

New Jersey Football Officials Association

SIX-OFFICIAL MECHANICS MANUAL

2015



** Adapted from the Louisiana High School Athletic Association's (LHSAA) and Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association's (PIAA) six official manual and modified to meet the requirements of the New Jersey Football Official's Association's (NJFOA) officiating philosophy and needs for six official mechanics. **Version 5.0 April, 2015**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Officials should maintain a professional attitude from the time they assume responsibility for the game until the end of the contest. It is important that officials not only know the rules, but that they communicate with the players and coaches in all matters pertaining to the game. Taunting and baiting opponents, as well as displays which demean the image of the game, should never be tolerated and should be penalized as provided in the rules. Officials must set an example for players and coaches by treating them with courtesy and respect at all times. Never use profanity or inappropriate language or gestures. Proper conduct is always important. Officials must have a football sense, which complements the technical application of the rules so that the game proceeds smoothly. Officials are expected to exercise good judgment in applying the rules. There is no substitute for hard work, hustle and a sense for being in good position. Players who have practiced long hours deserve competent officials who have a complete understanding of the letter, as well as the spirit, of the rules and administer them consistently and fairly. There is nothing here that hasn't been said in one way or another in previous years. We must all get involved in the game and do everything we can to protect the value and integrity of the game.

When using six-man mechanics, the on-field officiating crew consists of a Referee, Umpire, Head Linesman, Line Judge, Field Judge, and Side Judge. (Icons R,U,H,L,F,S respectively in the diagrams)

Gender References: In this manual, the masculine should be understood to include the feminine throughout.

II. BEFORE ARRIVAL AT GAME SITE

A. *Alcoholic Beverages/Drugs*

No alcoholic beverages or drugs that may hinder physical or mental capacity shall be consumed the day of the game. This means any game, be it Varsity, Jr. Varsity, Jr. High, Middle School, or Playground. Purchasing alcoholic beverages or even entering an establishment that serves such beverages must never be done while wearing a recognizable officials' uniform.

B. *Departure for Game*

All officials should be on time at the designated departure location if traveling together. The designated departure time is the DEPARTURE time, and all crew members should arrive at the designated location at least five (5) minutes prior to departure time. If an official arrives late at the designated location and misses the rest of the crew, that official is responsible to get to the game site in time for the pre-game conference.

C. *Proper Uniform*

All crew members must wear all the same identical parts of the uniform. The uniform must comply with the NJFOA uniform policy as outlined in the chapter's roster book

III. AFTER ARRIVAL AT GAME SITE

A. *Arrival & Pre-game Conferences*

The crew shall allow themselves enough travel time to arrive at the game site approximately 75 to 60 minutes before game time. Upon arrival at the game site, the Referee and Umpire shall conduct a pregame conference with each Head Coach beginning with the Head Coach for the home team. If one team has not yet arrived at the game site, the conference with that team's Head Coach may be held at a later time.

Pregame conference with Head Coaches: At the conference with the Head Coach, the Referee will provide each Head Coach with a Football Officials Name Card. A suggested coach pre-game conference checklist is shown in Appendix I. The Referee and Umpire should cover all items on that checklist at a minimum.

Pre game conference with team captains: a pregame conference with respective team captains shall be held prior to the contest. At that conference the referee shall read and review the NJSIAA sportsmanship statement and policy, as well as address any other sportsmanship issues that may arise

Pregame conference with Crew of Officials: The pregame conference with the officials' crew will be conducted by the Referee with all game officials and the clock operator participating. The conference should cover any matters that arose during the pre-game conferences with the Head Coaches. A pregame conference must be conducted before every game. An optional officials' pregame conference checklist is shown at Appendix II.

B. Individual Official's Pre-game and Auxiliary Game Duties

After the officials' pregame conference, the crew members shall complete their pre-game responsibilities.

Referee: After the conferences, the Referee should secure and approve the game balls, inspect the playing field and pylons, and order the removal of any hazards on or near the field.

Umpire: The Umpire shall check player equipment and rule on any questions concerning the legality of player equipment.

Head Linesman: The Head Linesman should secure and check the line-to-gain equipment and review with the chain crew members their duties and responsibilities. It is important that the Head Linesman emphasize the fact that they are members of the officiating crew, and, as such, they must refrain from "cheering and coaching."

Line Judge: The Line Judge shall inspect the playing field and pylons, as well as the sideline and end-line boundaries.

Field Judge: Because of his role as play clock operator, the FJ must inform the QB prior to the beginning of the game of where he will be. Also inform the Head Coach. If a team is attempting to run out the clock, then the umpire should remind the QB of where the FJ is positioned. Also, the wing officials should remind the coaches. Together with the Side Judge, locate and instruct the team ball handlers on their duties. The Field Judge has responsibility for securing the correct time, carrying an accurate watch, and assisting in getting the game started on time. During the game, the Field Judge shall be responsible for keeping the 25-second count. He should observe the play clock while the clock operator is testing it. **If there is no visible play clock, the Field Judge shall raise his hand overhead when there are 5 seconds remaining and begin the countdown chop so that it is clear to the QB and coaches.**

Side Judge: Together with the Field Judge, locate and instruct the team ball handlers on their duties. Observe the game clock while it is running and as Game Clock Operator tests it. During the game, shall maintain official time remaining in the absence of a game clock operator or the operation of an official electronic game clock. The Side Judge will time all time-outs and intermissions during the game.

Clock Operators: The Clock Operators will become familiar with the operation of the game clock. The operation of each clock shall be thoroughly checked and any problems shall be reported immediately to the Referee. If the game clock becomes inoperative, the official clock will be kept on the field by the **side judge** for the remainder of the quarter. If it again becomes operable, then the new quarter will begin with the official clock operator running the electronic clock. When the crew enters the field to begin its pre-game duties at 30 minutes prior to game time, the Game Clock Operator shall begin a 30-minute countdown on the game clock. If the play clock operator is not an official, the referee shall conduct a pregame conference with him and instruct him in his duties.

Crew: With 30 minutes prior to game time, at least **TWO (HL/LJ)** members of the crew should always be present on the 50-yard line in order to observe both teams. As crew members finish their respective pre-game duties, they should take different positions around the field to observe and "shadow-scrimmage" the teams as they warm up. Crew members should not congregate or otherwise stand around aimlessly while teams are on the field.

Prior to pre-coin toss duties, the crew should assemble at a location off the field as determined by the Referee. The crew should discuss any last-minute matters and then proceed to their pre-coin toss duties.

IV. COIN TOSS

Prior to the scheduled coin toss, the **field judge** will locate the Team that will occupy the sideline on the Press Box side of the stadium, and the **side judge** will locate the Team that will occupy the sideline opposite the Press Box side of the stadium. These officials will stay with their respective team and, at the appropriate time, notify the Head Coach that it is time to bring the team to the sideline. They will then escort the teams to the respective team box areas for the toss.

Once the teams and or captains have been escorted to the sideline and the field has been cleared for the coin toss, the Referee and Umpire shall escort captains to the middle of the field. The Referee should enter from the press box side of the field. The Umpire shall enter from the sideline opposite of the press box. The Line Judge and Head Linesman will obtain a game ball. The Line Judge (press box) and Side Judge (opposite press box) shall line up on the left side of the Captains on their respective sidelines. The Field Judge (press box) and Head Linesman (opposite press box) will line up to the right of the Captains on their respective sidelines. The Field Judge and Side Judge should have the Captain who will talk during the coin toss standing next to them.

The Line Judge and Head Linesman shall remain on their sidelines. At midfield, the Referee and Umpire will introduce themselves to the Captains and allow the Captains introduce themselves to each other. The Captains will face each other with their backs to their own sidelines.

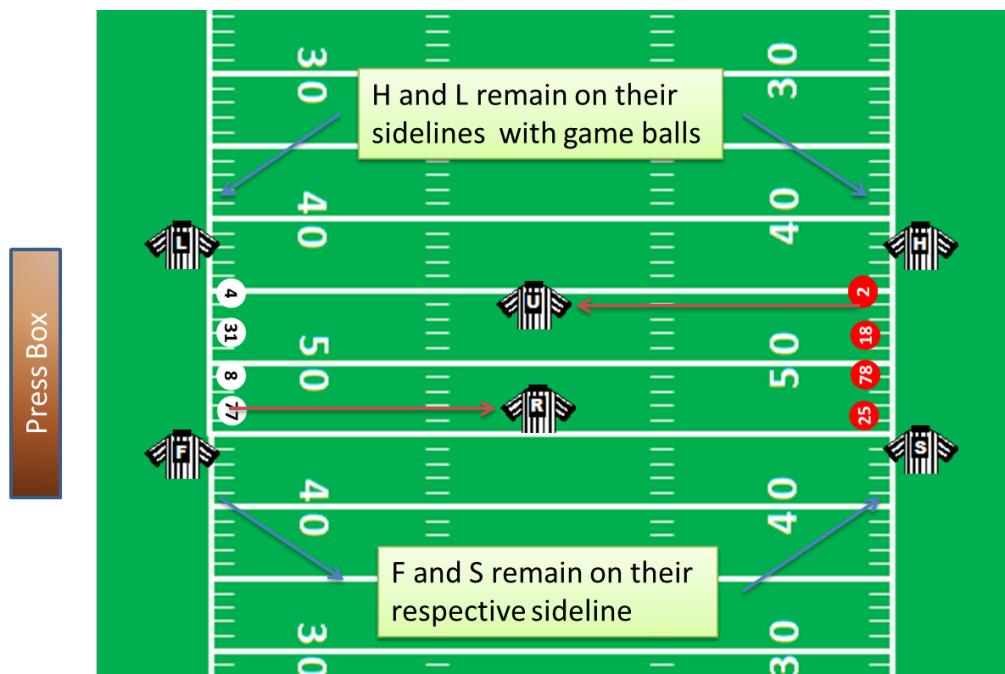
After all introductions, the Referee will ask the Visiting Team Captain to call the toss and shall obtain his choice prior to tossing the coin. Once the Visiting Team Captain has made his choice, the Referee shall toss the coin. The Umpire shall witness the toss and confirm the result. The Referee shall then inform each team of their respective options.

After the toss, all officials will record the results of the coin toss and the Captain's decisions. The Umpire will retain the kicking team's ball for the kickoff.

During the playing of the National Anthem, all officials will stand at attention, facing the flag, with the cap held by the right hand over the left chest. If no flag is present, officials will face the music source.

Following the National Anthem, the crew will assemble at midfield for last minute instructions. Crewmembers will then break to their positions for the opening kick-off.

The proper officiating positions for the coin toss are illustrated in the following diagram:



V. FREE KICK RESPONSIBILITIES

Generally: Prior to any free kick, all officials should have their bean bags in hand. The covering official should give the signal to start the clock when he observes the kick touched other than "first touching" in his area. Any official should mark a spot of "first touching" that they observe with a bean bag. Any official should mark the spot of a free kick that goes out of bounds untouched by Team R that they observe with a penalty flag. The Referee, Line Judge, and Head Linesman should be ready to bean bag any spot of momentum within the five-yard line.

Before the Kick: Following a safety, try, or successful field goal, the Umpire will jog down the sideline opposite the press box, and the Head Linesman and Line Judge will jog along their respective sideline to R's 40-yd line. The Side Judge and Field Judge will position themselves at the 50 yard line (R's free kick line) on their respective sideline, making sure that the 2 yd restricted area is cleared of all team personnel prior to the kickoff. With 20 seconds remaining in the official time-out, as timed by the Side Judge, all officials shall jog to their kickoff positions, and the Umpire shall jog on to the field along Team K's restraining line, align Team K, and present the ball to the kicker. As H and L move to their kickoff positions, they will sweep their respective sidelines to ensure that the restricted area is clear.

Referee: The Referee shall take a position in the middle of the field on Team R's goal line. The Referee shall stand erect while waiting for alignment of the teams and be prepared to acknowledge the signals by fellow crew members. The Referee will count the "R" players along with the Line Judge and Head Linesman, and signal accordingly. Once the Umpire has handed the ball to the Kicker and has taken his position on the sideline, the Referee will sound his whistle and signal that the ball is ready for play. **The Referee also is responsible for making sure that at least 4 players are on each side of the ball when it is kicked.**

After the kick, the Referee should observe the receiver making the catch or recovery and thereafter observe action involving him and in front of him, including watching for illegal blocks, clips, forward handing, etc. As the runner breaks up the field into other officials' areas, the Referee should observe action behind the runner as well as off-ball activity.

Umpire: The Umpire will set up the kicking team to kick off from the appropriate yard line. The Umpire shall count the kicking team and never allow the kickoff to proceed without the proper number of players. The Umpire shall point out the position of the Referee to the kicker and

explain kicking procedures to him. The Umpire will exit the field by jogging to a position on the kicker's restraining line beyond the sideline opposite the press box and signal the Referee when ready. He should be alert for encroachment by Team K players, short kicks, onside kicks, and spots of first touching.

At the kick, the Umpire's initial responsibility is action on the kicker. He should run onto the field at a 45 degree angle to a spot near the hash marks. Move downfield carefully and no more than 10 to 15 yards. Observe action mainly toward the center of the field. Watch for illegal blocks and observe off-ball action in front of the runner as he approaches, working inside-out as on any running play. He should move with the action, but he does NOT have goal line responsibility.

Line Judge and Head Linesman: The Line Judge will initially position himself on Team R's goal line at the pylon on the press box side. The Head Linesman will initially position himself on Team R's goal line at the pylon on the sideline opposite the press box. Both will adjust towards the 50 yd line appropriately based upon the skill level of the kicker, but no further than the 10 yd line. Both officials will count the Team R players and signal accordingly to the Referee.

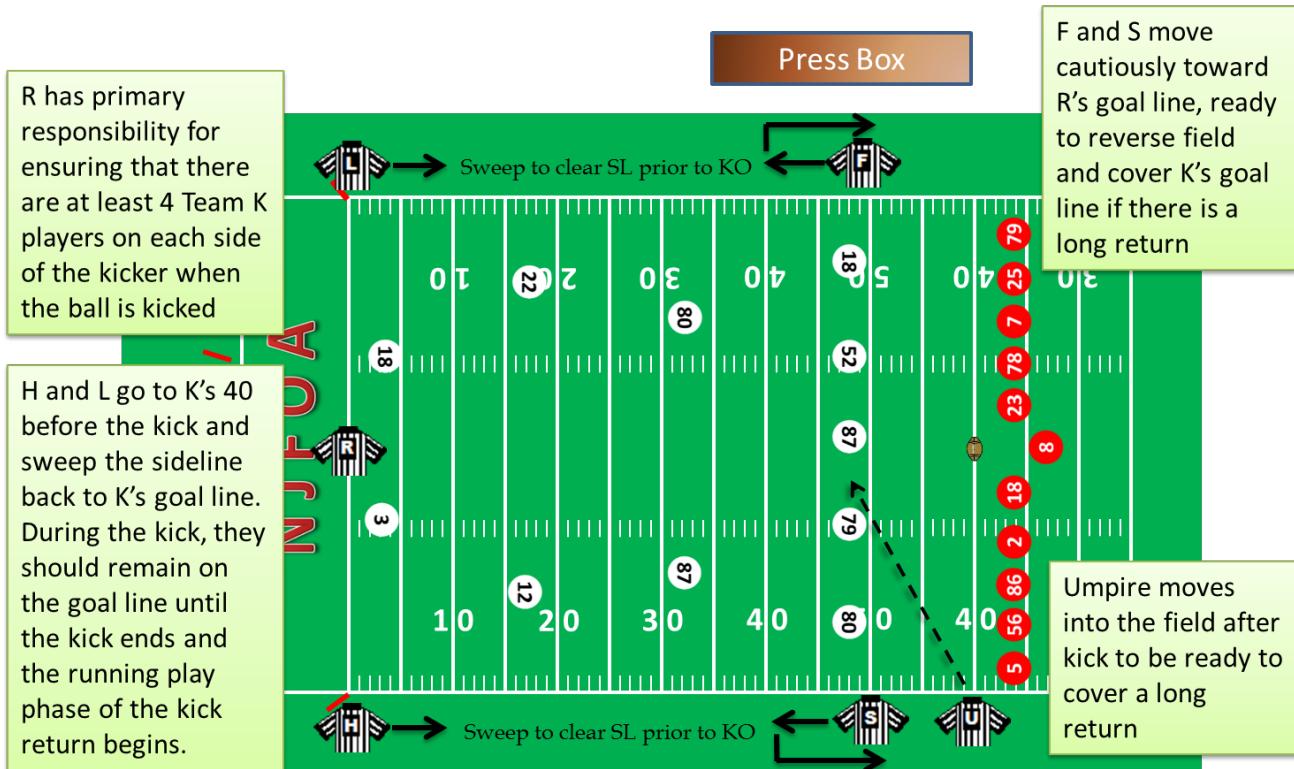
When the kick is deep and the pylon is threatened, the wing official nearest that pylon should remain at the pylon in order to cover the action. He should be at the pylon before the ball reaches the goal line. The other wing official should begin moving forward and be in front of the deep receiver to look across the field for illegal blocks, holding clips, forward handing, etc. Each official should be prepared to rule on kicks out of bounds on his sideline. These officials are responsible for forward progress along their sidelines to Team K's two-yard line. They will observe off-ball action away from the runner when the runner is in another official's area.

Field Judge and Side Judge: The Field Judge will initially position himself on the press box sideline at Team R's restraining line, and the Side Judge will initially position himself on the sideline opposite the press box at Team R's restraining line. They will count Team K's players together with the Umpire. It is NOT necessary for them to align Team R prior to the kick.

On a normal kickoff officiating alignment, the Field Judge must observe the kick and know if it touched the ground initially. On a normal kick, the Field Judge and Side Judge should move downfield toward Team R's goal line with a purpose but no more than 10 to 15 yards. Observe coverage in the critical area where contact between the teams occurs. As the return develops, maintain a cushion in advance of the run at all times. These officials are responsible for Team K's goal line and end line and forward progress inside Team K's two-yard line.

AFTER THE KICK: The Referee and/or Line Judge/Linesman should spot the ball when the play ends inside the receiver's 25 yd line.

The normal free kick positions are illustrated in the following diagram:



A. Anticipated Short Free Kick

When an on-sides kick is likely, the **Head Linesman** will be on the sideline opposite the press box at the 45 yd. line. The Line Judge will move to the press box sideline on Team K's free kick line.

The Field Judge, and Side Judge will maintain their same positions as in a normal free kick. **The Referee should move to the center of the field at the 10 yd line and is responsible for making sure that at least 4 K players are on each side of the ball when it is kicked.**

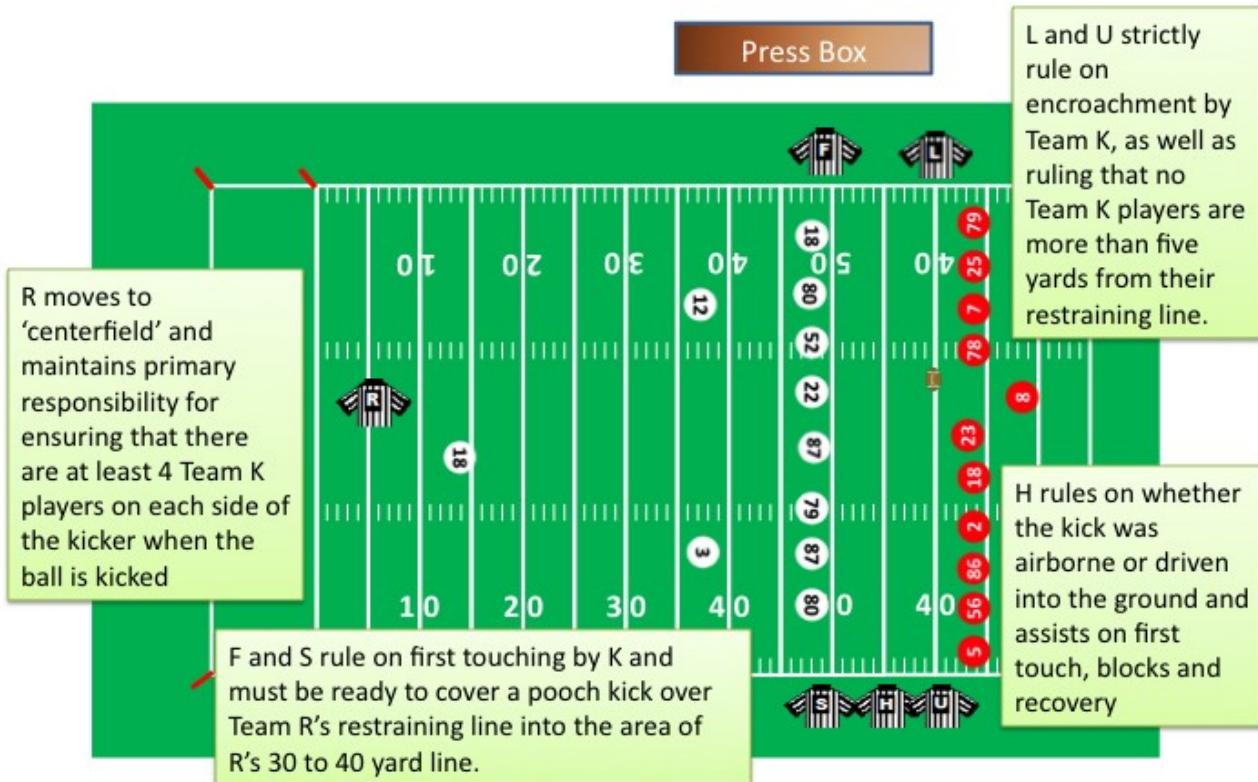
The **Umpire** will stay in his normal free kick position at the K free kick line (normally 40 yd line). He will assist the H and S on first touching, blocks and possession. The U and LJ have responsibility for K free kick line. The official in whose direction the kick is moving should be alert for first touching and catch or recovery. The other officials should watch for illegal blocking, holding, clipping, etc. If a short onside kick is anticipated, assist the SJ and HL with recovery, blocks, and coverage. If the kick is deep downfield, move to the middle of the field and assist with blocks and the kick return.

If the kick is deep downfield, the **Line Judge and the Linesman** should move downfield about five to 10 yards and officiate the play, being alert for blocking and holding in front of the play. If a long return develops, he should maintain a sufficient cushion (reverse mechanics) in front of the play and be on the goal line before a runner crosses it.

The **Field Judge and Side Judge** should be alert for clear encroachment by Team R. They must know if the kick traveled 10 yards (i.e. breaks the plane of Team R's free kick line and has touched the ground). They should be alert for touching by either team. If the kick ends up being

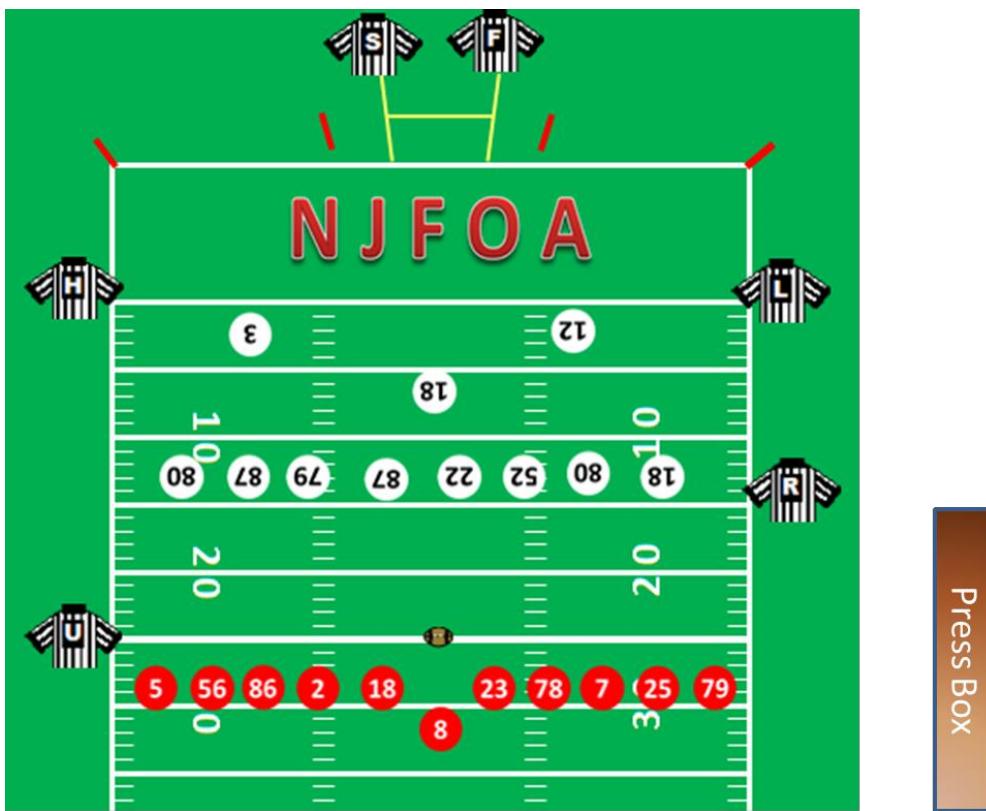
a deep kick down the field, they should move downfield to assist with downfield coverage. If a long return develops they should trail the play and will have forward progress to the two yard line.

The proper officiating positions for an anticipated on-sides kick are illustrated in the following diagram:



B. Free Kick Following a Fair Catch

Though extremely rare, all officials must be aware of both the rules and the mechanics necessary to administer a free kick following a fair catch. The proper officiating positions for a free kick following a fair catch are illustrated in the following diagram:



VI. PLAY RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Pre-Snap and General Duties.

Referee: The Referee will make sure of the down, checking with the Head Linesman. The Referee shall maintain a depth of 12-16 yds behind the line of scrimmage at an angle outside the shoulder of the tackle on his side of the LOS and shall line up on the passing arm side of the Quarterback. He should be in position to comfortably see the snap and exchange of the ball, as well as the backs and tackles. The Referee will announce the down. He will consistently mark the ball ready for play within 12-16 seconds following the ball becoming dead, or within 3 seconds after the ball is placed ready for play by the U, with the same cadence throughout the game **without** any extra delay for substitutions unless a momentary special delay is mandated by rule, such as for the Try or after an unexpected change of team possession. The Referee should notify the Head Coach when his team has used its last timeout and should remind the wing official to notify the Head Coach of timeouts remaining on all other charged time outs. He will count the offensive team players along with the Umpire, and signal him with a clenched fist when 11 or less are counted. Stand ERECT or get in a hand-on-knee position. DO NOT SLOUCH. Do not move too quickly to the play. He should be alert for false starts and illegal shifts in his area, especially involving the quarterback and backs. The Referee's initial keys are the Quarterback and the Tackle on his side of the field.

Umpire: The Umpire should take a position from 7 to 9 yards deep on Team B's side of the line of scrimmage. He shall count the offensive team players and signal the Referee with a clenched fist if 11 players or less are counted. His initial position at the snap should vary, depending on the position of the ball and the formation, but the ball should be visible so that he can rule on snap violations. He shall check offensive linemen to make sure there are five players numbered 50 through 79 on the line at the snap. Be alert for snap infractions, interference with the snap, false starts, encroachment, and disconcerting signals by the defense. The Umpire's initial keys are the

center and both guards, and the tackle opposite the referee. He can be assisted with the tackle by the HL or LJ whoever is opposite the referee.

Head Linesman and Line Judge (Wingmen): Initially, the Head Linesman and Line Judge should be positioned on the sideline standing ERECT and in a ready position. They should never slouch or use "hands on hips" stance. These officials should be alert for incoming and outgoing substitutes involving the teams on their respective sidelines as well as keeping the Restricted Area off the sideline clear. Both the Head Linesman and Line Judge should note numbers of eligible pass receivers. Check positioning of the wingbacks, slot backs and split ends. Use hand to backfield signal when the closest offensive player is off the line. This signal should be held until the snap or until the closest offensive player is no longer off the line. Both officials should count the players on the offensive line making sure that there are at least seven players on the line. The Head Linesman and Line Judge should communicate with each other to make sure that enough players are on the line of scrimmage. They should assist each other when necessary using cross-field mechanics. Be alert for encroachment by either team. Blow the whistle, move in quickly, and shut down all action immediately when encroachment or false starts occur. **The wingman is responsible for motion on his side of the LOS (from the center over) If a motion man crosses the center, then he becomes the responsibility of the other wing official.** As stated further below, the wingman is also responsible for all passes thrown toward him in determining if the pass is forward or backward. Initial key is the tackle if opposite the referee. The R has primary responsibility for the tackle to his side. Secondary key are all inside receivers on their side of the formation.

In addition to the above duties, the Head Linesman has the responsibility for the conduct of the line-to-gain and down marker crew, and the primary responsibility for counting downs. All officials, however, are responsible for maintaining the correct down count. All field officials should communicate and agree on the down count. The Head Linesman after each down, shall establish eye contact with the Referee to receive the signal for the next down. He should echo verbally and also indicate the next down with the appropriate hand signal. He should not call to change the down marker or move the chains for a first down until the Referee signals. For all first downs, the Head Linesman will mark the spot with his foot for the line to gain crew at the sideline. When the goal line is the line to gain, only the down marker will be used to mark the spot of the ball. The chain will be removed from the sideline.

The **Head Linesman and Line Judge** generally have responsibility for forward progress from Team A's goal line to Team B's two-yard line. The only exceptions are when the runner passes the down field official, and when covering goal line situations. The Side Judge and Field Judge should verbally communicate the out-of-bounds spot to the Head Linesman and Line Judge, respectively, when the runner goes out of bounds on their side of the field.

The Head Linesman and Line Judge should be aware of eligible receivers. Observe the snap to make sure there are no encroachments or false starts.

Field Judge and Side Judge: Side Judge should take an initial position on his sideline 22-25 yards in advance of the line of scrimmage. The SJ will determine the distance to line up (22-25 yds) and the FJ will mirror. FJ initial position should line up between the bottom of the numbers and the sideline. If the team lines up on the opposite hash and is in a tight formation, then the FJ should adjust inward accordingly. This way the QB will still be able to view him without twisting his neck too far. FJ's should adjust where they line up based upon where the ball will be snapped and the formation. At or prior to the snap move backward at a 45 degree angle towards the sideline. FJ and SJ will count Team B players and signal to each other with a clenched fist when there are 11 players or less. These officials should be alert for incoming and outgoing substitutes and "hideout" plays, and should assist in keeping the Restricted Area off the sideline clear. Their initial keys are the widest receiver on their side of the field at the snap. The Field Judge is responsible for enforcing the 25-second count. If there is no visible play clock, he will raise his hand overhead with 5 seconds remaining and begin the chopping motion so that it is clear to the QB and coaches. Both officials should assist in relaying information to other officials

and coaches. Except for goal line situations, the Field Judge and Side Judge generally have forward progress inside Team B's two-yard line.

As the play develops, the official on the opposite side of the field may "pinch in".

B. Running Plays

Progression of Coverage: SNAP - TACKLE - KEY - ZONE.

Referee: After making sure that the snap was legal and there were no false starts, the Referee should read whether the play is a run or pass play based on the blocking by the tackles. If run is read, the Referee's primary responsibility is the football until it is beyond the line of scrimmage, then to cover the action behind the runner. While the ball is behind the line of scrimmage, focus on blocks on the front side of the point of attack. Primary responsibility is the tackle on his side of the LOS. At the snap, move only if necessary. Delay moving immediately to avoid hindering reverse or delayed plays and to assure maximum vision of play. If needed, move backwards at an angle to keep the play in front.

If the play is wide, slowly move in that direction and watch for action around and in front of the runner to the neutral zone. On option plays, if the quarterback keeps the ball and turns up field, observe action on the trailing back until there is no longer the threat of a foul. When the quarterback becomes the runner and runs into a side zone or out of bounds, follow him all the way including out of bounds.

For runs by runners **OTHER THAN THE QUARTERBACK** into the side zone, move in that direction watching the play and action, but it is not necessary to go too far past the hash marks. Unless the runner was the quarterback or in a hurry-up or "two-minute offense," when the ball is dead in a side zone or out of bounds, get forward progress from the wingman at the inbounds spot and help spot the ball. For obvious first downs on long plays, or on short gains between the hash marks, it is not necessary to run to the line of scrimmage prior to declaring the ball ready for play.

Umpire: Initial position 7-9 yds off the LOS. After making sure that the snap was legal and there were no false starts or encroachment, the Umpire should read whether the play is a run or pass play based on blocking by the offensive line. If run is read, the Umpire should key on the point of attack and action on or by the interior linemen. Focus on the blocks and action on the back side of the point of attack looking for holding, chop blocks and other illegal blocks. Primary responsibility is the guards, center and the tackle opposite the R. If the play is wide, slowly move in that direction, and observe any action around the runner. Do not be restricted between the hash marks. When the ball becomes dead in a side zone or out of bounds, move out and retrieve the ball. Relay the ball to the Referee to spot the ball at the hash mark, unless the Referee is in the side zone. For a hurry-up or "two-minute" offense, obvious first downs and long gains, short gains between the hash marks, or balls that become dead within a few steps beyond the hash marks, retrieve and spot the ball getting forward progress from the wingman and spot the ball.

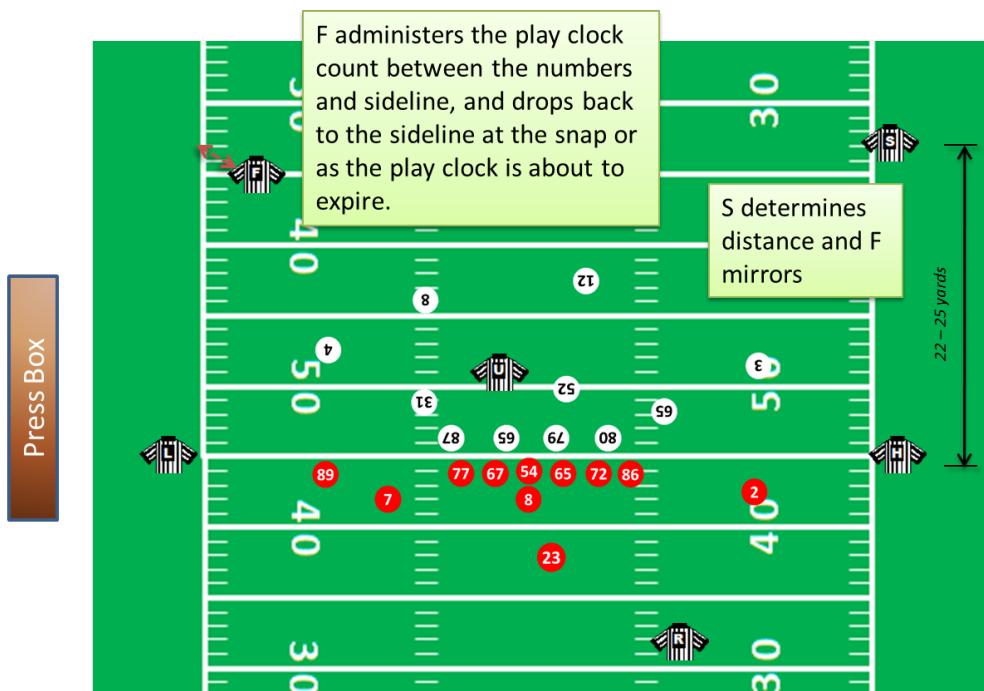
Head Linesman and Line Judge: After making sure the snap was legal and there were no false starts or encroachment, observe the tackles to read run or pass. Once run is read, both officials should maintain position on the line of scrimmage and allow the play to develop in front of them. Observe actions by tackles and keys. Do not leave the line of scrimmage until the runner crosses it. If the play is nearing the sideline, the covering official should back up beyond the sideline while maintaining his position on the line of scrimmage and officiate from outside-in. If the play is away from him, the wingman should pick up action behind the Referee and Umpire while moving downfield with the play giving special attention to late action on the Quarterback after he has pitched the ball.

When the runner is down in his area, the covering wingman should get an accurate forward progress spot and hold it until the Referee or Umpire acknowledges it. The wingmen should use cross-field mechanics when needed to assist each other in getting accurate forward progress. When the ball is dead, each official should "accordion in" on to the field approximately to the nine-yard marks or until he feels pressure from other players. Each official should square off the field in getting the spot and should match each other on the same line. If there is any disagreement, the officials should close in together and determine the correct spot. Use the upfield foot to give the spot of forward progress.

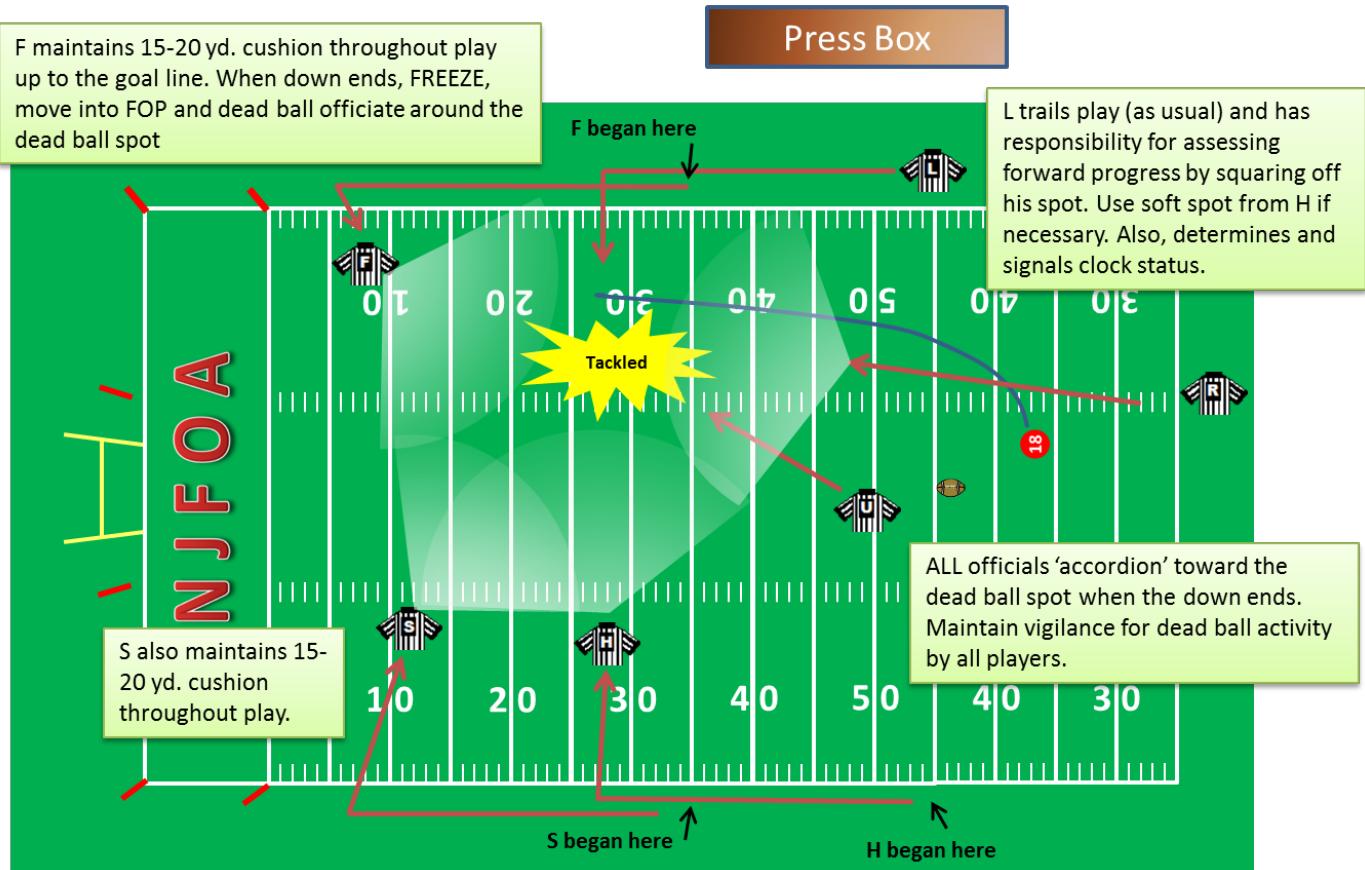
When the ball is dead inbounds near the sideline, **do not give a winding signal to indicate the clock is to continue to run, except when a runner's progress is forced sideways or backwards out of bounds or unless the runner is downed close to out of bounds (one yd or less)**. If the ball goes out of bounds, hold the out of bounds spot and facing the action out of bounds while either the Referee or deep wing official retrieves the ball. When getting the out of bounds spot, always keep the head up looking at the action and never look down at the ground. If a first down is obvious, the covering wingman should stop the clock. If close, signal to and wait for the Referee to rule.

Field Judge and Side Judge: At the snap, read the play. When FJ and SJ read run, they should initially take two steps in. If run ends near the LOS or a few yards beyond, they should pinch in quickly and help with the dead ball officiating as well as being the second leg of the triangle for ball rotation if the ball is dead in the side zones. During the play, observe action on the widest receiver. Be alert for illegal blocks ("crackbacks") and holding. If the play is to the official, he should maintain a cushion in advance of the play and assist with action on lead blockers. Be at the goal line before the runner crosses it. Take forward progress inside the two-yard line. If the play goes out of bounds on his side—especially when into the team box—and the wing official has the spot, he should proceed directly into the out of bounds/team box area to observe, clean up any action, and retrieve the ball. If the play is going away from him, he should assist in observing action behind the Umpire. Each official has responsibility for Team B's end line. After the play ends, they should "accordion in" while observing dead ball action. Be mindful of off-ball activity, especially in wide-open plays.

Standard Running Play Positioning Outside the Red Zone



Long Running Play: Forward Progress Determination/Dead Ball Officiating



C. Passing Plays

Progression of Coverage: SNAP - TACKLE - KEY - ZONE.

Referee: On passing downs, as the passer retreats, stay outside of and deeper than the passer, moving backwards along an angle to maintain cushion if necessary. Observe drop back blockers in vision, especially the tackle on your side. After the pass is thrown, continue to observe action on and around the passer until there is no threat of a foul. Verbally alert defenders when the passer has released the ball. Assist the Line Judge on passes thrown in determining forwards or backwards. You are responsible for all passes thrown behind the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped within Team B's 10-yard line. The Referee is the sole judge for intentional grounding but should seek input from other officials as to whether a forward pass was thrown into an area not occupied by an eligible receiver.

Umpire: Initial position 7-9 yds off the LOS. When the Umpire reads pass, he should move toward the line of scrimmage but without interfering with players. Don't rush to LOS. He should look for holding or other illegal blocks keying, but not tunneling, on the center and two guards and the tackle opposite the R. He must be alert for ineligible receivers being down field prior to the releasing of a forward pass. The Umpire must also assist the Line Judge in determining whether the pass crossed the neutral zone. When the ball is snapped inside Team B's 7 yard line, has responsibility for determining whether a forward pass crossed the line of scrimmage and if the passer was beyond the neutral zone. Once the pass has been released, he should turn quickly to assist in determining if there is a reception, interception, or an incompletion as other officials may be blocked out if the pass was thrown over the middle. He should maintain

coverage of his area of responsibility as long as there is a threat of action. After a catch, he should cover continuing action around the runner in the side zone.

Head Linesman: After the snap, observe the tackles to read run or pass. When pass is read, observe the blocking tackle briefly. Then, the Head Linesman's primary responsibility is for his eligible key receivers. If needed, he should move downfield along the sideline up to five yards at a pace allowing him to maintain focus on his keys in the belt area (roughly from the line of scrimmage to 10 yards downfield). Movement should be deliberate and with a purpose. Rarely will the Head Linesman slide more than five yards downfield. However, he may go beyond this distance if the situation suggests it (end of half or game pass near end zone, fourth and long, third and seven, etc.). If his key receiver or belt area is not threatened, he should assist with the tackle on his side.

When the pass is released deep downfield, the Head Linesman should move downfield with the pass. When moving downfield to cover your passing keys, keep your shoulders parallel to the sideline. This helps open up your vision should you be responsible for wide receivers coming off the line along with backs coming out of the backfield. He is responsible for receptions between him and the deep official. For shorter downfield passes, especially when the ball is thrown directly into his area, reducing movement while the ball is in the air will improve his ability to see the play more accurately. If the pass is not thrown in his area, he should observe off-ball action.

When the runner is down and the Head Linesman has forward progress, he should get an accurate forward progress spot and hold it until the Referee or Umpire acknowledges it. He and the Line Judge should use cross-field mechanics when needed to assist each other in getting accurate forward progress. When the ball is dead, each official should "accordion in" on to the field approximately to the nine-yard marks or until he feels pressure from other players. Each official should square off the field in getting the spot and should match each other on the same line. If there is any disagreement, the officials should close in together and determine the correct spot. Use the up-field foot to give the spot of forward progress.

Line Judge: After the snap, observe the tackles to read run or pass. When pass is read, observe the blocking tackle and key eligible receiver. If the receiver is threatened or goes downfield, give him priority. The Line Judge is responsible for activity involving the line of scrimmage, including whether the passer goes beyond the line of scrimmage and whether a forward pass crosses the line of scrimmage. He is also responsible for determining whether a pass behind the line toward his sideline is forward or backwards.

When the pass is released deep downfield, the Line Judge should move downfield with the pass. When moving downfield to cover your passing keys, keep your shoulders parallel to the sideline. This helps open up your vision should you be responsible for wide receivers coming off the line along with backs coming out of the backfield." He is responsible for receptions between him and the deep official. For shorter downfield passes, especially when the ball is thrown directly into his area, reducing movement while the ball is in the air will improve his ability to see the play more accurately. If the pass is not thrown in his area, he should observe off-ball action. When the runner is down and the Line Judge has forward progress, he should get an accurate forward progress spot and hold it until the Referee or Umpire acknowledges it. He and the Head Linesman should use cross-field mechanics when needed to assist each other in getting accurate forward progress. When the ball is dead, each official should "accordion in" on to the field approximately to the nine-yard marks or until he feels pressure from other players. Each official should square off the field in getting the spot and should match each other on the same line. If there is any disagreement, the officials should close in together and determine the correct spot. Use the up-field foot to give the spot of forward progress.

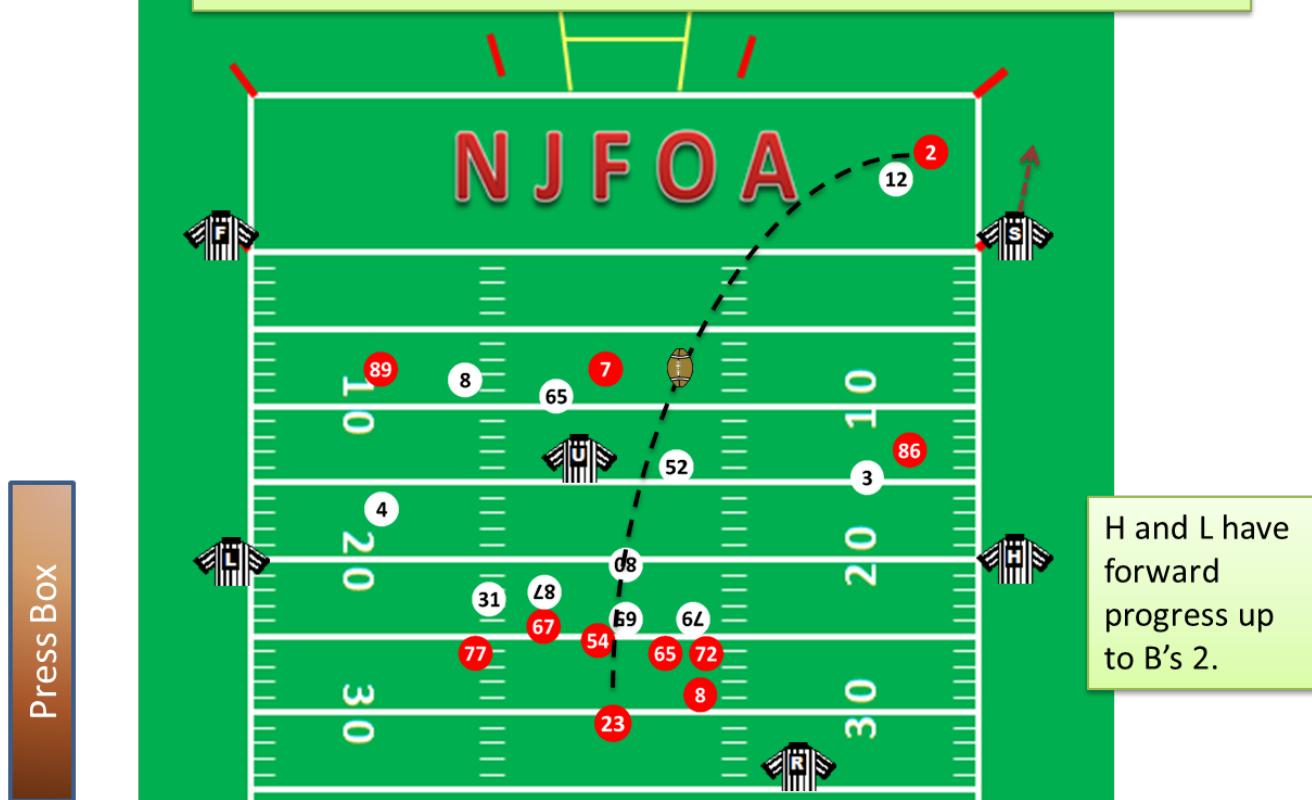
Field Judge and Side Judge: At the snap, maintain position and read the play. Once pass is read, move backwards to maintain cushion and assure maximum vision. Observe contact on key

receivers and the defensive backs. When the pass is away from you, observe action behind the Umpire. They should cover the sideline from their original position to the end line. When the ball is thrown into the official's area, he should cover the play and watch the defender's action on the receiver. **NEVER LET A RUNNER OR RECEIVER GET BEHIND YOU.**

The proper initial officiating positions for scrimmage plays are illustrated in the following diagrams.

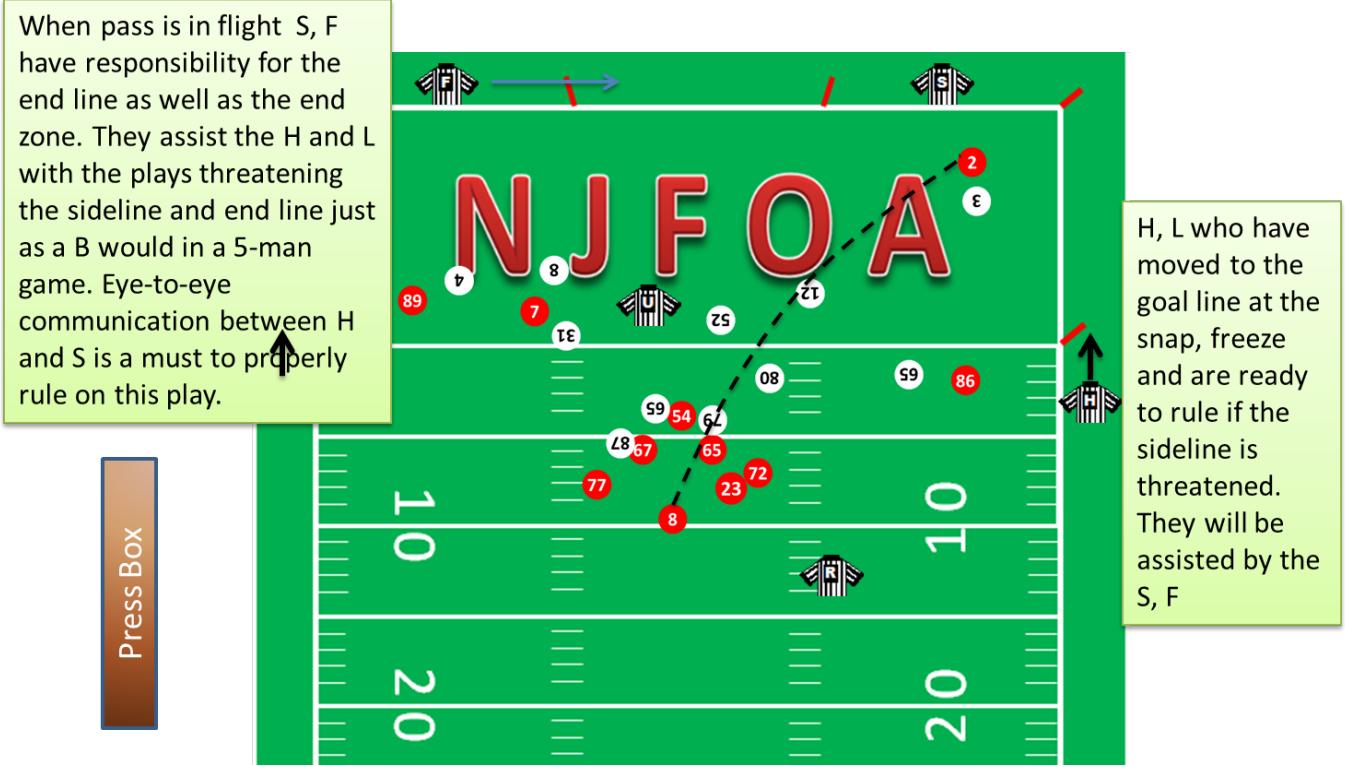
Pass into B's End Zone

F and S 'own' the goal line and should remain there until it is clear that a forward pass will go beyond the field of play. In this case, the S, only after determining that the pass will be into the end zone, will begin to move toward the end line to rule



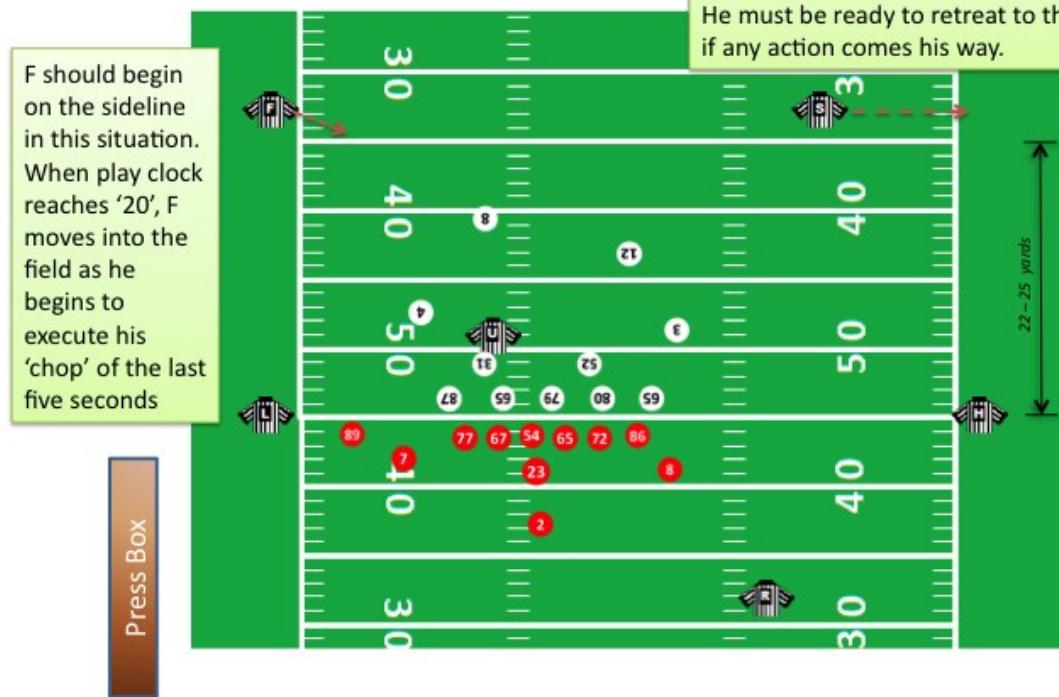
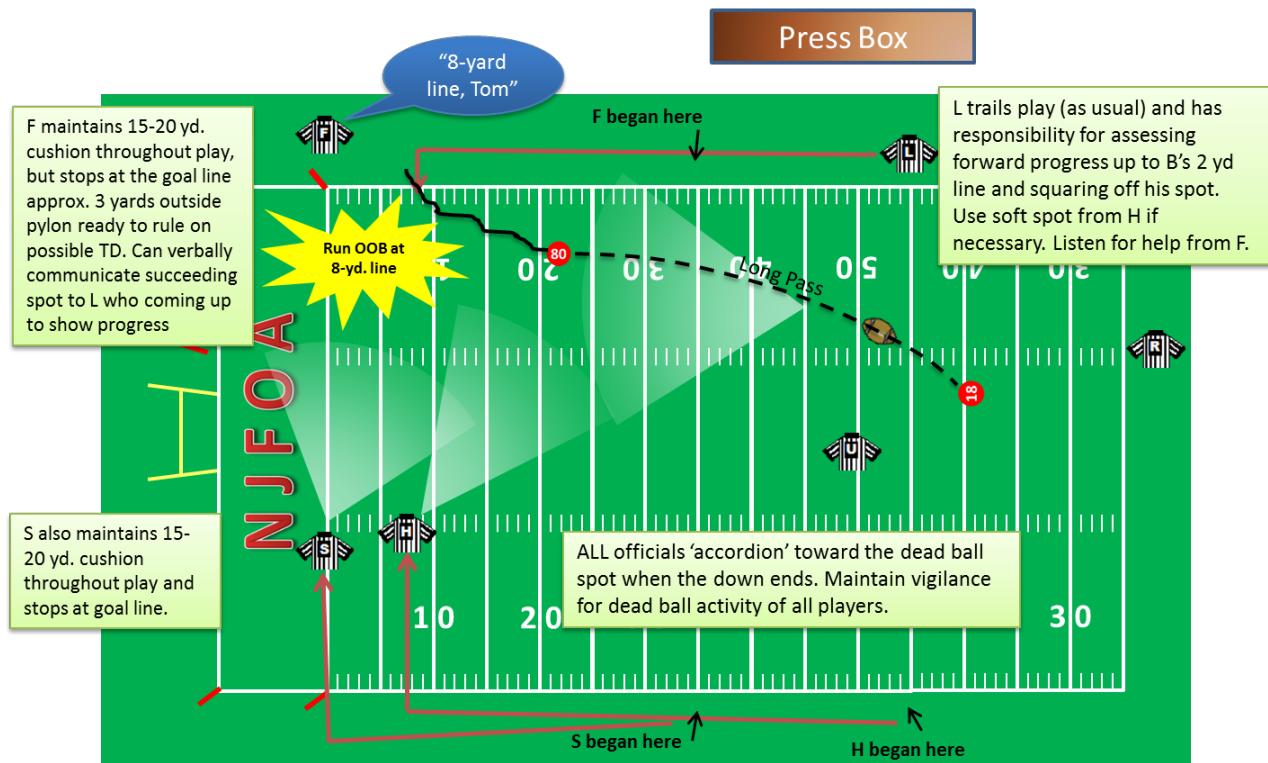
Pass Plays Inside or at B's 7

When pass is in flight S, F have responsibility for the end line as well as the end zone. They assist the H and L with the plays threatening the sideline and end line just as a B would in a 5-man game. Eye-to-eye communication between H and S is a must to properly rule on this play.



Passing plays inside B's 7 will likely develop very quickly. The **Line Judge**, **Head Linesman**, **Field Judge**, and **Side Judge** should resist the temptation to go 'zone.' Be prepared to remain 'man' on your keys for the duration of the down.

Long Pass Approaching B's End Zone



ngs (**Head Linesman** or **Line Judge**) has responsibility for forward progress, he will be trailing the play. This is normal and the expected way to cover the play. However, this position may put him at a disadvantage—especially if the runner or pass receiver is hit and driven back toward the

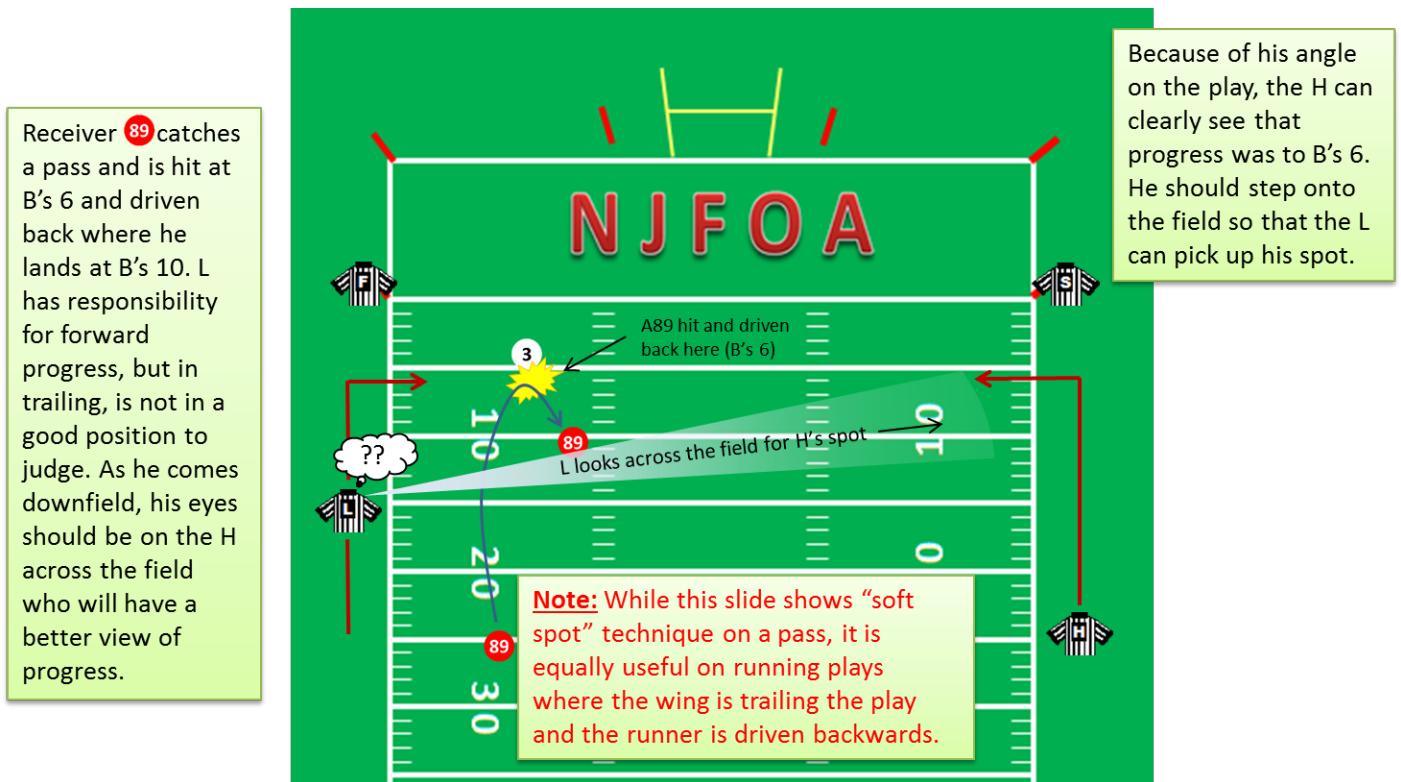
Tight Formation from Hash Mark

D. “Soft Spot” (Cross-field mechanics)

Oft en tim es, wh en on e of the wi

line of scrimmage. In such situations, it is very difficult for that wing to determine forward progress. The solution, however, comes from all the way across the field. Because he is also moving downfield, and because of his angle to the play, the opposite wing can provide the necessary help and allow the near-side wing (the covering official) to get an accurate spot. As the covering official moves downfield, the ball becomes dead, and he realizes his predicament, he should glance across the field at this partner. His partner should come downfield, square off, and step onto the field at the forward progress spot so that the covering official can pick up the spot.

The following diagram shows how this works.



E. Reverse Mechanics.

During a scrimmage kick / punt return, or when Team B begins a return following a turnover, officials should use reverse mechanics to cover the play.

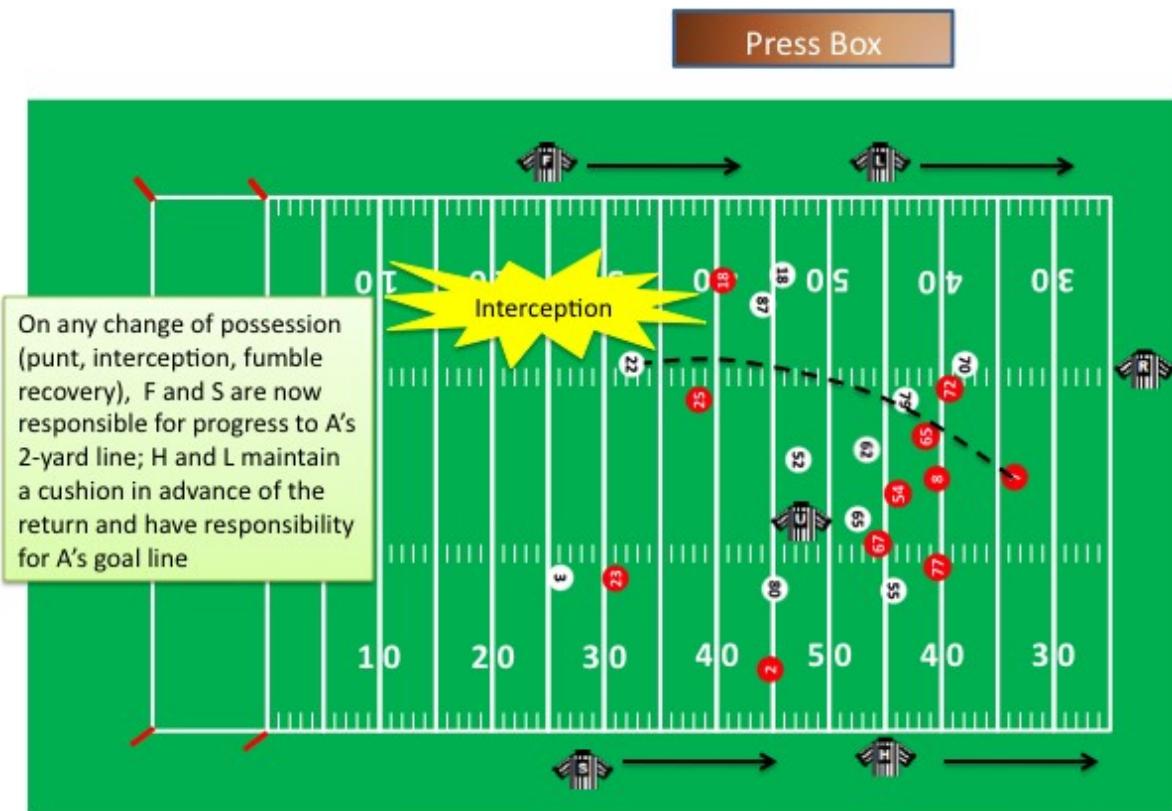
Referee: The Referee should cautiously move backwards towards Team A's goal line while maintaining coverage of Team A's Quarterback or Kicker. The Referee will work inside out to cover the play. He does NOT have goal line coverage and should NOT turn his back on the play to get to Team A's goal line.

Umpire: The Umpire should work to cover as any other play.

Head Linesman and Line Judge: When Team B or R begins its return, the Line Judge and Head Linesman should begin backing up along the sideline and officiating in front of the return, assisting with lead blockers. They should maintain a cushion in advance of the play and be on the goal line before the runner. They will have forward progress in this situation between Team A's two-yard line and its goal line. The Field Judge and Side Judge will take forward progress otherwise.

Field Judge and Side Judge: The Field Judge and Side Judge will trail the play and cover action on and around the runner on their side. The official who does not have coverage of the runner

will assist in off-ball coverage and clean-up action behind other officials. When not covering the runner, be alert for off-ball activity. The Field Judge and Side Judge will take forward progress up to Team A's two-yard line. The Line Judge and Head Linesman will have forward progress inside Team A's two-yard line.



VII. SCRIMMAGE KICK (PUNT) RESPONSIBILITIES

Referee: The Referee is positioned slightly behind the kicker and 7-9 yards wide on the kicking foot side of the field, in a position to look at approximately a 45 degree angle to the position where the kick will be made, so that he can see the snap, back blockers, and entire play in front of him. Together with the Umpire, he will count Team K players and give the appropriate signal when there are 11 players or less. Verbally alert Team R players when the kicker has kicked the ball. Be alert for action on and around the kicker, then clean up behind the kick action while drifting down field, opposite the side of the Umpire. If the kick is blocked, or on a long return, he should be prepared to move to Team K's goal line for coverage. If the ball goes out of bounds in flight, assist deep wing officials in determining the out of bounds spot. If a return develops, the Referee should use reverse mechanics to cover the play.

Umpire: The Umpire should be in position to rule on any contact with the snapper. He may adjust his position to 8 to 10 yards off the line of scrimmage. Together with the Referee, he will count Team K players and give the appropriate signal when there are 11 players or less. When the offensive team is in a scrimmage kick formation, the Umpire should verbally warn Team R players not to charge directly into the snapper. Also, when in a scrimmage kick formation, the Umpire must remember that Team A is exempt from the 50-79 numbering requirement, but the Umpire must note other numbers in case a forward pass is thrown. Be alert for holding by either team, especially any "pull and shoot" action by Team R. He must assist the Referee in determining if the ball was tipped in or behind the neutral zone. After the kick has crossed the neutral zone, and action in the line has cleared, turn and move toward the return area to observe action. After the ball becomes dead, be on the appropriate yard line to spot the ball. If the kick is

blocked and picked up by a member of the receiving team, the Umpire must follow the play and cover action around and behind the runner.

Head Linesman and Line Judge: Both official's position and pre-snap responsibilities are the same as for any scrimmage play. They should communicate with each other to make sure there are at least seven players on the line of scrimmage. They should hold their positions until the kicked ball crosses the neutral zone. **The Head Linesman** should assist the Referee in knowing whether the kick was tipped by a blocker. Each official should be alert for errant snaps or blocked kicks. In this situation, the official on the same side of the field as the loose ball should move into the backfield to help with coverage. The other officials should maintain his position at the line of scrimmage and rule on any action involving the line of scrimmage.

After the kick has crossed the neutral zone and stays beyond, they should move with a purpose downfield, approximately 15 yards. If the ball is to his side, that wing official should cover action ahead of the runner. Look for any player in chase mode who has gotten beat and may be inclined to hold or block from behind. If the ball is not to his side, that wing official should cover the play behind the deep wing official on his side. As the return develops, the Head Linesman and Line Judge should use reverse mechanics to cover the play.

Side Judge: Initial position is on the Head Linesman's side of the field, on the sideline approximately 5 yards behind the deepest receiver. Takes 1/3 of the field on his side. He should have 2 bean bags, one in hand. For punts in which the LOS originates inside B's 45 yd line, SJ initial position should be at the goal line pylon. He should be ready to mark any spot of first touching, illegal blocks, kick catching interference, holding etc. He must also use his bean bag to mark the spot where the kick ends (the "post scrimmage kick spot"). Be ready to follow the ball if the receiver fails to field the kick cleanly. Cover action on and against the runner until he enters the Head Linesman's area. Take flyers until ball is caught. Officiate the late action during the downward flight of the ball (signal, contact, blocking into, interference with opportunity, or muffing

If the kick will land on the other side of your hash mark, cover the play around the receiver and be ready to take the runner if the return is to your side of the field. Cover action behind the runner if the return is to the other side.

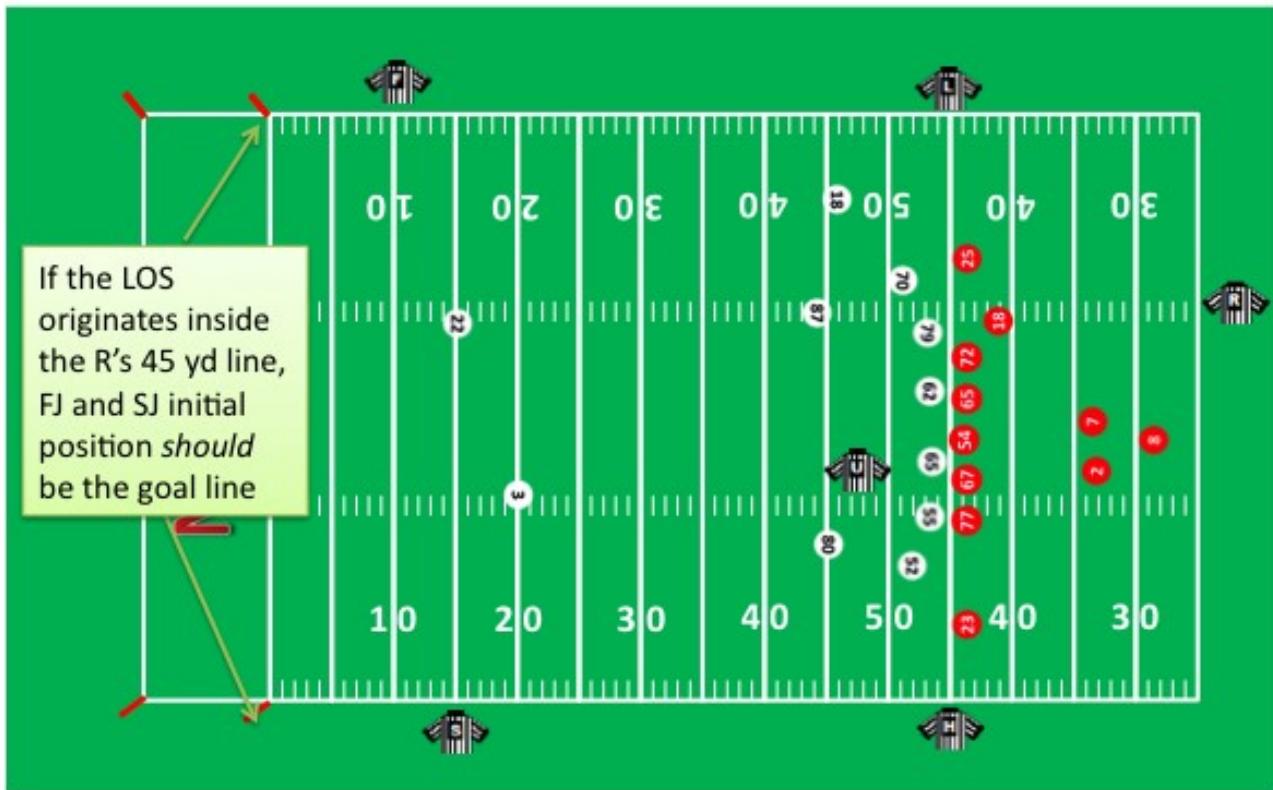
Field Judge: Initial position is on the press box side of the field, at the numbers about 5 yards behind the deepest receiver. For punts in which the LOS originates inside B's 45 yd line, FJ initial position should be on the goal line pylon. Responsible for the 25 sec play clock. He should have 2 bean bags, one in each hand. He should be ready to mark any spot of first touching. He must also use his bean bag to mark the spot where the kick ends (the "post scrimmage kick spot"). He should count the receiving team players and make the appropriate signal. He is responsible for valid and invalid fair catch signals, and ruling on a valid fair catch. Be alert for touching by Team R or Team K players.

If the kick will land on your side of the opposite hash mark (2/3 of field), you are responsible for fair catch, valid signal, interference, hand-offs, kicks out of bounds on your sideline, plays at the goal line and taking the runner on the return until he enters another official's zone.

You are responsible for fair catch, valid signal, interference, hand-offs, kicks out of bounds on your side line, ruling on plays at the goal line and taking the runner on the return until the runner enters the Line Judge's area of the field. If the kick will land on the other side of your hash mark, cover the play around the receiver and be ready to take the runner if the return is to your side of the field. Cover action behind the runner if the return is to the other side. Take flyers until ball is caught. Officiate the late action during the downward flight of the ball (signal, contact, blocking into, interference with opportunity, or muffing)

The proper officiating positions for punts are illustrated in the following diagram:

Press Box



VIII. FIELD GOAL AND TRY FOR POINT

Referee: Prior to the snap, the Referee will count Team K players along with the Umpire and give the appropriate signal with 11 players or less. The Referee will take a position at least 7 - 9 yards wide on the side ALWAYS facing the front of the holder and about 2 - 3 yards deeper than the holder. He should be in a position to observe the snap. After the snap, he should observe any action by the holder, including a muff, fumble, or recovery, and any action that follows. Once a kick is made, he should observe any action on and around the kicker and holder and verbally alert Team R when the kick is made. If the play turns into a running or passing play, the Referee should move to cover the play as normal. **The R does not need to mirror the signals of the SJ and FJ**

Umpire: Prior to the snap, the Umpire will count Team K players along with the Referee and give the appropriate signal with 11 players or less. The Umpire should be positioned about 5 - 7 yards behind Team R's line of scrimmage. He should observe line play and defensive action on the snapper. He should be alert for pull and shoots and other personal fouls. If the field goal or kick turns into a run or pass play toward the sideline without any covering official, officiate from inside out. If Team R possesses the ball and makes a return, use reverse mechanics.

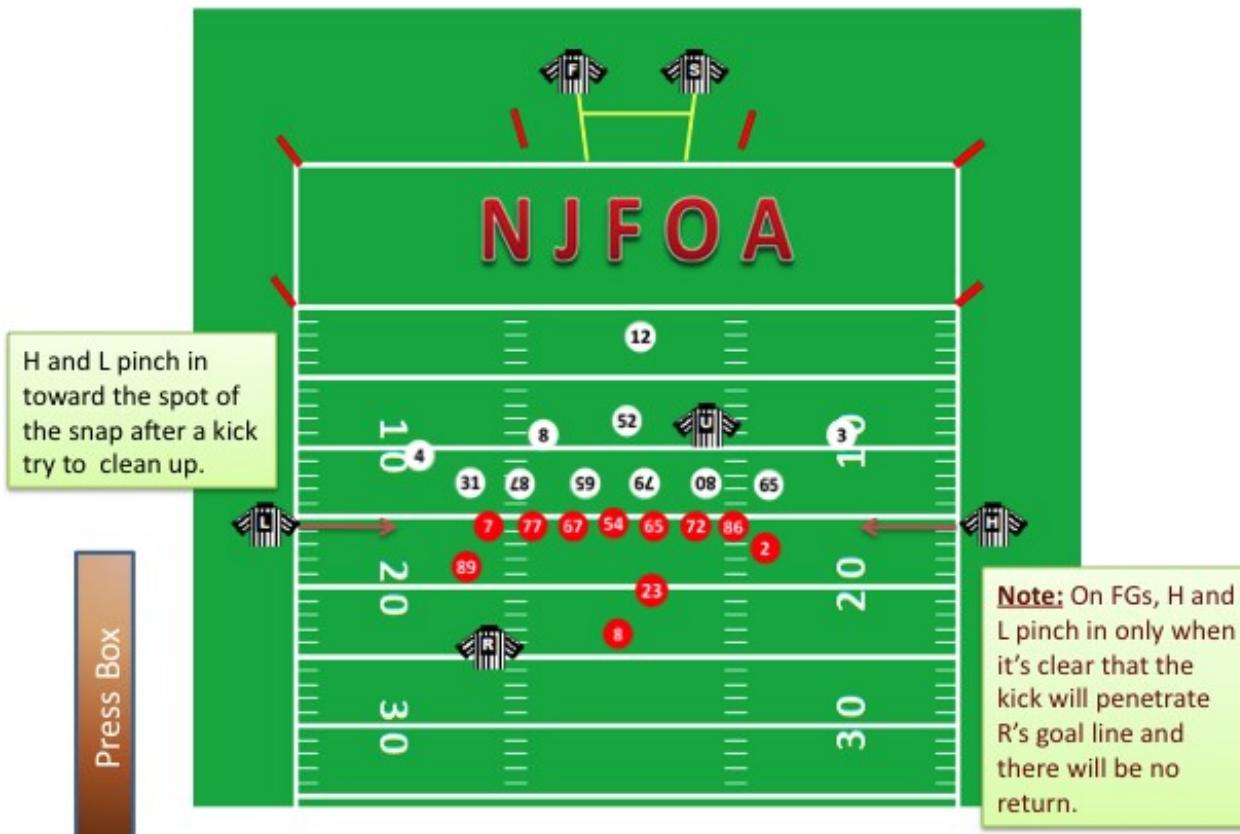
Head Linesman and Line Judge: Prior to the snap, the Head Linesman and Line Judge should position themselves as on any other scrimmage play. They should communicate with each other to make sure that there are at least seven players on the line of scrimmage. They should be ready

to cover action on their sideline from the line of scrimmage to the end line if necessary. Neither official should leave the line of scrimmage until the ball has crossed the line and it is necessary to move downfield. Unless it is necessary to move downfield, they will quickly close in to the line play after the kick and observe action. Both "pinch in" after try to dead ball officiate

Field Judge and Side Judge: If the kicking team uses a "muddle huddle", start at the "hash" mark on your side. Otherwise, the Field Judge will take a position behind the upright on the press box sideline. The Side Judge will take a position behind the upright on the side opposite the press box. Both will count Team R players and give the appropriate signal when 11 players or less are counted. They will rule on whether the kick is good. The Side Judge has primary responsibility for his upright and the crossbar. The Field Judge has primary responsibility for his upright. The Side Judge may blow the whistle once the try is kicked or when the field goal attempt is over. After the kick ends, both officials should communicate on the result, then take three steps forward and simultaneously signal the result of the play.

If the play turns into a run or pass, or if Team R gains possession and begins a return, the Field Judge and Side Judge should officiate as normal. Each should move out to the hash marks on their respective sides of the field to cover action coming at them which will put each official in position to observe action in the middle of the field as well as in the corner of their respective side of the end zone. If a return develops, they should use reverse mechanics.

The proper officiating positions for field goal and try attempts from a scrimmage kick are illustrated in the following drawing:

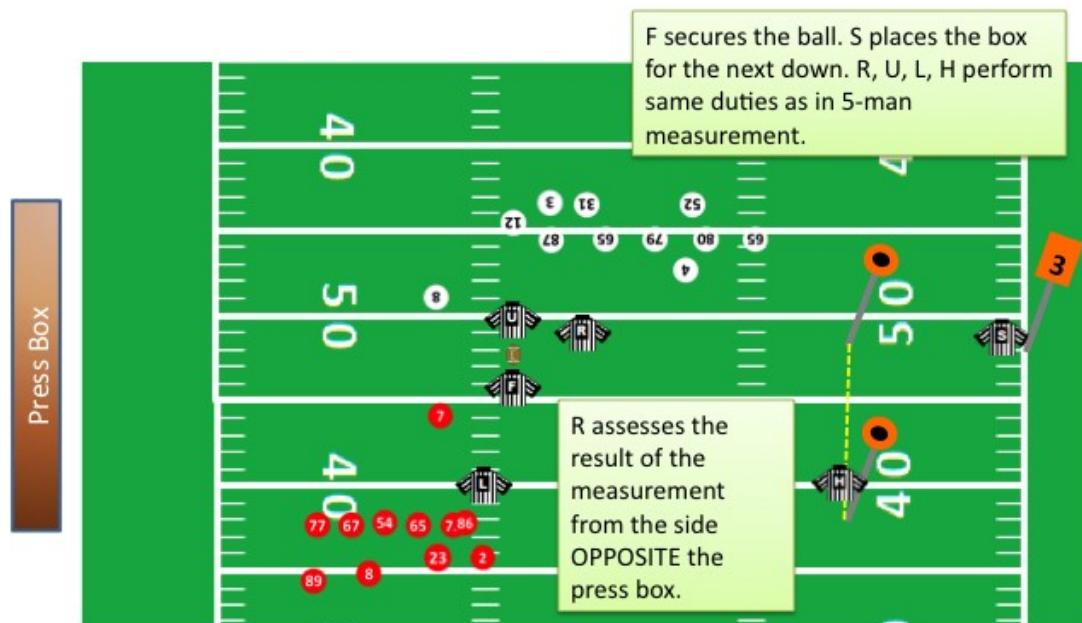


IX. MEASUREMENT FOR FIRST DOWN

When the ball is dead and forward progress is close to the line-to-gain, the Referee will decide if the clock should be stopped to signal a first down or ask for a measurement. If a measurement is needed, the Field Judge will hold the ball in place on the ground. The Side Judge and The

Head Linesman will go to the sideline with the chains. The Side Judge will mark and hold the front stake with the down box. The Head Linesman will take the chain at the clip, and direct the chain crew to take the chains onto the field toward the ball. The Line Judge will help the Head Linesman to align the chains on the field for measurement by giving him a spot on the yard line with the clip and in line with the ball. Once the Head Linesman has the clip down and secure, the Umpire will take the front stake from the chain crewman and stretch the chains so the Referee can rule on whether the front of the ball is beyond the line to gain. If a first down is indicated, the Head Linesman will release the chain crew to return to the sideline where he will give them a first down spot. If the line-to-gain has not been reached, the Head Linesman will return to the sideline, re-spot the clip, and make sure the chain is stretched to place the chain in its original position.

When a measurement is needed and the ball is dead outside the hash marks, the same process is used. However, if the ball is short of the line to gain, the old ball should remain at the spot until a new ball is spotted at the hash mark for the next play. In this situation, the **Line Judge** should obtain a new ball and hand it to the Referee. The **Referee** will take the new ball from the Line Judge and also grab the link of the chain just in front of the foremost point of the old ball. The **Head Linesman**, holding the clip, the Referee, holding the chain link, and the Umpire, holding the front stake, should bring the chains to the hash mark and align them with assistance from the Line Judge. The Head Linesman shall hold the chain at the clip, and the **Umpire** shall stretch the chain. Once the chains are aligned, the Referee will spot the new ball just inside the hash mark at the proper spot. The **Field Judge** will hold the dead ball in the side zone at its spot on the ground until the Referee has correctly spotted the new ball inside the hash mark and has released the chains back to the sideline. The Field Judge should then give the old ball to the ball handler. If the Referee happens to drop the chain, the new ball does not line up clearly with the old ball, or some other event occurs causing a problem with the process, return the chains to the old ball and start over. This is the reason it is very important for the **Field Judge** to secure the old ball the ENTIRE TIME.



X. TIME OUTS

Referee: Take a position near team "A"s huddle if the conference is held on the field. If the conference is held at the 9 yard marks take a position at the inbounds line nearest the team "A" sideline. Sound your whistle curtly at the conclusion of the time-out interval and summon the respective teams back to the succeeding spot to prepare for the next play. Mark the ball ready for play.

Umpire: Take a position over the football and do not allow its status or position to be altered.

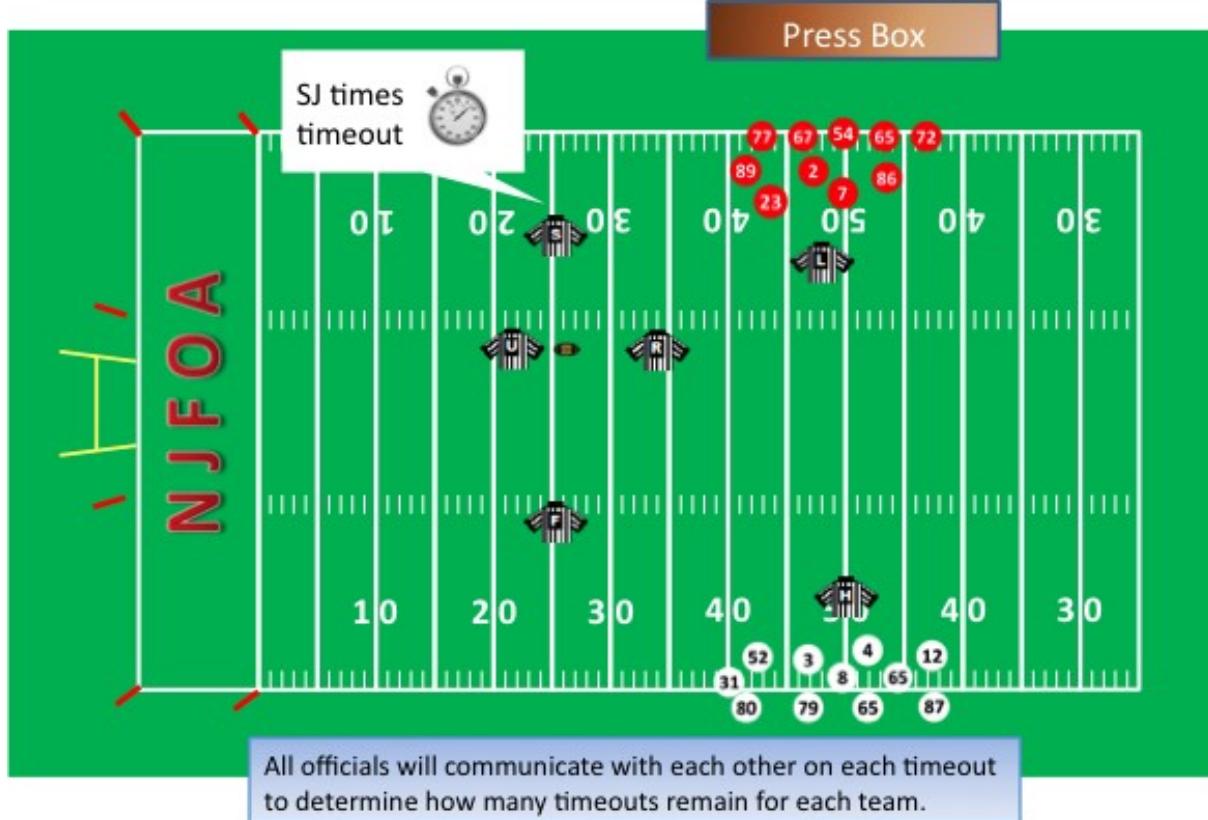
Head Linesman & Line Judge: Assume a position on your sideline near the respective teams' conference if it is held near the 9 yard marks. If the conference is held at the inbounds line, stay between the huddle and near the team box to monitor any and all player exchanges. Make sure to inform your respective head coaches as to the number of time-outs remaining for each team.

Field Judge & Side Judge: Assume a position somewhere between the team box located on your side of the field and the inbounds line. Monitor any activity during the conference if held at the inbounds lines.

Side Judge: Time the time-out interval and alert the referee when time has expired.

All Officials: Mark your game card and communicate with each other to assure that all members of the crew are aware of the proper number of time-outs available for each team before the conference period has expired.

The proper mechanics to use during a time out are shown in the following diagram.



XI.PLAYS NEAR THE GOAL LINE

A. Ball Outside Team B's 7-Yard Line

The Referee, Umpire, Head Linesman, and Line Judge will assume their normal positions. The **Field Judge and Side Judge** will position themselves on the goal line outside the pylon and will maintain this position as Team A moves toward the goal line unless the runners or receivers force them to move to the end line. ** **Field Judge: From the 25yd line to the 8 yd line, the FJ should line up on the goal line, and administer the 25 second count by moving in to the bottom of numbers if the count reaches 20. From the 7yd line, the FJ should line up on the end line at the pylon, then take one step in, and officiate the count from there.** The Line Judge and Head Linesman must be ready to move to the goal line if the Field Judge and Side Judge are forced to the end line.

Side Judge and **Field Judge**: Goal line and sideline responsibility on all plays. Initial position is on the goal line with SJ at the sideline. ** **Field Judge: From the 25yd line to the 8 yd line, the FJ should line up on the goal line, and administer the 25 second count by moving in to the bottom of numbers if the count reaches 20.** Move as the play dictates. Be alert. Protect the sideline on your side to end line. Be ready to rule on loose ball plays and on recovery in the end zone. Be careful on 4th down within 10 yard line.

Responsible for goal line on a running play when the line of scrimmage is beyond the 7 yard line. Be able to determine whether a catch of pass was made in or outside of end line. Watch for eligible receivers going over the end line before they catch or touch a pass. Assist on out of bounds spots. Before FJ,LJ rule TD, they should check with wing. "Look, confirm, nodthen go up"

When a pass is clearly going to the opposite side of the field, the off side official shall move in towards the center of the field along the end line to assist the his partner in determining possession and in bounds/out of bounds status.

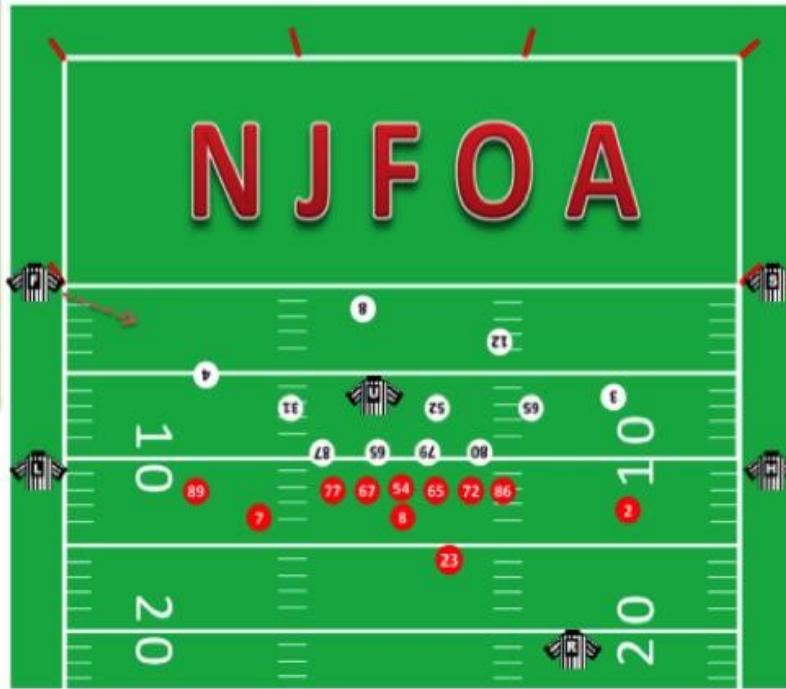
Linesman and **Line Judge**: Stay out of bounds on sideline. Close in towards play and goal line only after you are positive the play has gone into line or away from you. When ball is dead on your side, mark forward point in your opinion. Do not give a signal (visual or verbal) until you are positive you see a touchdown; then give the touchdown signal.

Position yourself the same as a running play, but emphasis is on forward progress. Concentrate more intently on your zone of coverage, as this is significantly smaller than usual. Assist F and S on all plays, especially passes into the end zone.

The proper officiating positions for plays where the snap occurs inside the red zone but outside Team B's 7-yard line are illustrated in the following drawing:

F administers the play clock count at the sideline once the ball reaches B's 20. When play clock reaches '20', F moves into the field as he begins to execute his 'chop' of the last five seconds

Press Box



F and S are positioned outside the goal line pylon and have responsibility for B's goal line.

H and L have forward progress up to B's 2.

B. Ball On and Inside Team B's 7 Yard Line

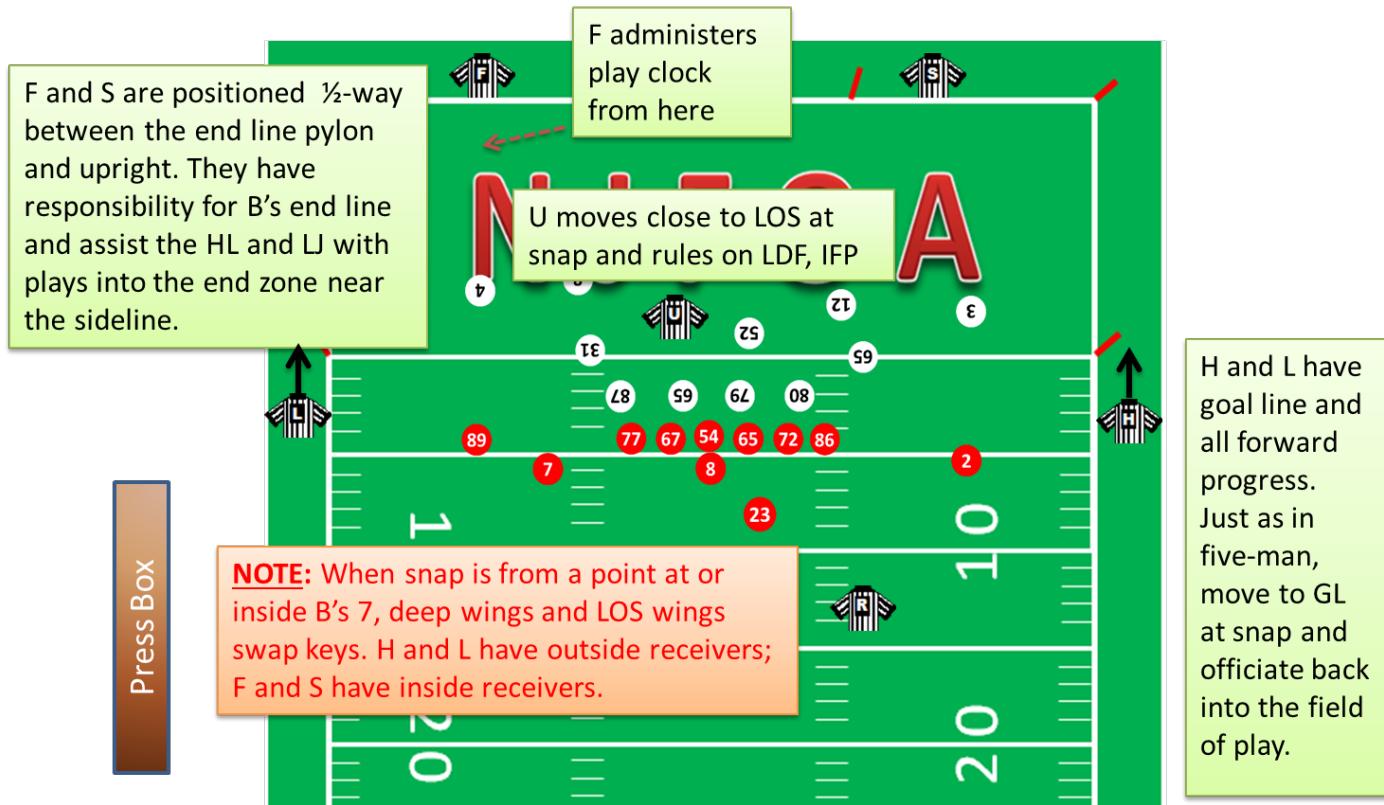
The Referee, Umpire, Head Linesman, and Line Judge will assume their normal positions. The **Field Judge and Side Judge** will position themselves on the end line outside the pylon (F near the numbers and moving to the sideline at the snap) and will maintain this position as Team A moves toward the goal line. At the snap, the Head Linesman and Line Judge should move to the goal line outside the pylon and officiate from that spot. They should be on the goal line before the runner crosses it. The Referee will take responsibility on ruling passes behind the line of scrimmage. The Umpire will take responsibility for determining whether the pass or passer crossed the line of scrimmage.

Side Judge and Field Judge: SJ initial position will be on the end line between the pylon and the goal post halfway between the sideline and the nearest upright (approximately 11 yards from the sideline). From the 7yd line to goal line the FJ initial position will be on the end line between the pylon and the goal post (approximately 11 yards from the sideline) then take one step in and officiate the 25 second count from there. Be responsible for end line to the center of the field on each side of the goal post. Assist the HL and LJ on passes that threaten the sideline. Cover the inside receivers to your side of field. When a pass is clearly going to the opposite side of the field, the off side official shall move in towards the center of the field along the end line to assist his partner in determining possession and in bounds/out of bounds status. FJ should take a step or two into the end zone from his position and administer the play clock procedure from there.

Linesman and Line Judge: Take regular position staying out of bounds at sideline. Cover your sideline to the end line, and be prepared to rule on passes at your sideline. The SJ and FJ will assist on passes in the end zone at the sideline. Cover the widest receiver to your side.

Line Judge and Linesman: When ball is snapped from 7 yard line and in, go immediately to the goal line, moving at a 45-degree angle so that you have established a 3-yard cushion off the pylon when you reach the goal line. This affords you a safe distance from the action and a wider viewing perspective of the goal line/sideline intersection." SJ and FJ are on the end lines between the pylons and goal posts. The goal line is left to the HL and LJ. They should be ready to pivot and

share the SL/EZ catch for TD/Interception. The **Umpire** moves closer to LOS at snap and must be in position to rule on illegal man downfield and illegal forward pass since the HL and LJ have vacated.



C. Sideline Plays Inside the Red Zone (20yd line)

On plays up a sideline and into B's end zone, FJ and LJ should make eye contact with each other (or SJ and HL on the other sideline) before giving any TD signal to be sure both agree that the runner did not step out of bounds. The short wings (HL and LJ) have the primary responsibility for ruling on this runner being out of bounds.

D. Goal Line Coming Out

When Team A snaps the ball on or inside its own five yard line, the Head Linesman and Line Judge should immediately move to the goal line outside the pylon. All other officials should officiate the play as normal. The **Umpire** moves closer to LOS at snap and must be in position to rule on ineligibles downfield and illegal forward pass since the HL and LJ have vacated the LOS.

XII. CHANGE OF QUARTER PROCEDURES

When time expires for the first or third periods, the Referee will hold the ball in one hand over his head to signal the official end of the period **after pausing** for a moment to make sure that no foul, obvious timing error, request for a coach-official conference or other irregularity has occurred. In hot or inclement weather the change of quarters is recommended as a good time to direct teams to their sidelines.

Once the period officially ends, the Referee, Umpire, and Side Judge will meet at the ball and agree and record possession, next down to be played, and the yard line where the ball is located. All officials will record the same information, and the Head Linesman will record the position of the clip. The Head Linesman will stay on his sideline and record all of the above and also the yard line where the clip is located. The Side Judge and Field Judge will at all times observe the teams, and help each team get turned around and located at the correct yard line. The Referee and Umpire shall move to the location of the ball at the new spot.

Prior to moving the chains, the Side Judge will proceed to the sideline and confirm the information with the Head Linesman and note the yard line where the clip is located. The Side Judge will observe the chains being turned around and then go to the opposite end of the field and make certain the clip is placed in the correct location.

The Change of Quarters procedure should take no more than one minute, and is timed by the **Side Judge**. After 45 seconds, the Side Judge should signal the Referee. The Referee should then signal the wing official to get the teams ready. After checking that all officials are in proper position and that the clock has been reset and that there is no other delay, the Referee will mark the ball ready for play.

XIII. HALF TIME PROCEDURES

When time expires for the second period, the Referee will hold the ball in one hand over his head to signal the official end of the period **after pausing** for a moment to make sure that no foul, obvious timing error, request for a coach-official conference or other irregularity has occurred.

The Game Clock Operator will put the length of the half time period on the Game Clock and wait for the Referee's signal. When all players and coaches have cleared the field, the Referee will signal the Game Clock Operator to start the Game Clock to time the half time period.

All officials will exit the field together and should neither avoid nor seek out coaches during the exit from the field. The **Side Judge** will keep backup time, or official time if the Game Clock is not functioning, for the half time period and the time will start when both teams have cleared the playing area. If there are any discussions between officials and coaches, the Referee will be the spokesman for the officiating crew.

Five minutes prior to the end of half time, the **Field Judge** will make contact with the Head Coach for the team on the press box side of the field, and the **Side Judge** will make contact with the Head Coach for the team on the side of the field opposite the press box. They will notify the respective Head Coaches of the time remaining in the half time. These officials will remain with their respective teams and make sure the teams return to the field in time for the mandatory warm-up period. These officials will give the proper options to the teams and get the choices from the Head Coaches concerning receiving, kicking, and defending a goal.

XIV. OVERTIME PROCEDURES

All varsity games must play an overtime period if, at the end of regulation time, the score is tied.

The overtime procedure to be used is the National Federation of State High School Association's overtime procedure specified in **THE NATIONAL FEDERATION FOOTBALL RULES BOOK** and **as modified by the NJSIAA (New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association.)** These procedures should be part of the pre-game.

When the score is tied at the end of regulation, all field officials will meet at the center of the field to review overtime procedures for a period of three minutes. The Game Clock Operator will turn off the game clock. After this three-minute intermission, the Head Linesman and Side Judge will go to the sideline opposite the press box, and the Line Judge and Field Judge will go to the press box sideline to inform the coaches of any special penalties that will be enforced, and of the number of timeouts each team has remaining (maximum one timeout per team per overtime). If requested by either coach, or to explain unusual situations, the Referee may go to **both** head coaches, home team first. The other officials will remain in the center of the field.

The Referee and Umpire will escort their respective Team Captains to the center of the field. The Head Linesman and Line Judge will obtain a game ball from their respective teams. When the coin toss is completed, the Umpire will place the offensive team's game ball on the appropriate yard line to begin the overtime.

Beginning with the third overtime, if a team scores a touchdown, it must attempt a two-point try.

XV. MISCELLANEOUS BUT IMPORTANT ITEMS

A. Forward Progress

IMPORTANT ! Give the runner/receiver every inch he has gained. Never allow the defense to negate forward progress by spotting the ball back to where the offensive player has been pushed. Always be alert as to the foremost point of the ball as the runner crosses the side line (i.e., give him all he has gained).

B. Pinching In

This phrase describes moving toward a downed runner, primarily by the Head Linesman and the Line Judge. Move toward the downed runner at right angles (perpendicular to the side line), never at an oblique angle. If you are slightly behind or ahead when the runner is tackled, reach the same yard line before going in toward the play. Use cross-field mechanics to assist with getting the proper spot of forward progress.

Mark the foremost point of the ball with the up-field foot positioned slightly forward. Hold this spot until the ball has been spotted or until another official has acknowledged that he has acquired the spot. When the Umpire or Referee accepts the spot from the spotting official, he should mirror his action by planting his up-field foot on the same yard line facing Team B's goal line and, when he is given the ball, spot the ball at the most forward point. The ball will then be spotted accurately. It should be noted that almost all forward progress spots will be taken from the wing men (Linesman or Line Judge). The only time the Umpire's spot will be acceptable is when the ball is dead at his feet **and both** wing men are **COMPLETELY** blocked out of the play.

If the dead ball spot is close enough to the line-to-gain that a measurement might be necessary, the spotting official should personally "pinch in" and move to the dead ball spot and place the ball at his own foot. Do NOT take the ball from a dead ball spot in the middle of the field and relay it to the spotting official in a side zone.

If the spot is not so close where a measurement might be necessary, the covering official should "pinch in" to give the spot of forward progress. However, when "pinching in," do not jump over players to reach the spot. Go in until pressure is felt (players at your side). Normally, it is much better to mark the spot from 5 to 7 yards away than to almost reach the downed runner and be knocked around by jostling and late arriving players. You cannot give accurate assistance in spotting the ball if you are being pushed around or knocked down. If you go in too deep, players can and will engage in action behind you and this should never be allowed to happen.

C. Dead Ball Period

Prior to the snap or awaiting the kickoff, all officials should be standing erect or be in a ready position. Officials should **NEVER** slouch or get in the habit of "hands on hips" while "leaning" on one foot. A professional appearance is given to coaches, players and fans if one assumes the "parade rest" position. This posture is highly recommended during time out periods.

During time outs the wing officials should be 10-12 yards from their respective huddles on the side line and be aware of substitutions being made. The Umpire should be over the ball, facing the offense and the Referee should be in the offensive backfield. The deep wings should be 8-10 yards deep in the defensive backfield, and the **Side Judge** is charged with timing the break in action. With 15 seconds remaining in the time-out, the **Side Judge** should signal the Referee, who in turn will signal the wing officials to bring in their teams.

D. Live Ball Period

During live ball action, keep in mind that each official has a specific area of responsibility and **never** should all eyes be on the ball. Be aware of the general location of the ball, but do not get in the habit of "zeroing in" on the ball. Be alert for unnecessary action away from the ball. When the ball carrier is downed, get in the habit of seeing the ball, knowing it is the ball and knowing the ball is dead in player possession **BEFORE BLOWING THE WHISTLE !**

E. Bean Bag Use

Deep Wing Officials shall carry two bean bags. All other officials shall carry at least one bean bag. The covering official will drop the bean bag to mark the designated line specified by rule and by the following mechanics. Officials should be familiar with these bean bag mechanics. It is not necessary to run to the actual spot to drop the bean bag. Once marked, remaining officials should not drop the bean bag just to „back-up" another official because confusion may result from multiple bean bag spots.

An official should drop his bean bag at the appropriate spot in the following situations:

- 1) Any spot of first touching during a free or scrimmage kick;
- 2) Any spot where a fumble occurs if the fumble is beyond the neutral zone;
3. The Referee will drop a bean bag when the QB is hit and loses control of the ball indicating he has ruled a fumble
- 3) The spot where a backward pass is thrown if it is beyond the neutral zone;
- 4) The spot of a catch, interception or recovery inside B's 5 yard line when the momentum rule applies
- 5) Forward progress when necessary; and
- 6) The spot where the kick ends (post scrimmage kick spot).

F. Fumble

The covering official observing a fumble should drop his bean bag to mark the spot of the fumble if the fumble occurs beyond the line of scrimmage. He should continue to officiate the remainder of the play. No bean bag is needed if the fumble occurs behind the line of scrimmage before team possession changes unless the Referee determines that the QB has lost control of the ball while attempting to pass.

If the play involves a scrambling pile of players attempting to recover the loose ball, be sure to see the ball before blowing the whistle. The first official to the pile should start digging for the ball in the pile. The second official should stop the clock and help in un-piling players. The remainder

of the officiating crew should monitor for dead ball infractions and keep other players from joining the pile.

G. Ball Persons

Ball persons should be stationed between the two wings, not behind the HL and LJ. Using this mechanic either wing official can retrieve and rotate the ball so that it can be spotted appropriately

H. Signals by Wing Officials

The Head Linesman and Line Judge should extend an arm horizontally toward the offensive team to signify that the offensive player *nearest* him is off the line of scrimmage. This signal should be held until the snap or at a time when the nearest player is no longer off the line.

The Head Linesman and Line Judge should extend his arm across his chest to indicate more than three linemen on his side of the snapper. This signal should be held until acknowledged by the other wing official.

The Head Linesman and Line Judge should assist an offensive player who is split out from the rest of the team in order to help him locate the line of scrimmage. If the offense is to the left of the wingman, he should extend his left foot to indicate Team A's line of scrimmage. If the offense is to the right, he should extend his right foot. Do not tell the player to move.

I. Complete and Incomplete Catch Signals

Wing and deep officials, along with the umpire may use the completed catch signal (two arms and hands over the head pulling them into the chest of the official two times) to signify that a player has made a catch. This signal may be used when appropriate. For instance: 1. Catch completed in the middle of the field as a player is diving for a ball and catches the ball just prior to it hitting the ground. 2. A player secures possession of a thrown ball just prior to going out of bounds and maintains possession. **This signal should never be used in the end zone to signal a completed catch. In the end zone use either the incomplete signal or touchdown signal.**

A wing official may use the "juggling signal" to signify that a player did not have possession of the ball prior to going out of bounds.

J. Penalty Administration

All officials have a role in the calling and enforcement of penalties.

The Calling Official: An official who sees a foul shall drop his penalty flag at the proper spot. If it is possible that enforcement may be from the spot of the foul, he should try to get the flag as close as possible to the actual spot of the foul. **For dead ball fouls or fouls simultaneous with the snap, the covering official should toss the flag overhead into the air and directly in front of him. For fouls that occur at the spot, drop the flag at the yd line of the foul. If it is necessary to throw a flag to a certain spot, then be very careful not to hit a player with the flag. It is better to miss the spot by a few feet than to hit a player with the flag!!!**

After the ball becomes dead, the official who called the foul should stop the clock and get the Referee's attention by giving short blasts of the whistle. If the calling official is covering the succeeding spot, he should not leave the spot until another official comes to him and takes the spot for him. Make sure another official is covering the spot of the foul. The official should communicate all the following important information to the Referee:

- 1) The foul that was called;
- 2) The offending team (jersey color, offense/defense, etc.);
- 3) The offending player's number;
- 4) Pertinent spots;
- 5) Status of ball when foul occurred (loose, pass, run, and possession);
- 6) Outcome of the play if applicable (first down, touchdown, short, fumble, etc.); 7) Status of clock on next play.

For the following fouls, the covering official may give the preliminary signal to the referee without consultation: encroachment, false start, pass interference (defense) and delay of game. The following guidelines must be adhered to when using this technique: Preliminary signals will only be given by the covering official when he/she is the only official making the call, and it is obvious that the foul has occurred. If two or more officials are involved in a penalty situation, then they must consult and inform the R, who will then make the preliminary signal and enforce the penalty, if accepted.

The calling officials should record all pertinent information on his game card including the player and team who fouled, whether the fouling team was on offense or defense, whether the penalty was accepted or declined, the foul and specific characteristics, the quarter, and time of the foul.

Referee: Give the time out signal and get the full information from the calling official. Give the preliminary signal to the press box side of the field, except that no preliminary signal is needed following dead ball fouls involving the line of scrimmage (false start, encroachment, etc.) and enforcement is obvious. Give the options to the offended Team's Captain and get his choice. If the choice is obvious, simply inform him what the result will be. Determine the enforcement spot. After the penalty has been determined, and while the Umpire is marking off the yardage and spotting the ball, the Referee should take a position clear of other players and then announce and signal the penalty and enforcement to the press box. Do NOT announce the number of the offending player.

The Referee is responsible for informing all officials of any player who commits an unsportsmanlike foul, and all officials will record the numbers of such players.

Following the game, he should review all penalty information with the crew and prepare a foul report to be turned into the Assignment Secretary.

Umpire: Secure the ball, verify enforcement spot and distance with the Referee and proceed to mark off the penalty. On a properly marked field, do not step off the yardage except for the first and final yard.

Head Linesman: Be ready to move the line-to-gain markers and be certain of the next down number. Mark off the penalty along the sideline to verify enforcement with Umpire. This serves as a check on the enforcement. Relay penalty information to the appropriate Coach as soon as possible.

Line Judge: Mark and hold the enforcement spot. Mark off the penalty along the sideline to verify enforcement with Umpire, but do so after the Umpire has already done so. This serves as a check on the enforcement. Relay penalty information to the appropriate Coach as soon as possible.

Field Judge and Side Judge: Help in retrieving the ball, holding the succeeding spot and or spot of the foul, and recovering the penalty marker. Assist in relaying information about the penalty to the Head Coaches.

All Officials: Accordion in at the end of the play as usual. Assist in obtaining information about what happened on the foul and relay the details to the Head Coaches. Make a mental note as to

whether the clock should be started on the ready or at the snap. Make sure the penalty has been assessed properly in all respects. Communicate with other officials to make sure the entire crew agrees on the upcoming down number.

XVI. END OF THE GAME

The jurisdiction of the officials ends when the Referee declares the score final by holding the ball over his head. Unless the score is tied and there will be overtime played, there cannot be a dead ball foul following the end of regulation time. All officials will immediately exit the field, and the Clock Operators will rejoin the crew as soon as possible. Do not discuss the game on the field with anyone. Do not make any public statements about the game. All officials should give their foul information to the Referee so he can prepare his game foul report. The Referee should report any flagrant irregularity, player disqualification or coach disqualification to the Assignment Secretary as soon as possible following the game.

XVII. GAME CLOCK OPERATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

A. *Pre-game*

The clock operator should report to the officials' dressing room at the stadium at least 45 minutes before game time for the following purposes:

1. To synchronize timer's watch with official game time as established by the official responsible for timing.
2. To advise officials whether the clock operator will be in the press box or on the sideline. Determine procedure for communication with timer and check this procedure prior to the game.
3. To discuss coordination of starting, stopping and adjusting the clock in accordance with the playing rules.

B. *Timing Pre-game and Intermittions*

The field clock is normally started 30 minutes before game time. The halftime intermission will start on the referee's signal when the players and officials leave the field. All pre-game and halftime activities will be synchronized with the official game clock. The mandatory three-minute warm-up period will be put on the clock after the intermission time has elapsed.

C. *Be Prepared!*

The clock operator shall have an extra stopwatch available. In case of failure of the game clock, the clock operator shall immediately contact the officials, giving them the correct data regarding the official time. The official responsible for timing will then pick up the correct game time on the stopwatch. Should the field clock become inoperative and subsequently repaired, it will not be used again until the next period or when the referee determines it is operational. In this case set the clock to zero or turn it off. The public-address announcer will indicate the field clock will not be official until the malfunction is corrected and subsequent announcement made on the PA system. **The Side Judge** will be responsible for keeping time on the field if the electronic clock becomes inoperable.

D. Game procedures

1. The clock operator is an integral member of the officiating crew and game administration. Unfair advantages occur when the game clock is not started or stopped correctly by rule. Great care must be exercised to see that no time lag occurs in starting or stopping the clock.
2. On all free kicks, the nearest official(s) will signal the legal touching of the ball by indicating that the clock should start.
3. The official who declares the ball dead will be the first official to signal a time-out when a first down occurs.
4. Any official may signal a team time-out; therefore, the operator should be alert to stop the clock.
5. On plays near a boundary line, unless an official so signals, if a pass is caught out of bounds, the incompletion signal will stop the clock. **Note:** On plays near the out-of-bounds line and in advance of the line to gain, an official **shall not give a winding signal** to indicate the ball is inbounds. Signal stop-the-clock signal for an apparent first down. **Officials are encouraged to not give the wind signal unless a player's progress is stopped and then he is driven out of bounds or is downed in bounds close to sideline. (one yd or less) Be alert for both signals.**
6. The clock operator will automatically stop the clock following a touchdown, field goal, touchback or safety after the appropriate signal has been made.
7. After the clock has been stopped, the referee will start it again on the referee's start-the-clock signal and if no such signal is given, the operator will start it on the snap. **If the Referee stops the clock, when he shouldn't – you stop the clock. If the referee starts the clock when he shouldn't – you start the clock. If a mistake is made, he will be responsible.**
8. The referee may start the clock again before the ready-for-play signal.
9. The try is not a timed down.
10. There are instances when a period shall be extended by an un-timed down. During these extensions, leave the clock at :00. Do not reset the clock for the next period until the referee declares the period over by facing the press box and holding the ball overhead.
11. If overtime is to be played, the Clock Operator will turn the clock off during this period.

E. NJSIAA Modified Timing Rule - Procedures

If in the 2nd half one team is leading by 35 or more points, the modified timing rule procedures go into effect.

1. Clock continues to run except under the following conditions:
 - a. score
 - b. time out (official or team)
 - c. penalty enforcement

If the score differential drops below 35 points, then regular timing rules go back into effect.

Clock operators are required to operate the game clock as their first and highest priority. Therefore, they must pay undivided attention to the action on the field. Their secondary responsibility is to keep the down, distance and score. Since it is a secondary responsibility, there may be times where accuracy in this area may be a bit off. Wrong

down and distance is not nearly as bad as the wrong time!! Since schools are paying a full varsity fee, you must adhere to these guidelines.

APPENDIX I - REFEREE PRE-GAME CONFERENCE WITH HEAD COACH

This conference should be held thirty minutes before game time. The home team coach should be conferred with first.

A. REFEREE:

1. Correct time.
2. Pre-game toss time.
3. Equipped according to rules/sportsmanship statement/profanity
4. Any unusual game situations.
5. Secure names and numbers of Captains.
6. Ask either coach if he will play any left handed quarterbacks, as well as kicker's foot. If so, record that player's jersey number on your game card.
7. Length of half.
8. Notifications at end of half time.
9. New rules questions from coach.
10. Ask for adult chain crew.
11. Keep sidelines clear and coaches in coaching box.
12. Post-game escort.

B. UMPIRE

1. Inspect player equipment.
2. Inspect player's casts, tapes and bandages.
3. Record numbers of players with illegal equipment.

APPENDIX II - PRE-GAME CONFERENCE WITH CREW

The Referee will conduct the Pre-Game Conference. However, in his absence the Linesman will assume this responsibility.

A. GENERAL:

1. Review rule changes.
2. Coordinate Watches with Field Judge.
3. Review any special bulletins issued by the assignor or the chapter.

B. TOSS OF COIN:

1. Actual three minutes before kickoff at mid-field.
2. Keep all players going on field for toss, except for captains (4-maximum).
3. All officials meet at fifty and record result of coin toss.
4. Break briskly to positions for kick-off. Outside officials check to insure that sidelines are clear.

C. KICKOFF:

1. All officials give referee signal when ready.
2. Discuss field and sideline coverage.
3. Anticipate on side kick, bean bag.
4. Starting clock.

5. Coverage on long run.
6. Fair catch - valid and invalid signals.
7. First touching.
8. Blocking below waist.

D. SCRIMMAGE KICK FORMATION:

1. Kicks:
 - a. Touched or untouched by K or R after crossing neutral zone.
 - b. Kicks that do not cross neutral zone
2. Long or short kicks out of bound, Officials responsibilities.
3. First touching.
4. Catch or recovery by R or K.
5. Fair catch signal.
6. Linesman responsibility if kick cross line.
7. Opportunity to catch kick.
8. Roughing the kicker.
9. Muff or fumble.

E. RUNNING PLAYS:

1. HL and LJ to rule on forward point of ball. Stay parallel with runner.
2. Caution on close measurements. Wing officials with forward progress spots on plays close to the line-to-gain or goal line should move in all the way to the dead ball itself to give the spot unless this is impossible.
3. HL and LJ position initially on sideline.
Watch for crack-back action.
4. HL and LJ check for seven men on offensive line (hand signals).
5. HL and LJ man in motion away from you.
6. Referee, Umpire, Field Judge, Side Judge, clean up on plays in side zone and outside sidelines.
7. False Starts - Umpire, Lineman, and Line Judge - No player permitted in or beyond neutral zone.
8. Free-blocking zone.
9. Stop clock on first downs.
10. SEE LEATHER BEFORE BLOWING WHISTLE.
11. Illegal snap ball remains dead.

F. GOAL-LINE OR SHORT YARDAGE PLAYS:

1. HL and LJ forward progress and must cover goal line. FJ and SJ take end line.
2. See leather.
3. Signal score (HL and LJ responsibility).
4. Referee never signal score from behind runner.
5. Umpire never signal score from ahead of runner unless if necessary in busted field goal / PAT situation.(Can help on plays at feet.)

G. FORWARD PASS PLAYS:

1. Linesman and Line Judge know eligible receivers.
2. Umpire, ineligible lineman. Know if pass crosses neutral zone. (Wings can help.)
3. Referee, eligible backs.
4. Run-pass option coverage. Referee takes passer to line of scrimmage.
Know if pass is legally thrown.
5. Referee covers passer.
6. HL and LJ responsible for quick quarterback pass (forward or backward).
7. FJ and SJ should be ahead of all passes.
8. Zone coverage. 9. Screen passes.

10. Discuss catch and forward progress.
11. Momentum rule inside five yard line.
12. Roughing Passer.
13. Discuss eligible receiver going out of bounds.
14. HL and LJ have forward progress and sideline from end line to end line.

H. FIELD GOAL AND TRY FOR POINT:

1. Field Goal - FJ and SJ responsible for ruling and signaling on all attempts.
2. Referee responsible for action on kicker and holder.
3. SJ has whistle.
4. Discuss fumble by holder.
5. Unsuccessful kicks.
6. Ball must go between not over uprights and over cross bar to be successful.

I. MEASUREMENTS:

1. Always place ball parallel to sideline for measurement.
2. LJ gives spot for HL.
3. Umpire stretches chain.
4. Referee makes decision.
5. Linesman put clip on yard line nearest rear rod. (Have down marker put in place of forward front stake before measurement.)
6. Field Judge sees that ball is not moved prior to measurement.

J. FOULS:

1. Know status of ball when foul occurred.
2. Referee give foul verbally to captain - Umpire to check - official calling foul stay by Referee to be sure he understands foul.
3. Signal foul before explaining options - again after acceptance or declination.
4. FJ and SJ to report foul and number to coach.
5. Captain must exercise penalty option before going to sideline during a time-out.
6. Umpire step off penalty.
7. HL and LJ assure correct enforcement with Umpire.
8. Review fouls which extend periods.
9. Official calling foul is primarily responsible for seeing that the Referee and Umpire assess penalty properly, but the entire crew is responsible for getting it right.

K. TIMING AND TIME OUTS:

1. If a team is attempting to run out the clock, then the umpire should remind the QB of where the FJ is positioned. Also, the wing officials should remind the coaches.
2. SJ times length of time outs. FJ times twenty-five second count, and holds arm up with five seconds remaining and begins chop.
3. Position of officials during time out.
4. All officials record time outs. Referee notify coaches and captains after third time out in each half.
5. All officials must observe the clock at all times. Do not allow a mistake to occur.
6. Procedure at end of period.
7. If time is kept on field, stop game and notify benches when four minutes remain in period.
8. Officials should not gather together for bull sessions during time out.

L. SUBSTITUTIONS:

1. LJ and HL, FJ and SJ, be alert for replaced players leaving field by any sideline except that of their team area.
2. All officials alert for substitution situations.
3. Substitution rules. (Replaced players leave immediately.)

M. MISCELLANEOUS:

1. Referee blow whistle and give arm signal whenever he declares ball ready for play.
2. Dealing with coaches (all officials).
3. Emphasis:
 - a. Keep sideline area clear.
 - b. Watch for blocking below waist.
 - c. SEE WRITING ON THE BALL BEFORE YOU BLOW THE WHISTLE.
4. Counting of players (FJ, and SJ count defense; R and U count offense). Give signals.
5. Inadvertent whistle.
6. Call what you see but see what you call.
7. Don't turn your back on tough calls.
8. A mistake by one is a mistake by all. Don't allow your co-officials to make an obvious mistake.
9. Be in position for all calls. Hustle and be alert.

N. POST GAME DUTIES:

1. Join other officials and leave field together.
2. Use good judgment in any remarks to anyone.
3. Make sure to complete game report to be filed with the assigner and recorded for end of the season evaluation.

APPENDIX III - POSITION KEYS

For complete coverage, all officials must cover their assigned keys at the snap. For the deep wings (FJ and SJ), keying Team A eligible receivers is their primary focus though downfield blocking by their primary key also needs their attention. For the referee and umpire, it's blocking keys that become their main responsibility. The short wings (LJ and HL) need to focus on both in order to be effective.

Referee. Assume the position described in this manual. Key on the quarterback and the tackle on your side of the formation. Though assisting in watching the interior line blocking, the referee's primary key is the quarterback, especially when threatened by a defender and under duress. He retains this responsibility throughout the play, until and unless the quarterback/runner advances beyond the neutral zone where a Wing Official picks up coverage.

Umpire. Ensure legal snap. Has primary responsibility for action by and against the center, both guards, and the tackle opposite the referee. Officiate at and behind the point of attack.

Head Linesman and Line Judge. At the snap, key on inside receivers and be ready to assist with blocking by the tackle on your side of the formation if the situation permits it. *Except from the 7yd line or closer to the GL in which the key will be the widest receiver

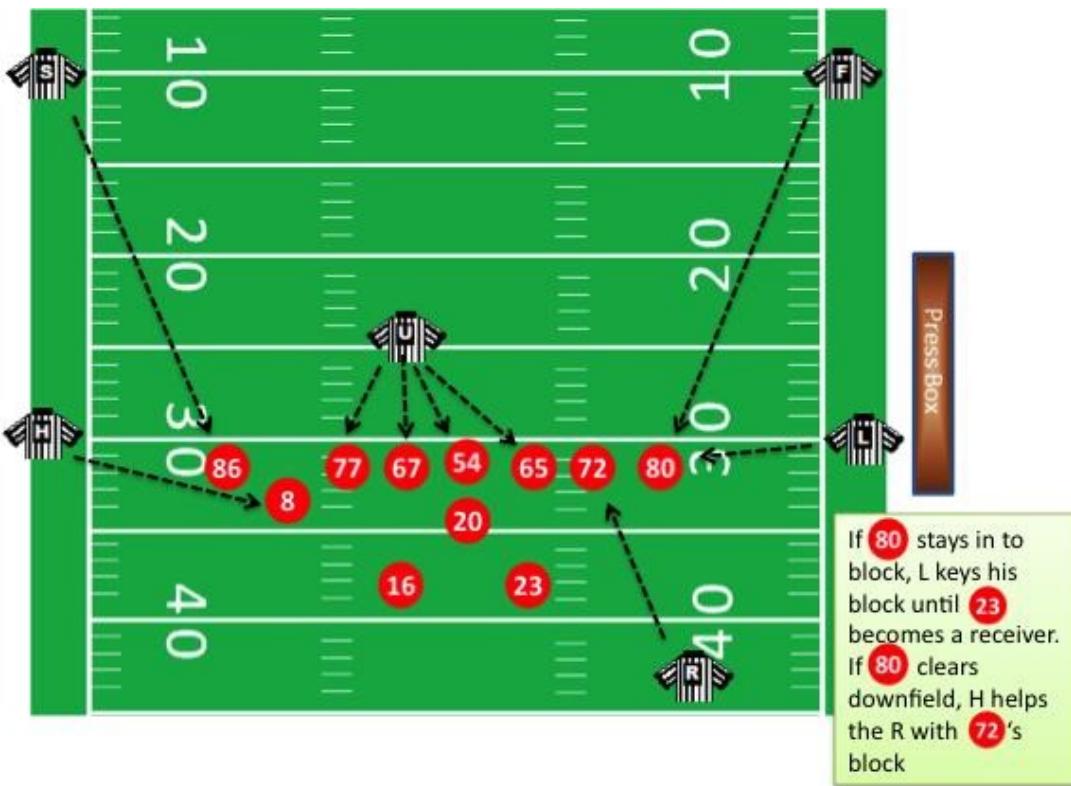
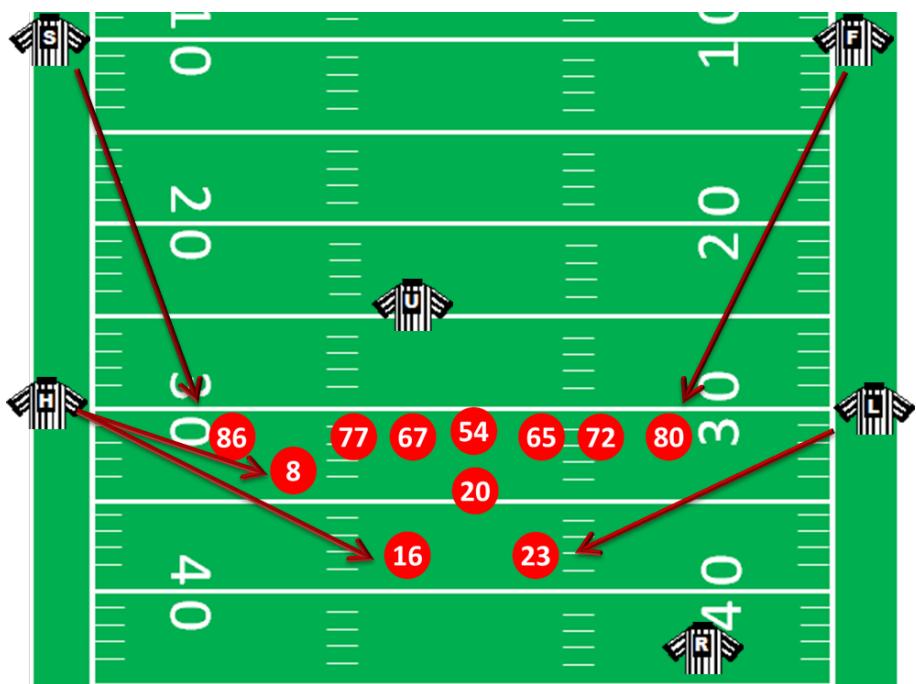
Field Judge and Side Judge: At the snap, key on the widest receiver. *Except from the 7yd line or closer to the GL in which the key will be the inside receiver

All officials: Stay with your key(s) for initial contact by or against him. Do not release your key or go to zone too early. Do not 'tunnel vision' your key. Only after initial contact should you go to zone coverage.

Shifts and motion. Your keys are set at the snap. Therefore, if there is a shift or motion before the snap, your keys may change. **BE ALERT FOR SHIFTS OR MOTION PRIOR TO THE SNAP.**

Examples of the application of these keys are illustrated on the following twelve diagrams:

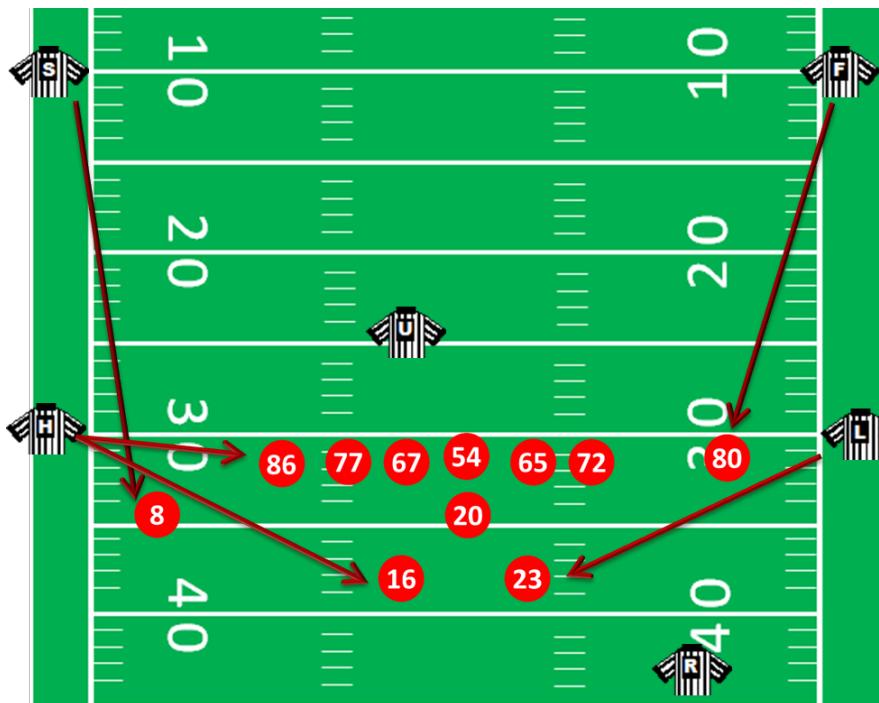
Strength to H; slot receiver – strength side



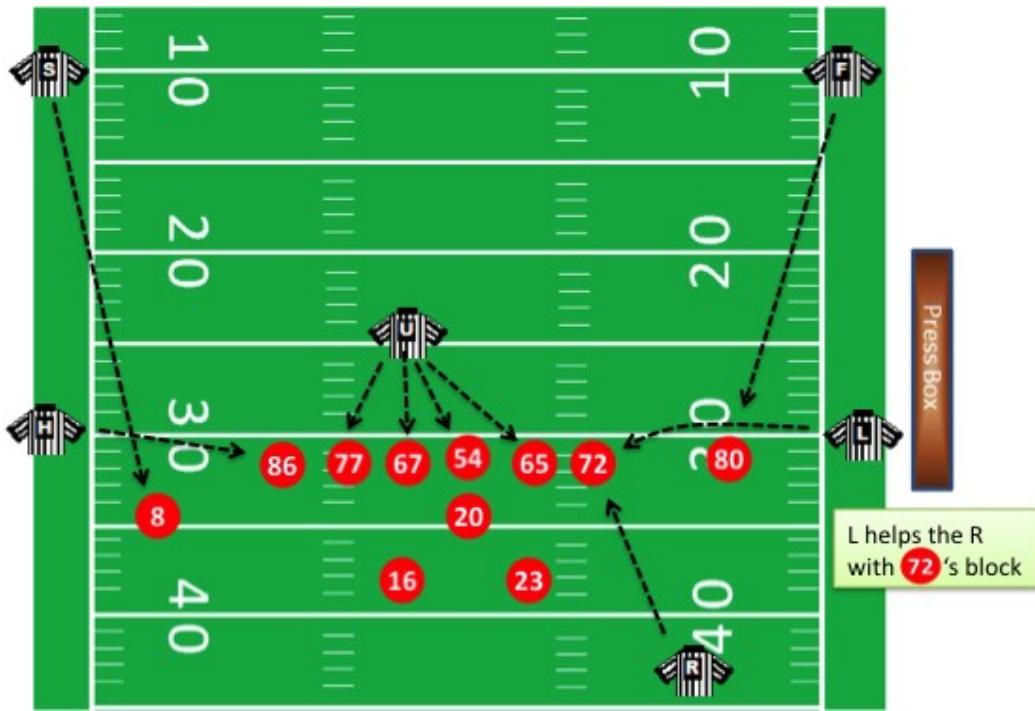
Eligible Receiver Keys

Blocking keys

Strength to H; pro-set

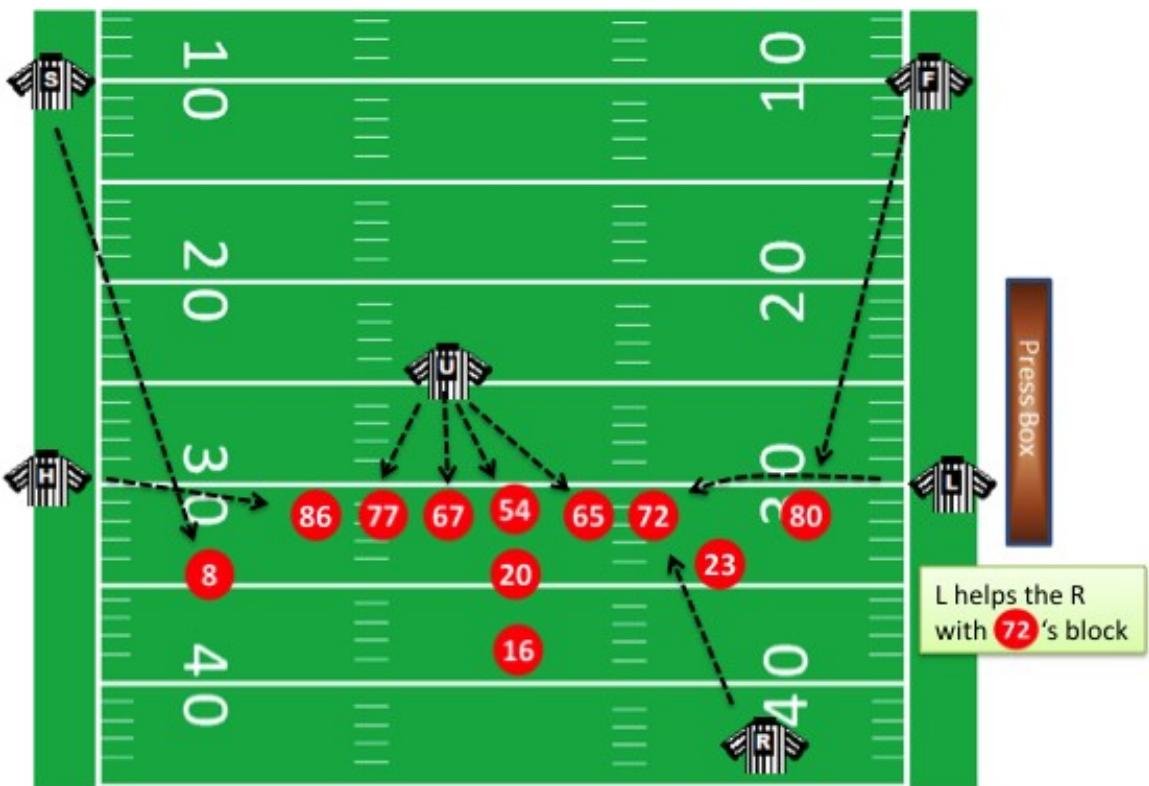
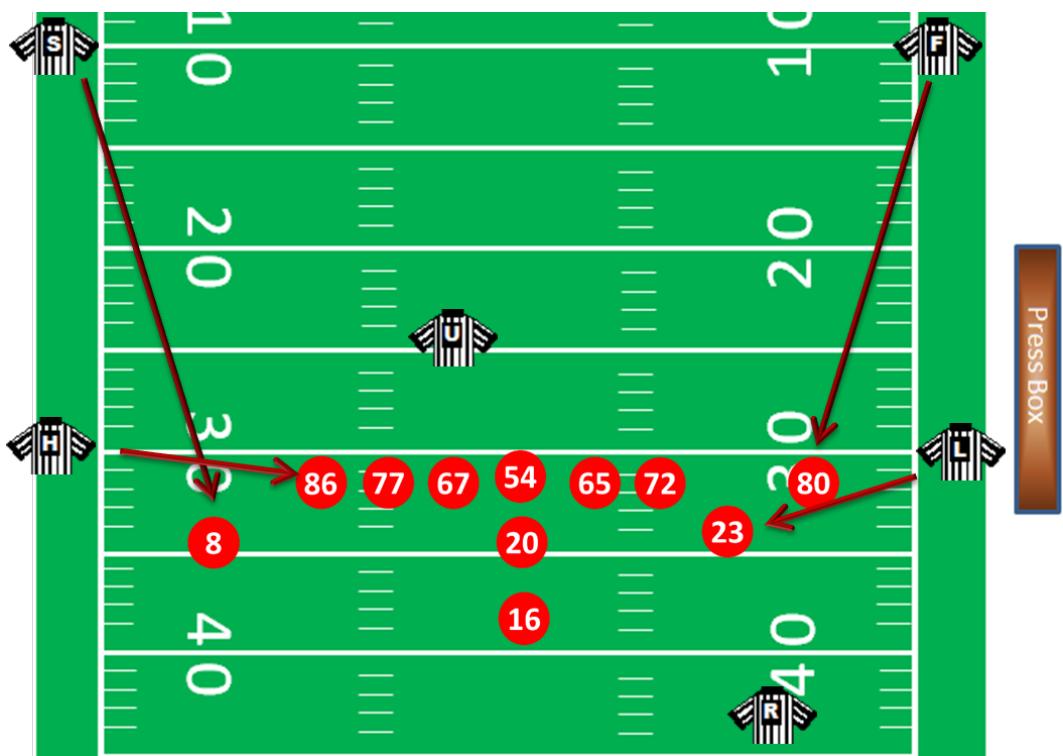


Eligible
Receiver
Keys



Blocking
keys

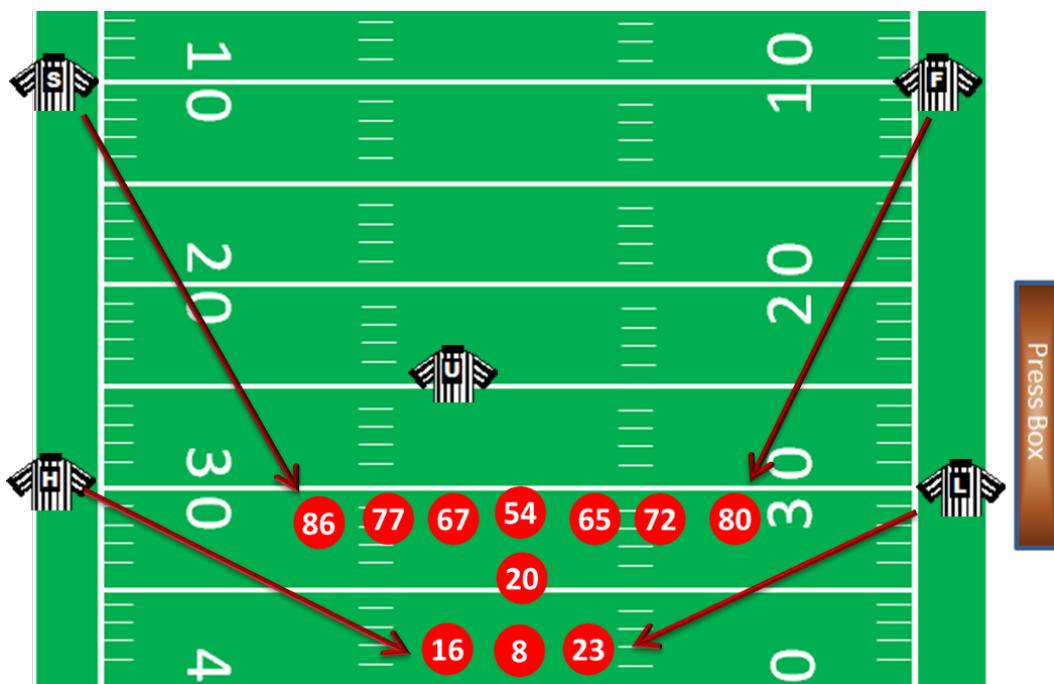
Balanced ("Double-double"); slot to L



Eligible Receiver Keys

Blocking
keys

Full-house; no backs outside the tackles

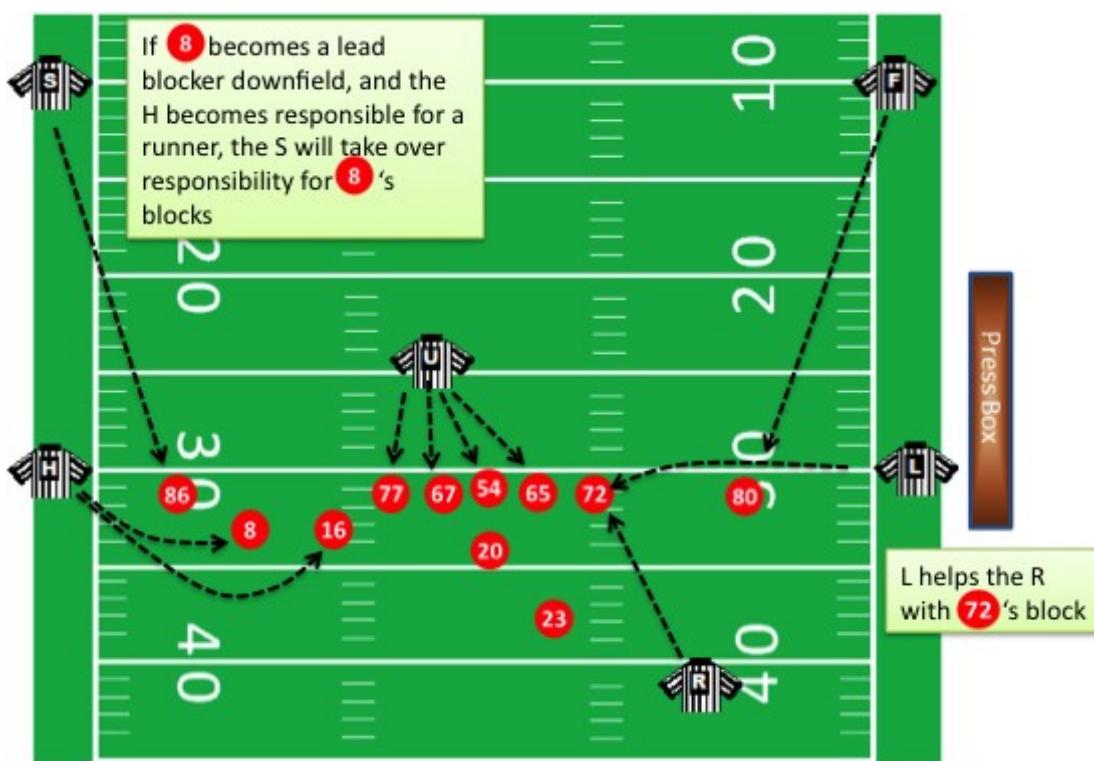
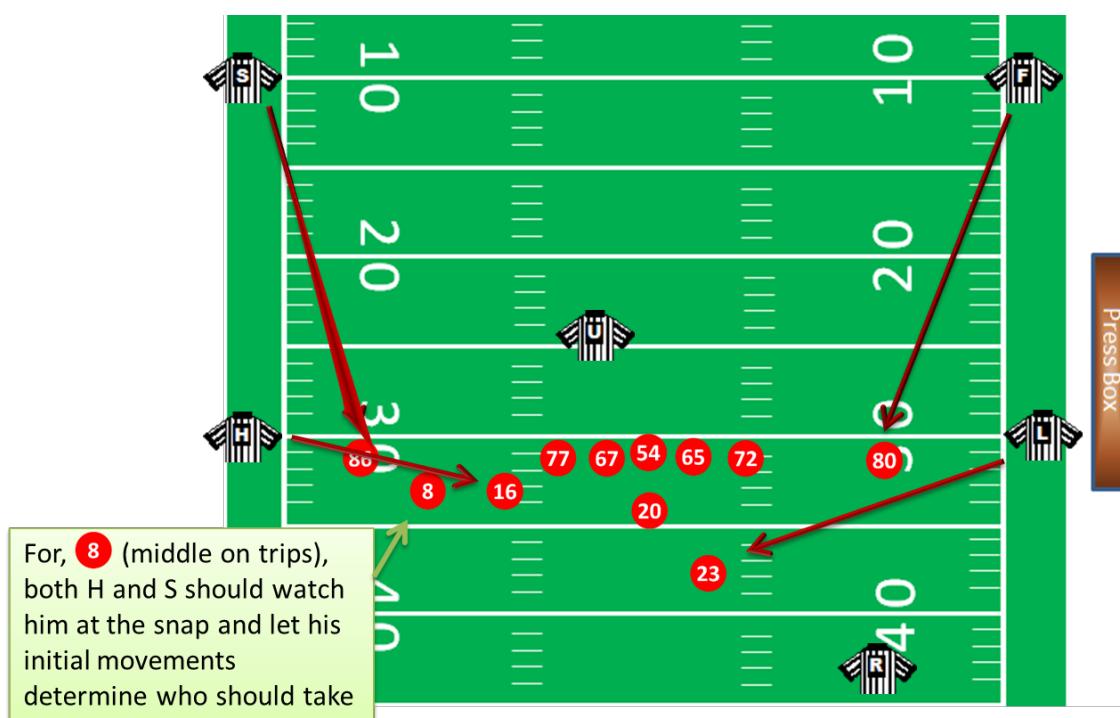


Eligible
Receiver
Keys

Blocking
keys

Trips

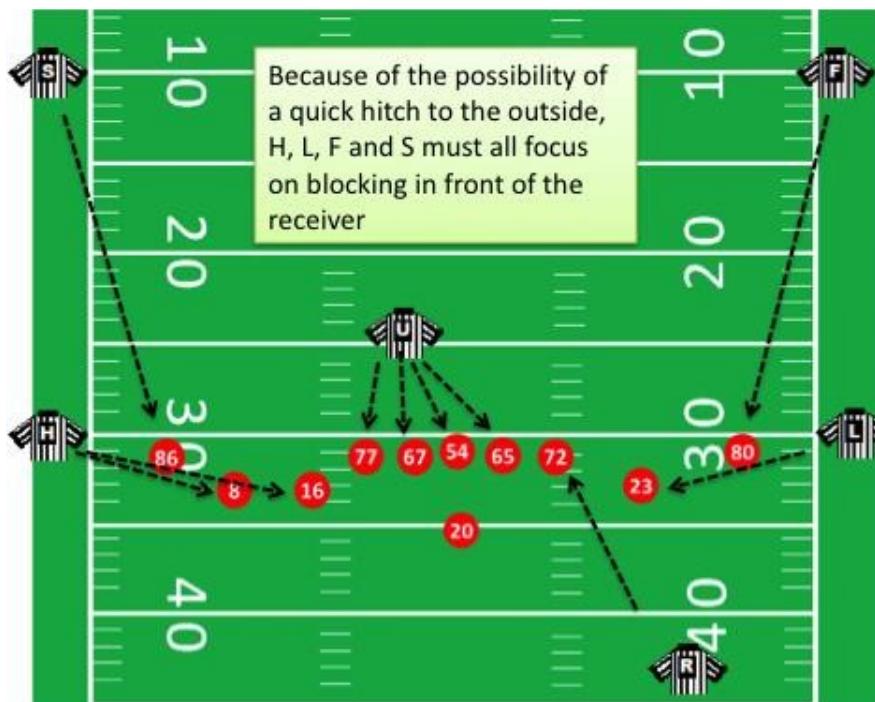
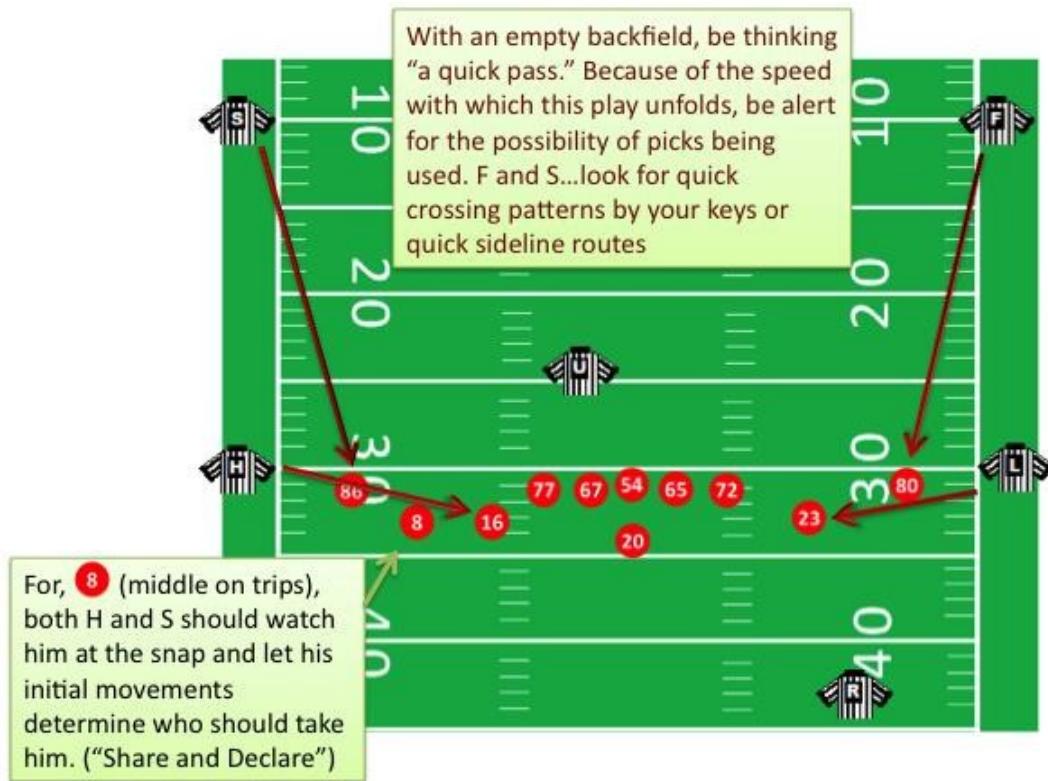
Eligible Receiver keys



Blocking keys

Empty Backfield (expect something "quick")

Eligible Receiver keys

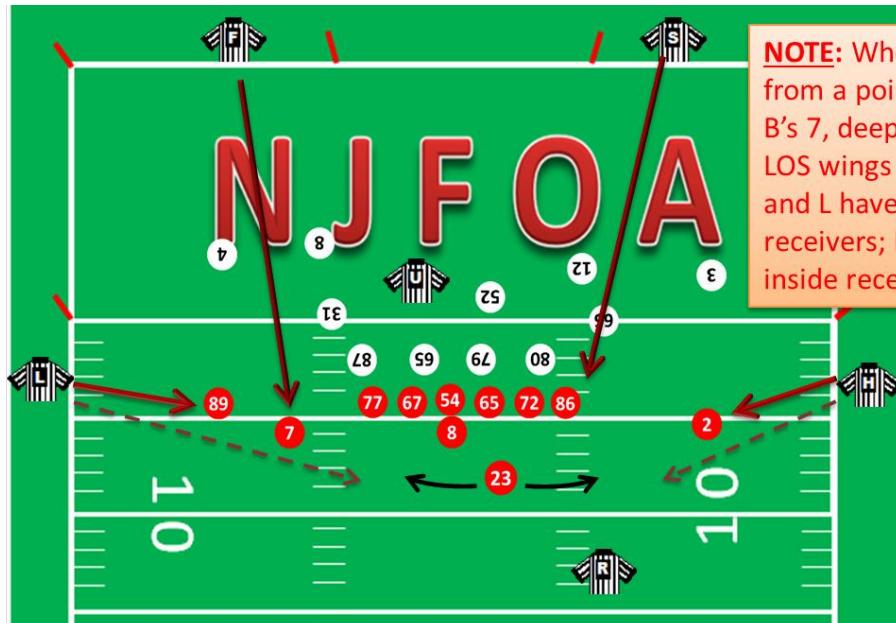


Blocking keys

At Or Inside B's 7 Yard Line

NOTE: This situation is an exception to the Passing Keys assignments previously shown, occurring when the snap is from, or inside of, B's 7.

“DOUBLE – DOUBLE”

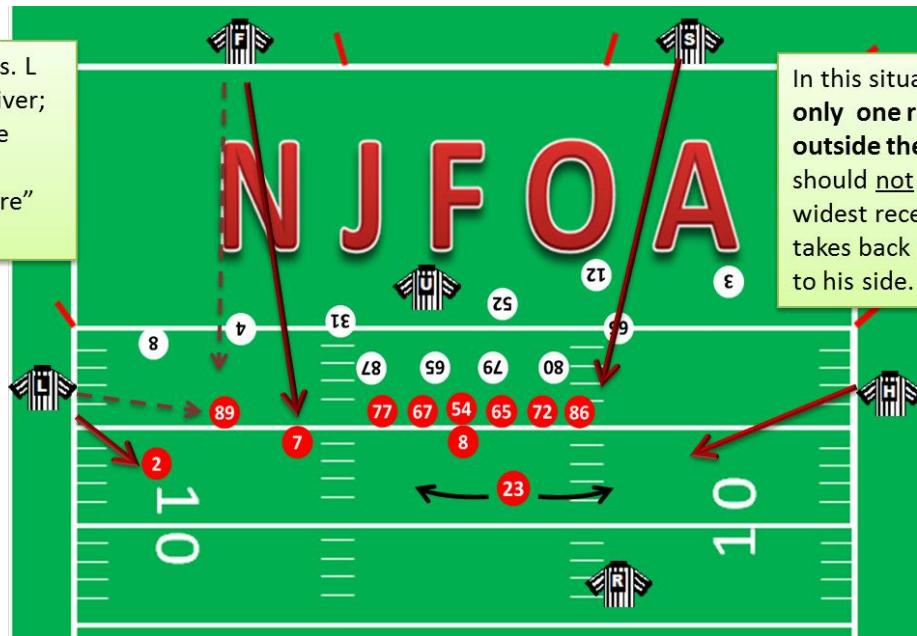


Press Box

TRIPS

F and L swap keys. L has outside receiver; F and S has inside receiver. L and F “share and declare” on 89

Eligible Receiver keys



Because we are deep in B's end, expect something ‘quick.’ Do not zone up in these situations. All officials should prepare to stay ‘man’ with their keys throughout the down