man in motion away from you, even if he reverses direction
- Give proper signal if your man moves on the line after he is signaled back by crossing your backfield arm over your chest
- Observe if your pre-snap key (receiver) is being “pressed” by the defense. If he is, be prepared to rule on any infractions. If not, continue to key on Tackle / End on your side of the field at the snap
- ***Spit out your whistle*** once the ball has been legally snapped

## Scrimmage Play Mechanics

### Running Play after the Snap

- Observe Tackle to your side of the field – how is he blocking? Run or Pass?
- Spy the Quarterback to confirm run or pass play
- On runs up the middle, stay on the LOS, do not move until the runner to advance a minimum of 7 yards, then you move
- On short gains, 7-15 yards, a side to side shuffle will suffice. Always watch the field of play!
- On medium gains, 15-20 yards, start with a shuffle but progress into a more aggressive movement to maintain the 7-yard cushion between you and the runner. ***Do not over-run the play!*** If the play begins to slow, slow yourself, but always maintain a controlled purposeful movement
- On long gains, 20+ yards, start with the shuffle, as the play progresses you will need to progress with it to maintain the 7-yard cushion, be prepared to run but not over-run
- The only reason a Headlinesman will leave the LOS is because the action on the field has forced him to move, either downfield or into the backfield
- On sweeps, move back into the offensive backfield and let the play go in front of you. Maintain the 7-yard cushion
- On every run play watch forward progress. Forward progress should be determined as follows;
  - ❖ One on one, give the runner the opportunity to elude the defender
  - ❖ Two on one, give the runner the opportunity to elude the defender, however, once he is wrapped up, progress has stopped
  - ❖ Three (or more) on one, once the runner’s movement is being determined by the force of the defenders, progress has stopped

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *Running play after the snap cont....*

- Square up your movement to the ball to mark forward progress as you move up and down the sidelines. **Do not round off your movement!**
- On progress, hold your spot until the ball has been spotted
- Watch point of attack on plays to your side of the field, clean up behind the play on runs to the opposite side of the field
- If the ball goes out of bounds on your sideline, get the spot and hold it. Do not shag the ball or lose the progress spot. In 5-man mechanics, the referee or BJ will assist. In 4-man mechanics, the referee will assist. In the event there is no assistance, drop a bean bag at the spot and retrieve the ball
- If the ball goes out of bounds on your sideline, get the spot and hold it, turn with the players going out of bounds, continuing to hold the spot. Other officials will assist in retrieving the out of bounds player(s)
- Signal for box to move to your spot
- If first down is achieved, signal for box and chain crew to move to your spot
- Personally mark location for the box to be set by extending one foot back towards the box, tapping your leg and instructing that this is the spot to mark
- Verbally instruct the box on the down. "Give me two in the box", make the box confirm back verbally, "Two in the box"
- Keep track of the down by changing your down indicator at the same time, every play
- Once the ball is spotted, box and/or chains have moved prepare for pre-snap mechanics

### **Pass Play after Snap**

- Observe Tackle to your side of the field – how is he blocking? Run or Pass?
- Spy the Quarterback to confirm run or pass play
- On a quick stand up pass, you may have to rule on forward or backwards. You must signal if a pass is backwards by punching a closed fist into the offensive backfield
- If a backwards pass is incomplete, it is a loose ball (fumble) and the play remains live. Be prepared to rule on team in possession
- Every pass play begins with your pre-snap key, but every pass play develops into zone coverage
- Hold the LOS and allow the play to develop while observing receivers in your zone
- If your sideline is threatened, you should move down field to help with outside to inside pass coverage. Determine if the receiver or defender was out of bound at any time during the play. Determine if the catch is in-bounds or out of bounds
- If your pre-snap key was in press coverage, pay close attention at the snap to rule on infractions
- You must have clear understanding on what constitutes pass interference
- If receivers in your zone extend 10 or more yards down field, move downfield maintaining a 7-10-yard cushion, always keeping your head on a swivel between your key and the quarterback
- You should not come back towards the LOS if the QB scrambles. Hold your spot and officiate. Allow the play to develop. Be prepared to move should the play end near your spot
- If the pass is incomplete in your area, stop moving and give a clear and controlled "incomplete" signal

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *Pass play after the snap cont...*

- If the pass is incomplete out of your area, give a clear and controlled “time out” signal twice
- If the pass is incomplete and your sideline is on offense, be prepared to relay a new ball to the umpire
- If the result of the play is a change of possession and you are the covering official, be prepared to rule on team in possession and provide first down signal
- Once the pass is complete, it becomes a run play. See Running plays after the snap

### **Scrimmage Kicks - Punt**

- Stay on the LOS until the kick crosses the neutral zone
- Before the kick, watch for contact of defensive end with offensive backs
- In the case of an errant snap, help officiate behind the line
- Mark the spot of rolling kicks going out-of-bounds with a bean bag
- Move cautiously down the field, floating 10 – 15 yards, watching the blocking in front of the ball, until the play transitions to your area then watch the point of attach

### **Scrimmage Kicks – Field Goal**

- If the referee has his back to you, you are to go under the upright
- If your position is under the upright, be prepared to rule on the kick being good or not good. U will have the whistle. Inform the U by “yes, yes” or “no,no”.
- If kick is good, verbally inform the U “yes, yes”, take two steps towards the field of play and give touchdown signal simultaneously with the U
- If kick is not good, verbally inform the U “no,no”, take two steps towards the field of play and give timeout signal twice simultaneously with the U
- If your position is on the LOS, confirm with the referee the number of lineman outside the center on your side of the field on your hand and extend it to the backfield
- You have the entire LOS, be prepared to rule on false start and encroachment
- Assist the referee on roughing the holder
- In case of an errant snap, help officiate behind the line
- In case the play becomes broken, stay on the LOS and officiate as running play
- If the kick is blocked in or behind the neutral zone, officiate as running play. Any team can recover and advance
- Once it is obvious the field goal is good or not good, pinch in and make your presence known

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Goal Line Plays

- When the line to gain is the goal line, instruct the chains to lay down and provide the box with a bean bag to mark spot of the ball for each down
- Be at the goal line when the runner and the ball break the plane. You do not need to be on the sideline – step back at least 2-yards. Give yourself clear sight
- On plays 10-6 yards in – Move with the play, but be at the goal line when the runner and the ball break the plane
- On plays 5-yards and in – First move is immediately to the goal line and officiate back to the ball
- If you know the ball was dead before it crossed the goal line, do not allow a score to stand. Pinch in and identify the location of the ball. **Sell your call!**
- Do not give the touchdown signal unless you see the ball in possession break the goal line. Pinch in on all goal line plays
- On Reverse-goal line – First move is immediately to the goal line and officiate back up field. If the ball becomes dead in the end zone possessed by the offense, it is a safety. **Signal Safety!** If the ball becomes dead in the end zone possessed by the defense, it is a touch down. **Signal Touch Down!**

### Measurements

- Once the referee has signaled for a measurement, move the down box to the forward stake before moving the chains. Key old down on box
- Grab the clip and jog onto the field with the chains
- Take the clip and place it on the yard-line marked by the LJ foot
- Continue to hold the clip tight while the chains are pulled taunt
- If the measurement results in a first down, drop the clip and instruct the back stake to set itself on the backside of the box. Once set, pull chains taunt and reset the clip and change the number on the box to 1
- If the measurement does not result in a first down, continue to hold the clip and reset on the yard-line / hash marked by the LJ foot. Once the referee has re-spotted the ball, jog to your sideline and re-set the clip to the proper yard line. Personally mark location for the box to be set by extending one foot back towards the sideline. Have the box reset on your mark

### Timeouts

- Cover the team on your sideline during a time out
- Take a position between your team and the ball, looking back towards the sideline
- Notify the coach on the number of timeouts remaining
- Do not use this time to discuss with players and coaches
- Mark down the quarter, time, down, distance and ball location
- At the 45 second mark, notify team verbally to come out of the timeout.
- Once team has maneuvered back to the field, assume your position on the sideline

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Injury Time Outs

***Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play for the remainder of that day. All officials should record the player's team, jersey number, quarter and time of injury.***

Be ready to assist appropriate health-care professional(s) and/or coach(es) in securing additional medical help, if needed.

Do not allow coaches to discuss game strategy with players during an injury timeout.

Attempt to keep players a significant distance away from the seriously injured player(s). Direct players and coaches toward respective team bench area.

Once the appropriate health-care professional(s) begins to work on an injured player, all members of the officiating crew should control the total playing field environment and team personnel and allow the appropriate health-care professional(s) to perform services without interruption or interference. Always ensure adequate lines of vision between the appropriate health-care professional(s) and all available emergency personnel.

Players and coaches should be appropriately controlled to avoid dictating medical services to the appropriate health-care professional(s) on the time taken to perform such services.

***Do not stand over or near the player after medical personnel or trainers have arrived. Move away from injured player and do not try and see what is happening.***

### Between Quarters

- Note and record the down, distance and location of the ball. Also, record the yard line of the clip
- Reverse the chains and assistants (be sure clip is attached and in proper location on yard line), then move to the corresponding line in the other half of the field. Hold the clip at the correct yard line while assistants tighten the chains, and set them
- If the quarter ends on a first down just set the chains as a normal first down
- Check your team for nine-yard line rule
- Notify team and coach on your side of the field when to be back on the field

### Between the Half

- Remind assistants to be back and ready to go with 3 minutes remaining before kickoff
- Direct chain crew, box and ball person to wait at the 25 yard-line on the receiving end of the field
- Get the coaches second half choice if they won the coin toss and deferred

### Try for Points

- If the back of the referee is facing you, move under the goal post
- Instruct the box to put 1 in the box and spot the 3 yard-line

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *Try for Points cont...*

- You have the upright, U will have cross bar and opposite upright.
- U has the whistle
- Position is under the upright, be prepared to rule on the kick being good or not good by informing the U by “yes, yes” or “no,no”.
- If kick is good, verbally inform the U “yes, yes”, take two steps towards the field of play and give touchdown signal simultaneously with the U
- If kick is not good, verbally inform the U “no,no”, take two steps towards the field of play and give timeout signal twice simultaneously with the U
- If the play becomes broken, hustle to your corresponding pylon and be prepared to rule on the plane of the goal line

### **Two Point Conversion**

- Officiate as normal goal line play

### **Penalties**

- How to throw your flag
  1. For pre-snap dead-ball fouls – Toss flag to offending side of field
  2. For personal / UNS fouls – Toss flag high into the air

For live ball fouls – Toss flag at spot of the foul

### *Penalties cont...*

- How to report a foul
  1. Sound your whistle with short loud bursts to gain the referee’s attention
  2. If you have the progress spot, hold spot until another official has your spot
  3. When reporting a foul, go slow and gather your thoughts before you speak
  4. At a minimum, report type of foul, number and team. Be prepared to provide additional information such as enforcement yardage and spot, down, decline or accept, result of the play. Example would be: “I have a block in the back on number 89 on the offense, 10-yard penalty from my flag and we will repeat the down”
- Enforcement of Penalties
  1. After all foul information is reported, march off the penalties with the umpire
  2. Always instruct the box to move with you
  3. If a first down is gain through the penalty, move the chain and box simultaneously with you and set as a normal first down

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### **Mechanics every official should do!**

- Always be aware of the clock. You should periodically check the clock as follows;
  11. Is the clock running when it is supposed to?
  12. Is the clock stopped when it is supposed to be?
  13. When a time out is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  14. When a penalty is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  15. Cover the end of the run / ball or other officials flag. If you are the off official on penalties, you should either cover the end of the run / ball or the reporting officials flag



# Line Judge (LJ) 5 Man Mechanics

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## Summary

### *Position*

- On the sideline on the press box side of the field, looking directly down the line of scrimmage (LOS). 1-2 yards off the sideline into the restricted area.

### *General Responsibilities*

- Oversees LOS with HL
- Watches player in motion away from LJ
- Watches for false starts and encroachment penalties
- Rules on sideline plays on his half of field
- Counts defensive players on field and confirms with U and BJ
- Determines when and if the runner is out of bounds
- Informs crew of first down
- Controls sideline to insure all officials have room to work

### *Run Plays*

- Watches for false starts or encroachments at LOS
- Monitors sideline on plays run to his half of the field
- Determines when and if runner is out of bounds
- Marks runners forward progress
- Watches the runner beyond the LOS to his side of the field
- Watches behind the play for runs to opposite side of field

### *Pass Plays*

- Watches his receiver key on routes behind the neutral zone and routes downfield
- Monitors receivers and defenders on his side of the field
- Watches for pass interference
- Rules on inbounds or out of bounds on catches to the sideline
- Rules on catch or no catch on passes in his side of field or end line threatened

### *Special Teams*

- Observes LOS for false starts and encroachment
- Rules on penalties involving blockers and defenders on trick or broken plays
- Observes the snap for the punt was clean and not errant
- Observes blocking at the LOS

# Pre-game Responsibilities

## Instructing the Ball Person

At a minimum, provide the following instructions to each ball person on your side of the field

- Introduce yourself and write down their name(s) on your game card
- Instruct them to have two (2) game balls. If their team is on offense one (1) ball will be on the field the other one will be with them. If their team is on defense, they should have two (2) balls with them
- Instruct them on the ball mechanics in the event of an incomplete pass
- Instruct them on the ball mechanics in the event of a score
- Instruct them to never go on the field to retrieve the ball, an official will relay it to them
- Instruct them on where they are to be positioned during the game
  7. Kick Off: standing at the receiving team's 25-yard line holding their game ball(s)
  8. Scrimmage Play: Standing directly behind LJ outside the two-yard restricted area
  9. Field Goal / Kick Try: Standing behind the goal post far enough back to retrieve the kicked ball

## Head Coach Pre-game

This is one of the most critical responsibilities in your pre-game. Defining the expectations for both the coach and yourself will greatly impact your ability to appropriately officiate on your side-line as well as affect your crew chief's ability to manage the game properly.

*Keep this one thought in mind; when you shake your coaches hand, they are passing on to you control and responsibility for the safety of their players. It can be looked at as a "relinquishing of power", which should not be taken lightly. Throughout the week, this coach has had full control and now he must pass that control on to the officials. Under no circumstances should this trust be broken or abused.*

At a minimum, provide the following instructions to the head coach on your side of the field

- Remove any sunglasses you might be wearing and look the coach in the eyes
- Shake his / her hand and introduce yourself in your full name. "Hi Coach, Forest Gump, I will be the official on your sideline today / tonight"
- Insure you obtain the coaches full name and write it down on our game card
- Address the coach by name when speaking to him; "Coach Brown"
- Discuss what you expect from the coach during the game;
  - ❖ Sideline Control – During dead ball action there can be 1-3 coaches in the **restricted area**, once the huddle has broken or the coach(es) have successfully called their play, **all coaches and players** must vacate the restricted area. During live ball action **absolutely, no coaches or players** will be allowed in the restricted area
- Discuss what the coach can expect from you regarding penalty information. "Coach I will get you the information regarding the penalty, it might take me a play or two, but I will get you the information." FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THIS!
- Ask the coach who will be calling the time out. State that you will listen for whomever gives the signal
- Ask the coach who their ball person will be
- Ask the coach who, if any, will be assisting him / her with controlling their sideline

## Pre-game Responsibilities cont....

- Finish by affirming that this will be a great game, that you will work diligently with him on information and with his sideline to insure everyone is safe and say “Thank you Coach Brown”
- Please do not entertain any negative talk about the other team, school administration or other officials. Always be positive and affirming

### On-Field Responsibilities

*All crew members should be on the field no less than 30 minutes before kick-off. The following areas of responsibility are in no particular order. These responsibilities should be addressed based on several factors including but not limited to;*

- Your team being on the field
- Coach on the field

### Responsibilities

- Walk your sideline from goal post to goal post observing the field surface for any potential hazards that might cause injury to you, chain crew or team. If any are found, inform the referee.
- Check the goal post pad to insure it is properly installed and fastened
- Check the pylons to insure they are in acceptable condition and in correct position (*reference Field Diagram*)
- Assist the HL with checking the chain and down box equipment
- Instruct ball person (*see Instruct ball person section*)
- Meet with the head coach (*see Head Coach Pre-game section*)
- Observe team player equipment noting any illegal equipment and notify umpire if required
- Observe offensive formation etc.
- Keep area between 45-yard lines clear of players and other team personnel

### Coin Toss

- Record the results of the toss and the options. If your team won and deferred be prepared to obtain your coaches second half option before they leave the field for half time

### Whistle Mechanics

- Progress – Short loud burst
- Penalty – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee’s attention
- Timeout – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee’s attention
- Touchdown or Safety – Long loud burst

# General Field Mechanics

## Kick Off / Free Kick Mechanics

### *Position*

- At R's restraining line
- On-side kick; bump up to K's restraining line

### **Pre-kick Responsibilities**

- Insure ball person are in proper position
- Count K and confirm with BJ by extending your arm out in front of you, confirm acknowledgement
- Insure your sideline is clear of coaches and players
- Key on players on your side of the field, within a 20-yard belt (50 - 30-yard line)
- Have bean bag in hand to mark spot as necessary
- Signify you are ready by raising an arm over-head with an open hand. Hold until referee has given the ready for play signal
- Be prepared to rule on encroachment by R
- Do not let play start with more or less than 11 kicking team players

### **After Kick**

- Quickly observe flight of ball to determine the general direction/location of where it will land
- Observe K / R as they initiate blocks in your area.
- Rule on all infractions observed in your area, keep officiating!
- Wind the clock should the ball be touched, muffed or possessed by R in your area
- If kick is out of bounds untouched by R, toss flag as close to the out of bounds spot as possible, sound whistle and give time out signal twice. Assist the BJ in offering the coach with options
- When the ball becomes dead and you have the spot, square up and hold forward progress.
- When the ball becomes dead by rule in your area, sound whistle and give time out signal twice
- When the ball becomes dead outside your area, mirror time out signal twice
- In the event of a short kick, be prepared to determine if the kick was grounded or pop up kick
- Signal for ball person and provide the umpire with the game ball or retrieve ball and hand to ball person

## **Pre-Snap Mechanics**

At a minimum perform the following pre-snap mechanics

- At the start of every play, be in a position outside the sideline. Straddling the LOS
- Know the down and distance at the start of every play
- Indicate current number of down on your hand over your head. Hold until referee has given the ready for play signal
- Insure the correct down is displayed on the box
- Count defense and confirm with U and BJ verbally and by holding a closed fist and arm extended out in front of you

## General Field Mechanics cont...

- Watch for substitutions
- Be aware of the neutral zone at all times, especially after the referee has given the ready for play signal. Be prepared to rule on false start or encroachment prior to snap
- As the huddle breaks, observe the formation and determine who is on the LOS
- Show receivers and ends that your foot is the line of scrimmage and let them adjust. If they ask you if they are on or off the line you may answer them but do not tell them to move in either direction
- Once the formation is set, determine widest offensive man on your side is in the backfield or on the LOS, and if any receivers are covered up. Give clear and proper signals
- Give proper signal if widest offensive man on your side is in the backfield by extending your backfield arm up and into the backfield
- If the HL gives you the same signal, acknowledge it by point to him. Also start counting the offensive backs (Might be 5)
- Observe man in motion away from you, even if he reverses direction
- Give proper signal if your man moves on the line after he is signaled back by crossing your backfield arm over your chest
- Observe if your pre-snap key (receiver) is being “pressed” by the defense. If he is, be prepared to rule on any infractions. If not, continue to key on Tackle / End on your side of the field at the snap
- ***Spit out your whistle*** once the ball has been legally snapped

## Scrimmage Play Mechanics

### Running Play after the Snap

- Observe Tackle to your side of the field – how is he blocking? Run or Pass?
- Spy the Quarterback to confirm run or pass play
- On runs up the middle, stay on the LOS, do not move until the runner to advance a minimum of 7 yards, then you move
- On short gains, 7-15 yards, a side to side shuffle will suffice. Always watch the field of play!
- On medium gains, 15-20 yards, start with a shuffle but progress into a more aggressive movement to maintain the 7-yard cushion between you and the runner. ***Do not over-run the play!*** If the play begins to slow, slow yourself, but always maintain a controlled purposeful movement
- On long gains, 20+ yards, start with the shuffle, as the play progresses you will need to progress with it to maintain the 7-yard cushion, be prepared to run but not over-run
- The only reason a Line Judge will leave the LOS is because the action on the field has forced him to move, either downfield or into the backfield
- On sweeps, move back into the offensive backfield and let the play go in front of you. Maintain the 7-yard cushion
- On every run play watch forward progress. Forward progress should be determined as follows;
  - ❖ One on one, give the runner the opportunity to elude the defender
  - ❖ Two on one, give the runner the opportunity to elude the defender, however, once he is wrapped up, progress has stopped
  - ❖ Three (or more) on one, once the runner’s movement is being determined by the force of the defenders, progress has stopped

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *Running play after the snap cont....*

- Square up your movement to the ball to mark forward progress as you move up and down the sidelines. **Do not round off your movement!**
- On progress, hold your spot until the ball has been spotted
- Watch point of attach on plays to your side of the field, clean up behind the play on runs to the opposite side of the field
- If the ball goes out of bounds on your sideline, get the spot and hold it. Do not shag the ball or lose the progress spot. In 5-man mechanics, the referee or BJ will assist. In 4-man mechanics, the referee will assist. In the event there is no assistance, drop a bean bag at the spot and retrieve the ball
- If the ball goes out of bounds on your sideline, get the spot and hold it, turn with the players going out of bounds, continuing to hold the spot. Other officials will assist in retrieving the out of bounds player(s)
- Signal for first down if line to gain is achieved
- Insure the correct down is displayed on the box
- Keep track of the down by changing your down indicator at the same time, every play
- On first downs, once the ball is spotted, observe box and/or chains have moved to the proper location and prepare for pre-snap mechanics

### **Pass Play after Snap**

- Observe Tackle to your side of the field – how is he blocking? Run or Pass?
- Spy the Quarterback to confirm run or pass play
- On a quick stand up pass, you may have to rule on forward or backwards. You must signal if a pass is backwards by punching a closed fist into the offensive backfield
- If a backwards pass is incomplete, it is a loose ball (fumble) and the play remains live. Be prepared to rule on team in possession
- Every pass play begins with your pre-snap key, but every pass play develops into zone coverage
- In 5-man mechanics it is not necessary to go down field immediately if you read pass
- Hold the LOS and allow the play to develop while observing receivers in your zone
- If your sideline is threatened, you should move down field to help with outside to inside pass coverage. Determine if the receiver or defender was out of bound at any time during the play. Determine if the catch is in-bounds or out of bounds
- If you pre-snap key was in press coverage, pay close attention at the snap to rule on infractions
- You must have clear understanding on what constitutes pass interference
- If receivers in your zone extend 10 or more yards down field, move downfield maintaining a 7-10-yard cushion, always keeping your head on a swivel between your key and the quarterback
- You should not come back towards the LOS if the QB scrambles. Hold your spot and officiate. Allow the play to develop. Be prepared to move should the play end near your spot
- If the pass is incomplete in your area, stop moving and give a clear and controlled “incomplete” signal

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *Pass play after the snap cont...*

- If the pass is incomplete out of your area, give a clear and controlled “time out” signal twice
- If the pass is incomplete and your sideline is on offense, be prepared to relay a new ball to the umpire
- If the result of the play is a change of possession and you are the covering official, be prepared to rule on team in possession and provide first down signal
- Once the pass is complete, it becomes a run play. See Running plays after the snap

### **Scrimmage Kicks - Punt**

- Stay on the LOS until the snap has been fielded cleanly
- Before the kick, watch for contact of defensive end with offensive backs
- In the case of an errant snap, help officiate behind the line
- Mark the spot of rolling kicks going out-of-bounds with a bean bag
- Move cautiously down the field, floating 10 – 15 yards, watching the blocking in front of the ball, until the play transitions to your area then watch the point of attach

### **Scrimmage Kicks – Field Goal**

- If the referee has his back to you, you are to go under the upright
- If your position is under the upright, be prepared to rule on the kick being good or not good. BJ will have the whistle. Inform the BJ by “yes, yes” or “no,no”.
- If kick is good, verbally inform the BJ “yes, yes”, take two steps towards the field of play and give touchdown signal simultaneously with the BJ
- If kick is not good, verbally inform the BJ “no,no”, take two steps towards the field of play and give timeout signal twice simultaneously with the BJ
- If your position is on the LOS, confirm with the referee the number of lineman outside the center on your side of the field on your hand and extend it to the backfield
- You have the entire LOS, be prepared to rule on false start and encroachment
- Assist the referee on roughing the holder
- In case of an errant snap, help officiate behind the line
- In case the play becomes broken, stay on the LOS and officiate as running play
- If the kick is blocked in or behind the neutral zone, officiate as running play. Any team can recover and advance
- Once it is obvious the field goal is good or not good, pinch in and make your presence known

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Goal Line Plays

- Be at the goal line when the runner and the ball break the plane. You do not need to be on the sideline – step back at least 2-yards. Give yourself clear sight
- On plays 10-6 yards in – Move with the play, but be at the goal line when the runner and the ball break the plane
- On plays 5-yards and in – First move is immediately to the goal line and officiate back to the ball
- If you know the ball was dead before it crossed the goal line, do not allow a score to stand. Pinch in and identify the location of the ball. **Sell your call!**
- Do not give the touchdown signal unless you see the ball in possession break the goal line. Pinch in on all goal line plays
- On Reverse-goal line – First move is immediately to the goal line and officiate back up field. If the ball becomes dead in the end zone possessed by the offense, it is a safety. **Signal Safety!** If the ball becomes dead in the end zone possessed by the defense, it is a touch down. **Signal Touch Down!**

### Measurements

- Once the referee has signaled for a measurement, move onto the field and mark the yard-line where the HL and clip will be placed with your extended foot
- Hold your position on the field until the referee has completed his measurement with the chains
- Observe for any kinks in the chains
- If the measurement results in a first down, return to your sideline. Once the box and chains are set, insure the correct number is displayed on the box
- If the measurement does not result in a first down and the referee is going to re-set, move with the referee and place your foot at the corresponding yard-line for the HL to place the clip. Once complete, return to your sideline and make sure you have the correct down on your down indicator / rubber band

### Timeouts

- Cover the team on your sideline during a time out
- Take a position between your team and the ball, looking back towards the sideline
- Notify the coach on the number of timeouts remaining
- Do not use this time to discuss with players and coaches
- Mark down the quarter, time, down, distance and ball location
- At the 45 second mark, notify team verbally to come out of the timeout.
- Once team has maneuvered back to the field, assume your position on the sideline

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Between Quarters

- Note and record the down, distance and location of the ball.
- Move to the corresponding line in the other half of the field and wait for the HL to re-set the chains and box. Insure they are located properly and that the chains are extending downfield in the correct direction
- If the quarter ends on a first down, the HL will just set the chains as a normal first down
- Check your team for nine-yard line rule
- Notify team and coach on your side of the field when to be back on the field

### Between the Half

- Remind the coach on your sideline that you will be coming to the locker room to bring the team out for the second half
- Direct the ball person to wait at the 25 yard-line on the receiving end of the field
- Get the coaches second half choice if they won the coin toss and deferred

### Try for Points

- If the back of the referee is facing you, move under the goal post
- Insure there the HL put 1 in the box and that the box is spot the 3 yard-line
- You have the upright, BJ will have cross bar and opposite upright.
- BJ has the whistle
- Position is under the upright, be prepared to rule on the kick being good or not good by informing the BJ by “yes, yes” or “no,no”.
- If kick is good, verbally inform the BJ “yes, yes”, take two steps towards the field of play and give touchdown signal simultaneously with the BJ
- If kick is not good, verbally inform the BJ “no,no”, take two steps towards the field of play and give timeout signal twice simultaneously with the BJ
- If the play becomes broken, hustle to your corresponding pylon and be prepared to rule on the plane of the goal line

### Two Point Conversion

- Officiate as normal goal line play

### Penalties

- How to throw your flag
  1. For pre-snap dead-ball fouls – Toss flag to offending side of field
  2. For personal / UNS fouls – Toss flag high into the air
  3. For live ball fouls – Toss flag at spot of the foul

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *Penalties cont...*

- How to report a foul
  1. Sound your whistle with short loud bursts to gain the referee's attention
  2. If you have the progress spot, hold spot until another official has your spot
  3. When reporting a foul, go slow and gather your thoughts before you speak
  4. At a minimum, report type of foul, number and team. Be prepared to provide additional information such as enforcement yardage and spot, down, decline or accept, result of the play. Example would be: "I have a block in the back on number 89 on the offense, 10-yard penalty from my flag and we will repeat the down"
  
- Enforcement of Penalties
  1. After all foul information is reported, hold the spot of the enforcement to insure the penalty was properly prescribed
  2. If a first down is gain through the penalty, insure that the move the chain and box is located properly and that the chains are extending downfield in the correct direction

### **Mechanics every official should do!**

- Always be aware of the clock. You should periodically check the clock as follows;
  1. Is the clock running when it is supposed to?
  2. Is the clock stopped when it is supposed to be?
  3. When a time out is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  4. When a penalty is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  5. Cover the end of the run / ball or other officials flag. If you are the off official on penalties, you should either cover the end of the run / ball or the reporting officials flag



# Line Judge (LJ) 4 Man Mechanics

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## Summary

### *Position*

- On the sideline on the press box side of the field, looking directly down the line of scrimmage (LOS). 1-2 yards off the sideline into the restricted area.

### *General Responsibilities*

- Oversees LOS with HL
- Watches player in motion away from LJ
- Watches for false starts and encroachment penalties
- Rules on sideline plays on his half of field
- Counts defensive players on field and confirms with U
- Determines when and if the runner is out of bounds
- Informs crew of first down
- Controls sideline to insure all officials have room to work
- Instruct game clock operator
- Keep 25-second play clock

### *Run Plays*

- Watches for false starts or encroachments at LOS
- Monitors sideline on plays run to his half of the field
- Determines when and if runner is out of bounds
- Marks runners forward progress
- Watches the runner beyond the LOS to his side of the field
- Watches behind the play for runs to opposite side of field

### *Pass Plays*

- Watches his receiver key on routes behind the neutral zone and routes downfield
- Monitors receivers and defenders on his side of the field
- Watches for pass interference
- Rules on inbounds or out of bounds on catches to the sideline
- Rules on catch or no catch on passes in his side of field or end line threatened

### *Special Teams*

- Observes LOS for false starts and encroachment
- Rules on penalties involving blockers and defenders on trick or broken plays
- Observes the catch of the punt was clean and not muffed, watch for fair catch signals
- Observes blocking at the LOS

# Pre-game Responsibilities

## Instructing the Ball Person

At a minimum, provide the following instructions to each ball person on your side of the field

- Introduce yourself and write down their name(s) on your game card
- Instruct them to have two (2) game balls. If their team is on offense one (1) ball will be on the field the other one will be with them. If their team is on defense, they should have two (2) balls with them
- Instruct them on the ball mechanics in the event of an incomplete pass
- Instruct them on the ball mechanics in the event of a score
- Instruct them to never go on the field to retrieve the ball, an official will relay it to them
- Instruct them on where they are to be positioned during the game
  6. Kick Off: standing at the receiving team's 25-yard line holding their game ball(s)
  7. Scrimmage Play: Standing directly behind LJ outside the two-yard restricted area
  8. Field Goal / Kick Try: Standing behind the goal post far enough back to retrieve the kicked ball

## Head Coach Pre-game

This is one of the most critical responsibilities in your pre-game. Defining the expectations for both the coach and yourself will greatly impact your ability to appropriately officiate on your side-line as well as affect your crew chief's ability to manage the game properly.

*Keep this one thought in mind; when you shake your coaches hand, they are passing on to you control and responsibility for the safety of their players. It can be looked at as a "relinquishing of power", which should not be taken lightly. Throughout the week, this coach has had full control and now he must pass that control on to the officials. Under no circumstances should this trust be broken or abused.*

At a minimum, provide the following instructions to the head coach on your side of the field

- Remove any sunglasses you might be wearing and look the coach in the eyes
- Shake his / her hand and introduce yourself in your full name. "Hi Coach, Forest Gump, I will be the official on your sideline today / tonight"
- Insure you obtain the coaches full name and write it down on our game card
- Address the coach by name when speaking to him; "Coach Brown"
- Discuss what you expect from the coach during the game;
  - ❖ Sideline Control – During dead ball action there can be 1-3 coaches in the **restricted area**, once the huddle has broken or the coach(es) have successfully called their play, **all coaches and players** must vacate the restricted area. During live ball action **absolutely, no coaches or players** will be allowed in the restricted area
- Discuss what the coach can expect from you regarding penalty information. "Coach I will get you the information regarding the penalty, it might take me a play or two, but I will get you the information." FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THIS!
- Ask the coach who will be calling the time out. State that you will listen for whomever gives the signal
- Ask the coach who their ball person will be
- Ask the coach who, if any, will be assisting him / her with controlling their sideline

## Pre-game Responsibilities cont....

- Finish by affirming that this will be a great game, that you will work diligently with him on information and with his sideline to insure everyone is safe and say “Thank you Coach Brown”
- Please do not entertain any negative talk about the other team, school administration or other officials. Always be positive and affirming

### On-Field Responsibilities

*All crew members should be on the field no less than 30 minutes before kick-off. The following areas of responsibility are in no particular order. These responsibilities should be addressed based on several factors including but not limited to;*

- Your team being on the field
- Coach on the field

#### **Responsibilities**

- Walk your sideline from goal post to goal post observing the field surface for any potential hazards that might cause injury to you, chain crew or team. If any are found, inform the referee.
- Check the goal post pad to insure it is properly installed and fastened
- Check the pylons to insure they are in acceptable condition and in correct position (*reference Field Diagram*)
- Assist the HL with checking the chain and down box equipment
- Instruct ball person (*see Instruct ball person section*)
- Meet with the head coach (*see Head Coach Pre-game section*)
- Observe team player equipment noting any illegal equipment and notify umpire if required
- Observe offensive formation etc.
- Keep area between 45-yard lines clear of players and other team personnel

#### **Coin Toss**

- Record the results of the toss and the options. If your team won and deferred be prepared to obtain your coaches second half option before they leave the field for half time

#### **Whistle Mechanics**

- Progress – Short loud burst
- Penalty – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee’s attention
- Timeout – Repeated short loud bursts until you gain the referee’s attention
- Touchdown or Safety – Long loud burst

# General Field Mechanics

## Kick Off / Free Kick Mechanics

### *Position*

- At R's restraining line
- On-side kick; remain at R's restraining line

### **Pre-kick Responsibilities**

- Insure ball person are in proper position
- Count K and confirm with BJ by extending your arm out in front of you, confirm acknowledgement
- Insure your sideline is clear of coaches and players
- Key on players on your side of the field, within a 20-yard belt (50 - 30-yard line)
- Have bean bag in hand to mark spot as necessary
- Signify you are ready by raising an arm over-head with an open hand. Hold until referee has given the ready for play signal
- Be prepared to rule on encroachment by R
- Do not let play start with more or less than 11 kicking team players

### **After Kick**

- Quickly observe flight of ball to determine the general direction/location of where it will land
- Observe K / R as they initiate blocks in your area.
- Rule on all infractions observed in your area, keep officiating!
- Wind the clock should the ball be touched, muffed or possessed by R in your area
- If kick is out of bounds untouched by R, toss flag as close to the out of bounds spot as possible, sound whistle and give time out signal twice. Assist the R in offering the coach with options
- When the ball becomes dead and you have the spot, square up and hold forward progress.
- When the ball becomes dead by rule in your area, sound whistle and give time out signal twice
- When the ball becomes dead outside your area, mirror time out signal twice
- In the event of a short kick, be prepared to determine if the kick was grounded or pop up kick
- Signal for ball person and provide the umpire with the game ball or retrieve ball and hand to ball person

## **Pre-Snap Mechanics**

At a minimum perform the following pre-snap mechanics

- At the start of every play, be in a position outside the sideline. Straddling the LOS
- Know the down and distance at the start of every play
- Indicate current number of down on your hand over your head. Hold until referee has given the ready for play signal
- Insure the correct down is displayed on the box
- Count defense and confirm with U verbally and by holding a closed fist and arm extended out in front of you

## General Field Mechanics cont...

- Watch for substitutions
- Be aware of the neutral zone at all times, especially after the referee has given the ready for play signal. Be prepared to rule on false start or encroachment prior to snap
- As the huddle breaks, observe the formation and determine who is on the LOS
- Show receivers and ends that your foot is the line of scrimmage and let them adjust. If they ask you if they are on or off the line you may answer them but do not tell them to move in either direction
- Once the formation is set, determine widest offensive man on your side is in the backfield or on the LOS, and if any receivers are covered up. Give clear and proper signals
- Give proper signal if widest offensive man on your side is in the backfield by extending your backfield arm up and into the backfield
- If the HL gives you the same signal, acknowledge it by point to him. Also start counting the offensive backs (Might be 5)
- Observe man in motion away from you, even if he reverses direction
- Give proper signal if your man moves on the line after he is signaled back by crossing your backfield arm over your chest
- Observe if your pre-snap key (receiver) is being “pressed” by the defense. If he is, be prepared to rule on any infractions. If not, continue to key on Tackle / End on your side of the field at the snap
- ***Spit out your whistle*** once the ball has been legally snapped

## Scrimmage Play Mechanics

### Running Play after the Snap

- Observe Tackle to your side of the field – how is he blocking? Run or Pass?
- Spy the Quarterback to confirm run or pass play
- On runs up the middle, stay on the LOS, do not move until the runner to advance a minimum of 7 yards, then you move
- On short gains, 7-15 yards, a side to side shuffle will suffice. Always watch the field of play!
- On medium gains, 15-20 yards, start with a shuffle but progress into a more aggressive movement to maintain the 7-yard cushion between you and the runner. ***Do not over-run the play!*** If the play begins to slow, slow yourself, but always maintain a controlled purposeful movement
- On long gains, 20+ yards, start with the shuffle, as the play progresses you will need to progress with it to maintain the 7-yard cushion, be prepared to run but not over-run
- The only reason a Line Judge will leave the LOS is because the action on the field has forced him to move, either downfield or into the backfield
- On sweeps, move back into the offensive backfield and let the play go in front of you. Maintain the 7-yard cushion
- On every run play watch forward progress. Forward progress should be determined as follows;
  - ❖ One on one, give the runner the opportunity to elude the defender
  - ❖ Two on one, give the runner the opportunity to elude the defender, however, once he is wrapped up, progress has stopped
  - ❖ Three (or more) on one, once the runner’s movement is being determined by the force of the defenders, progress has stopped

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *Running play after the snap cont....*

- Square up your movement to the ball to mark forward progress as you move up and down the sidelines. **Do not round off your movement!**
- On progress, hold your spot until the ball has been spotted
- Watch point of attack on plays to your side of the field, clean up behind the play on runs to the opposite side of the field
- If the ball goes out of bounds on your sideline, get the spot and hold it. Do not shag the ball or lose the progress spot. In 5-man mechanics, the referee or BJ will assist. In 4-man mechanics, the referee will assist. In the event there is no assistance, drop a bean bag at the spot and retrieve the ball
- If the ball goes out of bounds on your sideline, get the spot and hold it, turn with the players going out of bounds, continuing to hold the spot. Other officials will assist in retrieving the out of bounds player(s)
- Signal for first down if line to gain is achieved
- Insure the correct down is displayed on the box
- Keep track of the down by changing your down indicator at the same time, every play
- On first downs, once the ball is spotted, observe box and/or chains have moved to the proper location and prepare for pre-snap mechanics

### **Pass Play after Snap**

- Observe Tackle to your side of the field – how is he blocking? Run or Pass?
- Spy the Quarterback to confirm run or pass play
- On a quick stand up pass, you may have to rule on forward or backwards. You must signal if a pass is backwards by punching a closed fist into the offensive backfield
- If a backwards pass is incomplete, it is a loose ball (fumble) and the play remains live. Be prepared to rule on team in possession
- Every pass play begins with your pre-snap key, but every pass play develops into zone coverage
- Hold the LOS and allow the play to develop while observing receivers in your zone
- If your sideline is threatened, you should move down field to help with outside to inside pass coverage. Determine if the receiver or defender was out of bound at any time during the play. Determine if the catch is in-bounds or out of bounds
- If you pre-snap key was in press coverage, pay close attention at the snap to rule on infractions
- You must have clear understanding on what constitutes pass interference
- If receivers in your zone extend 10 or more yards down field, move downfield maintaining a 7-10-yard cushion, always keeping your head on a swivel between your key and the quarterback
- You should not come back towards the LOS if the QB scrambles. Hold your spot and officiate. Allow the play to develop. Be prepared to move should the play end near your spot
- If the pass is incomplete in your area, stop moving and give a clear and controlled “incomplete” signal

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *Pass play after the snap cont...*

- If the pass is incomplete and your sideline is on offense, be prepared to relay a new ball to the umpire
- If the result of the play is a change of possession and you are the covering official, be prepared to rule on team in possession and provide first down signal
- Once the pass is complete, it becomes a run play. See Running plays after the snap

### **Scrimmage Kicks - Punt**

- Position 3-4 yards deeper and 8-10 yards wider than the deepest receiver. Stay on LJ side of the field.
- Before the kick, instruct the receiver(s) on the fair catch signals
- In the case of an errant snap, move back to your sideline and officiate as a run play
- Watch for fair catch signal. If a fair catch signal is given and the kick is caught cleanly, drop bean bag at the end of the kick spot, blow whistle loudly and give time out signal twice. Inform the referee of a fair catch.
- Mark the spot of the end of the kick with a bean bag.
- Watch for first touching by K, mark the spot of first touching with a bean bag.
- If the ball becomes dead untouched by R, downed by K, inform Referee of first touching
- If the ball becomes dead untouched by R and K, drop bean bag at spot, blow whistle loudly and give time out signal twice.
- Once the kick is caught or possessed by R, trail the play watching the point of attach until you turn the runner over to the flank official. Then transition to watching the action behind the play.

### **Scrimmage Kicks – Field Goal**

- If the referee has his back to you, you are to go under the upright
- If your position is under the upright, be prepared to rule on the kick being good or not good. U will have the whistle. Inform the U by “yes, yes” or “no,no”.
- If kick is good, verbally inform the U “yes, yes”, take two steps towards the field of play and give touchdown signal simultaneously with the U
- If kick is not good, verbally inform the U “no,no”, take two steps towards the field of play and give timeout signal twice simultaneously with the U
- If your position is on the LOS, confirm with the referee the number of lineman outside the center on your side of the field on your hand and extend it to the backfield
- You have the entire LOS, be prepared to rule on false start and encroachment
- Assist the referee on roughing the holder
- In case of an errant snap, help officiate behind the line
- In case the play becomes broken, stay on the LOS and officiate as running play
- If the kick is blocked in or behind the neutral zone, officiate as running play. Any team can recover and advance
- Once it is obvious the field goal is good or not good, pinch in and make your presence known

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Goal Line Plays

- Be at the goal line when the runner and the ball break the plane. You do not need to be on the sideline – step back at least 2-yards. Give yourself clear sight
- On plays 10-6 yards in – Move with the play, but be at the goal line when the runner and the ball break the plane
- On plays 5-yards and in – First move is immediately to the goal line and officiate back to the ball
- If you know the ball was dead before it crossed the goal line, do not allow a score to stand. Pinch in and identify the location of the ball. **Sell your call!**
- Do not give the touchdown signal unless you see the ball in possession break the goal line. Pinch in on all goal line plays
- On Reverse-goal line – First move is immediately to the goal line and officiate back up field. If the ball becomes dead in the end zone possessed by the offense, it is a safety. **Signal Safety!** If the ball becomes dead in the end zone possessed by the defense, it is a touch down. **Signal Touch Down!**

### Measurements

- Once the referee has signaled for a measurement, move onto the field and mark the yard-line where the HL and clip will be placed with your extended foot
- Hold your position on the field until the referee has completed his measurement with the chains
- Observe for any kinks in the chains
- If the measurement results in a first down, return to your sideline. Once the box and chains are set, insure the correct number is displayed on the box
- If the measurement does not result in a first down and the referee is going to re-set, move with the referee and place your foot at the corresponding yard-line for the HL to place the clip. Once complete, return to your sideline and make sure you have the correct down on your down indicator / rubber band

### Timeouts

- Time 60-second time out. Notify teams at 45-seconds by blowing your whistle with two short bursts. Notify teams at 60-seconds with one loud burst
- Cover the team on your sideline during a time out
- Take a position between your team and the ball, looking back towards the sideline
- Notify the coach on the number of timeouts remaining
- Do not use this time to discuss with players and coaches
- Mark down the quarter, time, down, distance and ball location
- At the 45 second mark, notify team verbally to come out of the timeout.
- Once team has maneuvered back to the field, assume your position on the sideline

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Between Quarters

- Note and record the down, distance and location of the ball.
- Move to the corresponding line in the other half of the field and wait for the HL to re-set the chains and box. Insure they are located properly and that the chains are extending downfield in the correct direction
- If the quarter ends on a first down, the HL will just set the chains as a normal first down
- Check your team for nine-yard line rule
- Notify team and coach on your side of the field when to be back on the field

### Between the Half

- Remind the coach on your sideline that you will be coming to the locker room to bring the team out for the second half
- Direct the ball person to wait at the 25 yard-line on the receiving end of the field
- Get the coaches second half choice if they won the coin toss and deferred

### Try for Points

- If the back of the referee is facing you, move under the goal post
- Insure there the HL put 1 in the box and that the box is spot the 3 yard-line
- You have the upright, U will have cross bar and opposite upright.
- U has the whistle
- Position is under the upright, be prepared to rule on the kick being good or not good by informing the U by “yes, yes” or “no,no”.
- If kick is good, verbally inform the U “yes, yes”, take two steps towards the field of play and give touchdown signal simultaneously with the U
- If kick is not good, verbally inform the U “no,no”, take two steps towards the field of play and give timeout signal twice simultaneously with the U
- If the play becomes broken, hustle to your corresponding pylon and be prepared to rule on the plane of the goal line

### Two Point Conversion

- Officiate as normal goal line play

### Penalties

- How to throw your flag
  9. For pre-snap dead-ball fouls – Toss flag to offending side of field
  10. For personal / UNS fouls – Toss flag high into the air
  11. For live ball fouls – Toss flag at spot of the foul

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *Penalties cont...*

- How to report a foul
  12. Sound your whistle with short loud bursts to gain the referee's attention
  13. If you have the progress spot, hold spot until another official has your spot
  14. When reporting a foul, go slow and gather your thoughts before you speak
  15. At a minimum, report type of foul, number and team. Be prepared to provide additional information such as enforcement yardage and spot, down, decline or accept, result of the play. Example would be: "I have a block in the back on number 89 on the offense, 10-yard penalty from my flag and we will repeat the down"
  
- Enforcement of Penalties
  16. After all foul information is reported, hold the spot of the enforcement to insure the penalty was properly prescribed
  17. If a first down is gain through the penalty, insure that the move the chain and box is located properly and that the chains are extending downfield in the correct direction

### **Mechanics every official should do!**

- Always be aware of the clock. You should periodically check the clock as follows;
  18. Is the clock running when it is supposed to?
  19. Is the clock stopped when it is supposed to be?
  20. When a time out is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  21. When a penalty is called, quickly look at the clock to make sure it has stopped before you perform any other duties
  22. Cover the end of the run / ball or other officials flag. If you are the off official on penalties, you should either cover the end of the run / ball or the reporting officials flag



# Back Judge (BJ) 5 Man Mechanics

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## Summary

### *Position*

- In the defensive backfield, 18 to 20 yards deep but always deeper than the deepest defensive back

### *General Responsibilities*

- Watches receivers and defensive backs
- Watches for defensive holding and all pass interference penalties
- Counts defensive players on field and confirms with LJ & U
- Assists Referee in administering of penalties
- In command of all timing duties
- Assists Referee with out of bounds play clean up and bringing players back onto field
- Assists in ball relay to umpire on long pass plays and plays into side zones
- Provide coverage of any flag thrown by another official
- Assist Referee with players in plays ending out of bounds in team box area
- Keep 25-second play clock

### *Run Plays*

- Watches for holding at point of attack
- Follows action up field in front of runner

### *Pass Plays*

- Watches all inside receivers at the snap
- Watches for defensive holding and all pass interference penalties

### *Scrimmage Kicks*

- Observes the action on the returner
- Observes legality of fair catch

### *Dead-ball*

- Observe all action on and off the field. You have the widest view, so the crew is relying on you!

## Pre-game Responsibilities

- Instruct clock operator on length of quarters, and halftime. Make sure he is to watch officials for starting and stopping the clock at all times unless clock starts on a snap. Confirm clock operator has clear understanding of all football signals regarding timing, i.e: time out, safety, touchdown, wind the clock....
- Observe team player equipment noting any illegal equipment and then notifying umpire of such illegal equipment.
- Observe offensive formations etc.
- Keep area between 45-yard lines clear of players and other team personnel.

### Coin Toss

- Stand on the number 40 opposite the press box with that team's game ball.
- At conclusion of coin-toss come together in center of field to record coin-toss results and choices and any further instructions.

#### *Second half choices:*

***BJ will go and get team opposite the press box with five minutes remaining in halftime and escort them to the playing field.***

## General Field Mechanics

### Whistle Mechanics

- After the snap, drop the whistle from your mouth.
- Always see the ball down, possession, or forward progressed stopped before blowing your whistle.
- When ball becomes dead, covering official should sound whistle quickly and loudly.
- Use bean bag to mark spot if an inadvertent whistle is blown.
- When the ball becomes dead, if you have a penalty to report, sound your whistle with short loud bursts until you gain the referee's attention.

### Ball Mechanics

- Ball person should ALWAYS be stationed directly behind flank official at all times with at least one extra game ball. Anytime a new ball is needed, the official should be able to turn around and have another ball handed to him immediately. Ball persons must run up and down sideline with official to always be ready to hand ball to official.
- If pass is thrown deep and incomplete, flank official of offensive team gets ball from ball person and relays to umpire while ball person retrieves incomplete pass from the field or the back judge. This is the only time a ball person should enter the field of play.
- After all scoring kicks, ball person will hand ball to back judge and retrieve kicked ball and return to his sideline.
- Ball persons are there to do a job, not "watch game" and "mess around" with friends or team mates. They are not to have a cell phone.
- Only game officials who actually see touchdown should give touchdown signal.
- Game officials not observing touchdown do not mirror signal.

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### *If a free kick following safety:*

- Each game official assumes same relative position and has same duties as on kickoff.
- Ball may be put in play by drop kick, place kick or punt
- Back judge begin timing one-minute interval after referee signals score or no score.
- Game officials hustle up sidelines to free-kick position and then fill out game cards.
- Be ready and in position to mark ball ready-for-play within the one minute.

### **Penalties and use of Flags**

Two penalty flags should be carried. Primary flag tucked in front of pants. Secondary flag tucked in back pocket out of sight.

On dead ball fouls, flag should be thrown in the air. If an encroachment or false start, it should be thrown to the offending team's side of the field. ***When it is an obvious false start or encroachment the calling official will move quickly towards Referee and signal to him the foul. If both teams moved and it is a close decision then covering officials will still need to come into middle of the field to discuss with Umpire and Referee.***

On live ball fouls flag should be thrown out in front of the calling official to a location or a spot of the foul.

Do not throw a flag in an aggressive manner.

***All officials are to carry a game card and are to write down all of their foul calls on the game card. Penalty information should include, quarter, time, foul, team, offending player, accepted or declined. All officials are to write down every personal foul and unsportsmanlike foul called by every official.***

### **Coach-Referee Conference**

- Allows for review of possible misapplication or misinterpretation of rules by game officials.
- Allows for corrections to be made in case of an error.
- Request for conference must be made prior to the ball becoming live following the play which is to be reviewed unless period has officially ended.
- Time-out is granted and charged to team requesting conference.
- Referee, accompanied by HL or LJ, and coach confer at sideline directly in front of team box.
- If rule is determined to have been applied correctly, time out remains charged to team. If team has no time outs remaining, they are charged with a delay of game penalty in this situation.
- If rule has been misapplied, correction shall be made immediately. Time out is not charged to team. Referee will review and explain situation to opposing coach.

*This is not for a coach to voice his complaints about calls or to ask you to watch for things the other team is doing.*

***Flank officials are to communicate with the coach that conferences are only for misapplications of rules and that he will be charged a time out or delay of game if the rule has been applied correctly.***

### Coach Disqualification Procedure

- Referee, accompanied by HL or LJ, will provide coach with reason.
- Any coach receiving two unsportsmanlike fouls is disqualified and must vacate stadium area.
- If severe enough, can be disqualified on first unsportsmanlike foul.
- Coach is to vacate the stadium area, this means he must go to the locker room or team bus.
- If coach does not vacate stadium area: inform coach that it could lead to his team forfeiting the game. Contact game administration for assistance. Do not continue game until coach has vacated stadium area.
- Opposite flank official shall notify opposing coach of disqualification.

### **Reminders**

**Coach must be notified by referee or calling official of all unsportsmanlike fouls against him or his team such as:**

- Improper conduct towards a game official.
- A player not wearing proper equipment.
- More than three coaches in the 2-yard restricted area prior to ball becoming live.
- Having anyone in the restricted area during live ball.

### Radio Use

More and more crews are choosing to use radio communication devices during game play. This is an excellent way to keep up to date with current trends in officiating as well as enhance communication between officials during the game. Below are the KCOA guidelines for radio use during games.

They are not a toy and must be used in a manner that enhances communication during the game.

All personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls must still be communicated to the Referee personally and not through the radio.

### Sidelines and Team Box Area

#### ***First violation by team:***

Referee will signal sideline warning, then go to offending sideline and communicate with coach the need for his cooperation in keeping the sidelines clear and safe. Also inform coach that this first call is only a warning and that each subsequent occurrence will result in distance penalties of 5 yards and then 15 yards. All officials are to record time and period of sideline warnings.

#### ***Non-Team Personnel:***

***All non-team personnel must be outside the team box area and behind the dashed restraining line. NO EXCEPTIONS. All non-team personnel are to refrain from making any comments relating to the official's performance or calls/non-calls during the game. If this occurs, inform the Referee and the Referee may ask game administration, i.e. the athletic director, to remove them from the sidelines to a place away from the field. The athletic director does not have to move them and there is no penalty to his team for the actions of the non-team personnel or the refusal to remove them.***

***We must be tactful and professional in our communication in these situations.***

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### Team Altercations

- Attempt to stop the altercation.
- If unable to stop altercation, step back and record the uniform number(s) of each player involved and other team personnel.
- Flank officials should try and prevent coaches and players from entering field. Record the uniform number of any player leaving the bench area to enter the playing area during the altercation.
- At no time should you attempt to physically restrain or separate players or coaches.
- Once order is restored, send all players and coaches to their respective team boxes. Confer with other officials to determine any possible disqualifications or penalties.

### Overtime Procedures

- Hold coin-toss at center of field, using the coin-toss mechanics.
- 3-minute intermission between 4<sup>th</sup> period and OT with 2-minute intermission between all subsequent OTs.
- Coin-Toss winner will have choice of whether to be on offense or defense or end of field. Choice will alternate for all succeeding OTs.
- Each team starts 1<sup>st</sup> & 10 at the 25-yard line except for a succeeding spot foul. Succeeding spot fouls carry over from the end of regulation to OT and to each OT possession.
- Only one time out per team per OT. Time outs do not carry over.
- OT is untimed with the exception of the 25 second play clock.
- Both teams get a chance to score on offense, but should the defense score, the game is over.
- Once the defense gains possession the ball is dead, and the offenses' series is over.
- The offense may have the ball placed anywhere between the hash marks to begin their possession.
- A FG may be tried on any down. PSK does not apply in OT.
- A 1<sup>st</sup> down may be gained or awarded. 1<sup>st</sup> down awards are for: Roughing the passer, kicker, holder, snapper, or if the kicking team recovers a kick that was touched by R beyond the neutral zone and before the ball crosses the goal line.
- It is possible for a safety to be awarded to the offense against the defense if a new force was applied to the ball causing it to enter the end zone.
- Live or dead ball foul on a TD must be enforced on the try. There is no carry over in OT. Fouls that would carry over after end of a period do not carry over during OT.
- If game is still tied after 1 OT, the offense must go for 2 points on all tries.

### Kick Off

- Take charge of ball.
- Move up K's sideline to K's restraining line. Move to center of field where free kick will occur.

### *Responsibilities:*

- Make sure kicking tee is legal.
- Count K players and confirm with LJ.
- Inform the kicker not to kick the ball until the referee blows his whistle. Hand the ball to the kicker. If the kicker is not ready, place the ball on the ground.
- Confirm at least 4-players on each side of kicker before you move to sideline.
- Move to sideline opposite the press box on K's restraining line.
- After moving to Head linesmen's side of field, be certain coaches, players, substitutes and other individuals are in proper locations and no K players, with the exception of the kicker, are more than five yards behind the kicking team's free kick line.
- Hold arm above head with bean bag in hand until referee blows his whistle for the ready for play.

## General Field Mechanics cont...

- If the ball falls off the tee. Blow whistle and run into center of field and repeat above steps.
- Watch for any infractions involving K's restraining line. Encroachment by K is a dead ball foul. Whistle play dead immediately.
- Responsible for signaling to press box any dead-ball rules infractions and any live ball rules infractions that cause a re-kick. Mark off penalty enforcement

### ***Watch for illegal pop-up kicks by K.***

- If there is a foul, signal the penalty and administer the penalty.
- Time the 25 second clock.
- Be alert for first touching by K and mark spot with bean bag.
- Mark spot on field where kick goes out of bounds on your side of field.
- Drop penalty flag if untouched inbounds by R.
- Watch initial blocks by players near R's restraining line and action against kicker and holder. Cover action to the opposite 45-yard line.
- After the ball has gone downfield, move to the center of the field. Move downfield no more than 10-15 yards while maintaining inside-out coverage. Take responsibility for K's goal line.
- Be in position to take coverage of runner in your area on a long return.
- Observe legality of blocks and action away from ball.
- Stop the clock when ball becomes dead.

## Scrimmage Plays

### ***Keys and Priority of keys:***

Strength of formation – determined by the number of eligible receivers on a particular side of the offensive formation. It has nothing to do with the number of linemen on each side of the center, but rather the number of eligible receivers outside the tackles at the snap. If there is no strong side, strength of formation is to the line judge's side of field.

Trips – Three or more receivers outside the offensive tackles on the same side of field.

Motion: If motion occurs, the strength of the formation is not determined until the snap. The officials must be prepared to change their keys as motion occurs.

## Running Plays

### ***After ball is spotted:***

- Position – 15 to 20 yards beyond line of scrimmage but always deeper than the deepest defensive back.
- When ball is on hash mark, position yourself no wider than on single or double spread formation, adjust position to provide best coverage.
- Areas of responsibility – Time 25 second play clock. Use a visible hand signal for last 5 seconds by extending arm back and forth in front of your body and **above head** to count off last 5 seconds.
- Count defense and confirm with line judge and umpire by extending closed fist out in front of body and verbally.

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### ***After the snap:***

- Move so runner is between you and either flank official while observing blocks in front of runner at point of attack.
- Stay far enough away to keep boxed in with flank official and umpire.
- Maintain inside out coverage, while staying between the hash marks. Cover players who are deeper than flank officials.
- When runner breaks free, cover action at point of attack.
- Responsible for goal line.
- When run goes out of bounds, especially in team areas, move into dead ball area and assist game officials in maintaining order.
- Assist with relay of ball from flank to umpire.
- Keep play boxed in.

### ***Before blowing whistle:***

- See ball and make sure runner is down, progress is stopped, or pass is incomplete.
- Keep eyes on area of responsibility you are covering.

### ***When ball becomes dead in your area:***

- Watch for dead ball fouls.
- LJ on first downs, stops the clock, signal to referee that it is a first down by pointing in the direction of the first down with your finger in front of your chest. Then release HL from the progress spot by using cross field mechanics.

### ***If there is a fumble, the covering official should:***

- Drop bean bag at spot of fumble unless fumble is behind line of scrimmage.
- Rule on possession. If unable to determine possession, stop the clock.
- If defense recovers, official should immediately signal time out then indicate defense has recovered by pointing in the direction that team is going.
- If offense recovers, official should indicate number of next down his hand and wind the clock if we have stopped it.
- If ball becomes dead before the fumble, official should blow whistle immediately to indicate down has ended.

### ***If ball goes out of bounds:***

- Covering official should give time out signal.
- Mark and hold spot while watching player's actions and out of bounds.
- Continue to watch action.
- Referee or back judge get players out of bounds and lead them back onto the field.
- Assist in relay of ball to umpire.
- Other officials should also signal time out and check clock to make sure it has stopped.
- Be alert for substitution infractions.
- When first down, signal time out and make sure clock has stopped.
- On 4<sup>th</sup> down plays, signal time out after play.

### Passing Plays

#### *After ball is spotted:*

- Position – 15 to 20 yards beyond line of scrimmage but always deeper than the deepest defensive back.
- When ball is on hash mark, position yourself between that hash mark and the middle of the field, adjust position to provide best coverage.
- Areas of responsibility – Time 25 second play clock. Use a visible hand signal for last 5 second by extending arm back and forth in front of your body and **above your head** to count off last 5 seconds.
- Count defense and confirm with line judge and umpire by extending closed fist out in front of body and verbally.

#### *After ball is snapped:*

- First step is back to maintain position behind deepest defensive back.
- Cover deepest receivers down the middle of field and to sidelines.

#### *When pass is thrown, move toward the ball:*

- Watch for interference.
- Be ready to rule on fumble or illegal pass after completion.
- Be ready to rule on all passes near goal line AND end line.
- If pass is incomplete in your area – blow whistle, give incomplete signal, retrieve ball and relay to umpire or sideline if deep pass.
- If pass challenges sideline you are responsible for catch/no catch. If pass challenges end line you are responsible for foot in or out of bounds.

#### *If pass is complete in your area:*

- Move to spot of forward progress. When first down, signal time out.

#### *Covering Officials:*

- Be alert for illegal passes.
- Observe touching or catching by ineligible receiver.
- Watch for holding of eligible receivers and all contact beyond neutral zone both before and after pass is thrown.
- If pass is intercepted inside 5 yard line and player making interception is downed in end zone or ball goes out of bounds there:
  - Mark spot of interception with bean bag.
  - Be prepared to rule on whether his momentum took him into end zone.

### Scrimmage Kicks

#### *After ball is spotted:*

- Position 10-12 yards wider and 3-5 yards behind deepest return man on HL side of field.
- Count R players and confirm with umpire and LJ.
- Carry different color bean bags in hand to mark first touching, fumble, momentum, or end of kick.

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### ***After the snap:***

#### ***When kick is short to either sideline:***

- HL or LJ will assume responsibility for ball.
- Watch action of players around ball.

#### ***Ball out of bounds in flight:***

- Blow whistle and give time out signal.
- Move farther downfield than where ball went out of bounds.
- Walk up field, along, sideline until referee marks the spot by chopping his upraised hand/arm.

#### ***Long or Deep Kick:***

- Cover long or deep kick out of bounds on HL's sideline.
- Cover all kicks down the middle and be ready to rule on whether kick is touched by either team.
- If ball is muffed, be ready to rule on possession. If K recovers, stop the play.
- Watch for handoff and reverse.
- Mark spot of first touching.
- Continue to officiate.
- If K is first to touch kick that has come to rest beyond the neutral zone, blow whistle and give time out signal.
- If kick is blocked, ball remains live unless it breaks the plane of the goal line or is recovered by K beyond the LOS.

#### ***Following a fair catch:***

- Blow whistle and give time out signal.
- Mark the spot.
- Be sure referee knows it was a fair catch.

#### ***When fair catch is not made:***

- Stay with ball blow play dead when possession is gained by any player on either team.
- Mark spot of first touching with bean bag.
- Let LJ observe action by signaler.

#### ***When kick becomes dead:***

- Blow whistle and give time out signal.
- Be ready to rule on touchback and give correct signal.
- Inform referee of ball status before spotting it.
- If kick is caught inside 5-yard line and player is downed in his end zone or ball goes out of bounds there, be ready to rule on whether his momentum took him into the end zone.
- Mark spot of catch inside 5-yard line with bean bag.

## General Field Mechanics cont...

### FG & PAT's

***FG attempt by free kick after a fair catch or awarded fair catch.***

***Positions:***

Beyond end line and behind your upright where you feel most comfortable and have best coverage of upright.

***After ball is spotted:***

- Count R players.
- Back judge time 25-second count.

***After snap:***

- Assume responsibility for end line and for determining if kick goes over or under crossbar and inside upright:
- Back judge rules on crossbar and upright.
- Flank official rules on upright.
- Blow whistle when successful kick passes upright or when it is apparently unsuccessful after breaking goal-line plane.
- Both game officials, at the same time, move one yard into the end zone in front of their upright and signal score or no score while facing the line of scrimmage.
- Be prepared to move if kick is blocked, obviously short, or a fake.
- Key tight end on your side.
- Linesman or line judge: If run or pass develops to your vacated side, quickly move along end line to back pylon to rule on sideline.
- Next move is toward goal line to assist.

### Goal Line

- Start on end line if you have given goal line responsibility to the flank officials.
- Assume complete responsibility of end-line coverage.
- Time 25-second count.

### Administering Penalties

- Help obtain ball.
- Assist in holding spot of foul or recovering penalty marker.
- Assist in relaying foul information to appropriate sideline.
- Give final signal for foul to be enforced on kickoff to press-box side of field.
- Write down ALL fouls by ALL officials.

***Calling official:***

***After calling foul and ball has been declared dead:***

- Blow whistle and give time-out signal twice.
- Make sure another game official is covering spot of foul.

## General Field Mechanics cont...

- Identify foul.
- Identify offending team including jersey color and offense/defense or kicking/receiving team.
- Identify offending player's number or position.
- Indicate spot of foul, end of run or end of kick.
- Indicate status of ball when foul occurred.
- Assist with locating captains.
- Recover penalty markers and ball.

### ***Enforcement:***

- Stay clear of spot of foul.
- If spot is different, go to enforcement spot.
- When umpire begins enforcement, check for correctness and distance.

### ***When a disqualifying foul is called:***

- Game official who called foul shall identify offending player and report his/her number and type of infraction to referee, coach and other members of officiating crew.
- Emphasize disqualification is for remainder of game.
- If there are double disqualifying fouls, referee may designate another game official to assist in reporting foul to coaches.
- The game official shall not place a hand on offending player while accompanying or escorting him/her to sideline.

### ***All Game Officials:***

- Record player's number and name if known.
- Record all unsportsmanlike penalties

## **Measuring First Downs**

- Do not permit team attendants to enter field.
- Help clear players from measurement area.
- Observe all players.
- Tend ball at time of measurement.

## **Time Out Procedure**

- Time 60-second interval; notify referee at 45 seconds and again when 60-second interval expires.

### ***All Game Officials:***

- Record time-out, number of player who called it, time on clock and period.
- Do not visit with players.
- Restrict discussion to captain.
- Do not huddle in a group.
- Confirm number of remaining time-outs with other officials

### Injury Time Out Procedure

***Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play for the remainder of that day. All officials should record the player's team, jersey number, quarter and time of injury.***

Be ready to assist appropriate health-care professional(s) and/or coach(es) in securing additional medical help, if needed.

Do not allow coaches to discuss game strategy with players during an injury timeout.

Attempt to keep players a significant distance away from the seriously injured player(s). Direct players and coaches toward respective team bench area.

Once the appropriate health-care professional(s) begins to work on an injured player, all members of the officiating crew should control the total playing field environment and team personnel and allow the appropriate health-care professional(s) to perform services without interruption or interference. Always ensure adequate lines of vision between the appropriate health-care professional(s) and all available emergency personnel.

Players and coaches should be appropriately controlled to avoid dictating medical services to the appropriate health-care professional(s) on the time taken to perform such services.

***Do not stand over or near the player after medical personnel or trainers have arrived. Move away from injured player and do not try and see what is happening.***

### End of Periods

***If a scoreboard clock is not used:***

Notify referee approximately four minutes before the end of the second and fourth periods.

Approximately 30 seconds before time for period expires, notify referee that time may expire during the next down.

When time expires and ball becomes dead, signal referee by raising arm above head, blow whistle and give time-out signal twice.

***If scoreboard clock is used:***

- When facing clock, be responsible for knowing when time expires.
- If time expires prior to snap:
- Blow your whistle to prevent snap, if possible.
- If ball is snapped immediately after time has expired, blow whistle loud and long, and give time-out signal twice.

### Between Periods

- Observe team on linesman's sideline until linesman becomes available.
- Assume responsibilities as for time-out.
- Check team box and huddle areas for appropriate conference procedure as during charged time-out.
- Give your team 15-second warning when directed by referee.
- Time 60-second interval; notify referee at 45 seconds and again when 60-second interval expires.
- Limit of three team attendants are permitted on field.
- Either legal type coach-player conferences may be held.

### Between Halves

- Leave field together.
- Assemble in dressing room or another private place.
- Discuss the overtime procedure, if applicable.
- Return to field at least five minutes before the second half is to begin.
- Start second half on time.