



2021

# Football Officials Manual

## For a Crew of 3 Officials

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# **Football Officials Manual For A Crew of 3 Officials**

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**Texas Association of Sports Officials**



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## **PURPOSE OF MANUAL**

The manual of football officiating is designed to make available to each and every TASO official, detailed information regarding the officiating techniques which, through evaluation and studied development, have come to be recognized as accepted standards of officiating performance.

This manual is an authoritative guide to the best in football officiating, hopeful that it will assist all officials in maintaining their effectiveness and making ready use of their potentialities.

This manual is designed to provide the best possible officiating techniques for TASO officials working Texas High School Football. TASO officials are expected to use the mechanics specified in this manual and are not authorized to deviate in any manner.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY OF APPROVED 2021 MANUAL CHANGES .....	iv
OFFICIATING REQUISITES .....	1
SECTION 1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES .....	2
SECTION 2. STANDARD UNIFORM .....	5
SECTION 3. OFFICIATING PROCEDURES .....	8
SECTION 4. PRE-GAME DUTIES ON FIELD .....	10
SECTION 5. TOSS.....	12
SECTION 6. GENERAL GAME DUTIES .....	13
SECTION 7. TIMING .....	17
SECTION 8. USE OF BEAN BAG AND HAT .....	22
SECTION 9. FREE KICKS .....	23
SECTION 10. PLAYS FROM SCRIMMAGE.....	25
SECTION 11. RUNNING PLAYS .....	27
SECTION 12. FORWARD PASSES.....	28
SECTION 13. GOAL LINE PLAYS .....	30
SECTION 14. FUMBLES .....	31
SECTION 15. SCRIMMAGE KICKS.....	32
SECTION 16. FIELD GOAL ATTEMPTS.....	34
SECTION 17. TIME-OUTS .....	36
SECTION 18. MEASUREMENTS .....	38
SECTION 19. CALLING FOULS & ENFORCEMENT.....	39
SECTION 20. CLOSE OF A PERIOD & INTERMISSIONS .....	41
SECTION 21. INTERMISSION BETWEEN HALVES .....	42
SECTION 22. POST-GAME DUTIES .....	43
SECTION 23. SIX-PLAYER FOOTBALL .....	44
SECTION 24. TASO OFFICIATING PHILOSOPHIES .....	53
PRE-GAME CONFERENCE IN DRESSING ROOM .....	65
APPROVED SIGNALS.....	66

# **SUMMARY OF APPROVED 2021 MANUAL CHANGES**

**HEAD LINE-JUDGE:** Head Linesman title has been changed to Head Line-Judge and will still be referred to as **H**.

**PRE-GAME DUTIES ON FIELD:** Anytime players of both teams are on the field, up to 60 minutes prior to the scheduled game time, at least one official shall be present on the field. (see page 10)

**10-SECOND RUNOFFS:** Created a signal the **R** can use to signal to clock operator for a 10-second runoff (see page 17).

**SCRIMMAGE KICKS (PUNTS):** Modified the position before the snap for the **R** on scrimmage kick (punt) plays to be slightly behind punter. (SECTION 15. – ARTICLE 1, see page 32)

## OFFICIATING REQUISITES

COURAGE, A WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF THE RULES AND MECHANICS, HUSTLE, AND TACT are indispensable to a good official, but none any more important than – GOOD JUDGMENT!

**RULES AND MECHANICS:** An overall familiarity with the rules and full understanding of mechanics are necessary for the proper conduct of a game. The intent of each rule must be kept in mind. Each official should seek the happy medium between strict adherence and undue laxity. Situations arise in a game which cannot be foreseen and which cannot be covered in a rule book or manual. Football “sense” must supersede the most technical application of the rules.

**COURAGE:** A smooth running game suddenly can get out of hand as a result of an overly officious attitude toward players and coaches, or an undue laxity of enforcement. Conversations with a coach or a player should always be courteous without sacrificing dignity. If something is said or done which warrants a penalty, penalization should be done unobtrusively and without dramatization. A game is kept under control by proper administration of the rules, which can be best accomplished if no impression of militant supervision is created.

**HUSTLE, BUT DON'T HURRY:** Hurry should not be mistaken for hustle. There are times it is proper to speed the tempo of the game in order to get the ball back in play after an incomplete pass, to take a position on a foul situation, to prepare for a measurement, etc. Never hurry an injured man off the field. Never rush to get another ball before the play is over. Don't move the ball to the inbounds line without first checking for the need of a measurement. Don't pressure a captain's decision on a difficult option. Precision and care should be exercised in all situations. Hustle is essential. HURRY is a hazard.

**TACT, BUT NOT SUBMISSION:** Tact is necessary but should never be a justification for retreat from a position properly taken or a decision correctly rendered.

**POISE, BUT NOT INDIFFERENCE:** Staying loose is an asset in officiating, as in any other phase of a sport where fast reflexes are required. A relaxed appearance is a great help if it gives the impression of confidence. Care, however, should be taken to avoid the appearance of indifference. The poised official is able to remain inconspicuous as he moves to the right place at the right time.

## **SECTION 1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

### **ARTICLE 1. KNOWLEDGE OF THE RULES:**

Rule mastery will be perfected over time, and must be supplemented by ability to interpret rules and editorial changes correctly. These abilities are acquired through devotion of time and study.

### **ARTICLE 2. PHYSICAL CONDITION:**

Football officiating is difficult and exhausting and requires 100 percent efficiency of mind and body. An annual physical examination should be a personal requisite to ensure your health, thus allowing you to assess your ability to officiate.

### **ARTICLE 3. MENTAL REACTIONS:**

Decisions must be instantaneous and rulings announced without delay. To ensure improved instinctive reaction to play situations, continue to review the different combinations of circumstances that may occur.

### **ARTICLE 4. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Each official must have a thorough knowledge of the duties of his own position and must also be fully informed concerning the duties of each of the other officials. He/she should be prepared to assume any one of the other positions whenever circumstances require rearrangement of assignments.

#### **AN OFFICIAL MUST:**

- A. Know the down and yardage prior to each snap.
- B. Be ready to assist any official that is temporarily out of position.
- C. Observe erroneous procedure or rulings of other officials and attempt prevention and correction whenever possible. Under no circumstances should an argument develop on the field between officials.
- D. Know the prescribed signals and when and how they should be used.
- E. Secure a new ball if appropriate, after all action has ceased and be able to handle and pass the ball properly.
- F. Be alert to happenings away from the ball when play has left his immediate area.
- G. Call time-out for any player who is obviously injured or disabled. Never hurry the treatment of an injured player. Recognition of injured players is the concern of all game officials. Clock can be started if time-out is not necessary.

### **ARTICLE 5. SIGNALS:**

All signals should be given promptly, distinctly and conspicuously as they are the non-verbal communications tools we use to inform.

### **ARTICLE 6. ENFORCEMENT:**

All rules should be strictly and fairly enforced. There shall be no deviation from the NCAA Football Rules with UIL exceptions.

### **ARTICLE 7. HUSTLE:**

Keep the game moving smoothly from start to finish. Do not permit haste to interfere with duties or correct determinations.



**ARTICLE 8. BOXING IN:**

Smart officiating requires keeping the players "boxed in" and avoidance of officials being "boxed in". "Outside looking in" is essential for sideline and end line coverage. The ultimate goal is to have each play viewed from more than one direction.

**ARTICLE 9. OFF BALL OFFICIATING:**

Officials should not be ball watchers. The official nearest the action should take the primary responsibility for the ball, but should also be alert to action around the ball. The official that is the farthest distance away should take the widest, "big picture" view of the action, looking for unsportsmanlike acts and threats to player safety. The officials in between should work in "rings". The closer you are to the ball, the smaller your "ring" is.

**ARTICLE 10. COOPERATION:**

Team work is essential among officials. If a ruling is puzzling, relay explanation to press box. Never issue direct or indirect newspaper interviews, statements or stories concerning games in which you are an official. Continuous verbal and non-verbal communication between all officials during the game is essential for effective game administration.

**ARTICLE 11. DON'T DISCUSS:**

Do not discuss with a coach the play or players of his opponents in a game which you will officiate or are officiating. Coaches and other school representatives are expected to submit reports on work of officials to the governing authority and not to make evaluations through conversation with other officials or through public statements.

**ARTICLE 12. OFFICIALS' "ABCs"**

- A - Ability to handle players in firm, fair, and friendly fashion.
- B - Knowledge, understanding and correct application of the rules.
- C - Knowledge of an adherence to approved mechanics.

**ARTICLE 13. WHEN IN QUESTION RULES:**

- A. Block below the waist (2-3-2-a).
- B. Block in the back is below the waist (2-3-4-a).
- C. Catch or recovery not completed (2-4-3-h).
- D. Ball not touched on kick or forward pass (2-11-4-d).
- E. Ball is accidentally kicked (touched) (2-16-1-d).
- F. Forward rather than backward pass if thrown from in or behind the neutral zone (2-19-2-a).
- G. Forward pass and not fumble (2-19-2-c).
- H. It is a catchable forward pass (2-19-4 and 7-3-8-c).
- I. Stop clock for injured player (3-3-5-a-1).
- J. Forward progress stopped (4-1-3-a).
- K. Kick catch interference (6-4-1-b and e).
- L. Touchback rather than safety (8-5-1-a).
- M. Is targeting with the crown of the helmet (9-1-3).
- N. Is initiating contact to the head or neck area of a defenseless player (9-1-4).
- O. Twisting, turning, pulling facemask or helmet opening (9-1-8-b).
- P. Roughing kicker rather than running into (9-1-16-a-8).

**ARTICLE 14. ALTERNATE OFFICIAL-**

For some games, an Alternate Official may be assigned in case another official is injured during a game. The Alternate Official will be considered a part of the crew, should travel and arrive at the game site with the crew, and participate in pregame activities with the crew. The Alternate Official will dress in the same uniform as the game crew and will wear a black shirt or jacket at all times when on the field. During the game, the Alternate official will be positioned off the **H** sideline, moving up and down the field as play dictates, paying close attention to each play in preparation for the possibility of entering the game. The Alternate Official will only enter the game in situations where another official is injured and cannot continue his duties. **The Alternate Official will aid the crew in matters such as pass thrown beyond/behind the LOS, pass caught/touched beyond/behind the LOS, and linemen illegally downfield.**

## SECTION 2. STANDARD UNIFORM

### ARTICLE 1. TRADITIONAL UNIFORM:

It is essential that all TASO football officials dress in a consistent manner. All members of a crew must be similarly dressed. For all varsity games the uniform worn by all officials shall include the following:

- A. **SHIRT** - Standard black and white knit, long tail, 2¼ inch vertically striped officials' long and short sleeve shirts with pocket on the left breast (without emblem or numbers, other than small manufacturer's logo) and complete with knit black "Byron" collar and black cuffs. Mesh shirts may be worn if entire crew is so garbed.
- B. **PANTS** - The Pants shall be full length black pants. The pants must include a one and one-quarter inch white strip on the seam of the leg, must not be cuffed, and must continue to the shoe without a break.
- C. **SOCKS** – When wearing approved pants, officials will wear black socks
- D. **SHOES AND BELT** – Predominantly black shoes with black laces and appropriate soles or cleats. A black belt, a minimum of one and one-quarter inches and a maximum of two inches in width shall be worn.
- E. **CAP** - Brooklyn style solid black cap with traditional narrow white piping (without emblem or numbers, other than small manufacturer's logo) shall be worn by all but the Referee, who shall wear a Brooklyn style solid all-white cap (without emblem or numbers, other than small manufacturer's logo). The cap shall be oriented with the bill facing forward and squarely covering the forehead of the official. For state championship games only, the logo of a sanctioning body may appear on the front two panels.
- F. **FOUL MARKER** - All officials shall be equipped with a light gold foul marker, 15" X 15" and weighted in the center with pebbles, sand or beans and worn *INCONSPICUOUSLY*.
- G. **BEAN BAGS** - All officials will be equipped with one or more **white or black** bean bags for marking spots. Bags shall be filled with pebbles, sand or beans. The entire crew must use the same color of bean bag.
- H. **JACKETS** – Jackets are not considered part of the official uniform.
- I. **UNDERSHIRTS** - All undershirts which show should be black. Long sleeved undershirts shall only be worn with long sleeve standard official's shirt.
- J. **GLOVES** - Gloves when worn shall be black.
- K. **NUMBERS, LETTERS, AND EMBLEMS** – A 2" x 3¾" American Flag will be worn on the left sleeve and a 2" x 3¾" Texas Flag will be worn on the right sleeve. A standard TASO patch as prescribed by the TASO Football Board of Directors shall be worn above the left breast pocket.

The crew may opt to wear letters or plackets for Varsity games only. The plackets must be worn by the entire crew and must be securely affixed to the back of the shirt, centered 3" below the collar. The letters shall align with the TASO mechanics manual, i.e., R, U, H, L, B, S and F.

All other numbers, letters, and emblems visible on uniform or equipment are prohibited, except as may be specifically directed by the TASO Football Board of Directors or the TASO Executive Director. Requests for memorial or other special insignia or emblems must be submitted to the Executive Director for approval.

- L. **HELMETS** – A protective helmet may be worn by the Umpire. When worn, helmets will be black, without a bill and must be fitted and secured with a black chin strap which must be secured when the ball is in play.
- M. **MICROPHONES** - Microphones for officials other than the **R** are prohibited. Protected wireless communication systems open only to the crew and observers may be allowed if approved by TASO prior to use on the field.

Below are the standards, along with a brief explanation, that all crew systems must meet in order to be considered for approval. A list of approved systems is available in the Member's Portal at [taso.org](http://taso.org) and available for crew use without prior approval. While other radio systems may meet the standards below, if they are not on the approved list, they may not be used without written approval from TASO.

- **Private transmission.** Radios must provide a system of "privacy codes" which allow for private communication and conversation within the system while also reducing interference.
- **Push to talk operation only.** Allows more focus by officials without the distraction of open microphones.
- **Paired with headset and microphone.**
- **Water resistant.**
- **Black or black & white are the only acceptable colors.**

## **ARTICLE 2. TASO-FOOTBALL APPROVAL:**

All uniforms meeting the above specifications are approved by the TASO-Football Division board of directors.

## **ARTICLE 3. UNIFORM CHECK:**

Check your uniform and equipment before leaving home and again check each other's uniform prior to the game. Test whistle, watch (carry spares) have game data cards, foul marker, bean bag(s), a down indicating device and pencils. Have shoes polished and entire uniform neat and clean.

**ARTICLE 4. SUMMER UNIFORM:**

A "summer uniform" is approved for wearing in scrimmages and sub-varsity, in accordance with Chapter policy, but all in the crew must wear the same uniform. A "summer uniform" is a traditional uniform with black shorts with a 1 ¼ inch white stripe down the side. Black socks will be worn with the black shorts.

## SECTION 3. OFFICIATING PROCEDURES

### ARTICLE 1. BEFORE ENTERING FIELD

- ALL** A. Attendance at the pre-game conference at the time and place designated in advance notice is mandatory. Only an emergency and notice to the Referee may excuse absence.
- H** B. In the absence of the **R**, you are responsible to ensure that a pre-game conference is conducted in accordance with the pre-game conference guide in this manual.
- L** C. If not provided, arrange dependable transportation to and from the stadium.
- L** D. Make certain you have correct time. Other officials will check their watches with yours. Confirm starting time with home management and arrange for punctual arrival of officials on field. Have stopwatch, or watches, ready if necessary.
- L** E. Playing time shall be kept with a game clock, which may be a stopwatch, operated by the **L** or a field clock operated under the direction of the **L**.
- R** F. Conduct a thorough meeting using a pre-game conference guide. The purpose of a pre-game conference is to prepare the crew mentally. It is important to solidify the thinking of officials in regard to procedures, rules and interpretations and enforcement. Referees will vary their approach to a pre-game conference, but the value of organizing and unifying the techniques to be employed in a game cannot be overemphasized. No unauthorized visitors shall be allowed in this important session.
- R** G. **PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL AND USE OF FOOTBALLS PRIOR TO AND DURING THE GAME:**
  - 1. At least one hour before game time, shall receive, test, certify and mark the new or nearly new game balls submitted for approval by each team. (Limit 6 balls unless conditions warrant more).
  - L** 2. If delivered to the dressing room, take over game balls from **R**. Take to field just before game time. Instruct ball persons on their game duties.
  - ALL** 3. When the ball becomes dead nearer the sideline than the hash marks, is unfit for play or is inaccessible, a replacement ball shall be obtained from a ball person, if a ball is available.
- R, L** H. Visit each team 1 hr. 15 minutes before kickoff. **L** inspects player equipment and bandages, tape, etc. **L** should record numbers of players with illegal equipment and recheck when players come onto the field. **R** checks official time and confirms starting time with each head coach or designated representative. **R** lists on game cards correct information for captain's names, numbers, and position. **R** reminds head coach of NCAA equipment rule requirements, secure proper certification and review any unusual game situations with the head coach.
- R** I. Ask defensive coaches about defensive signals to be used during the game.
- H** J. Contact home management and arrange to have line to gain indicator and down indicator available.

**ALL**      K. Leave the stadium dressing room together at least 15- minutes before game time.

## SECTION 4. PRE-GAME DUTIES ON FIELD

*Pre-game activities on the field performed by Officials are very important and necessary so all officials, chain crews, teams and clock operators are ready for the start of the game and compliant in all rules. Officials should utilize the pre-game time effectively to accomplish all tasks and not use it for activities unrelated to pre-game activities.*

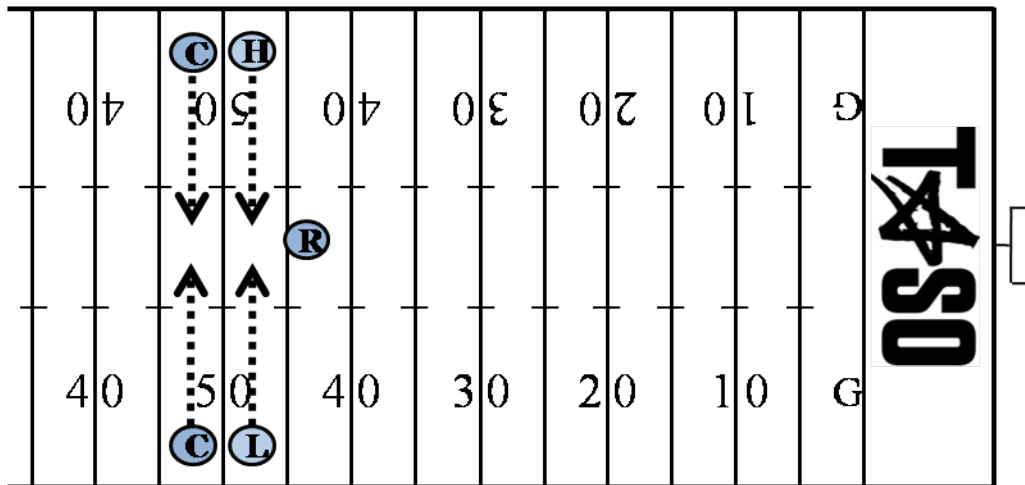
### ARTICLE 1. PROCEDURES

- ALL** A. Anytime players of both teams are on the field, up to 60 minutes prior to the scheduled game time, at least one official shall be present on the field.
- B. Arrive on the field as a unit, no later than 15 minutes before the toss and sooner if duties require. Go to bench on press box side and then disperse for pre-game duties.
- C. Note location of press box, team areas and benches. Check identities of team doctors and trainers.
- D. Inspect entire field. Observe any unusual markings or serious irregularities and advise other officials. Take measures to remedy or remove any hazardous obstructions within or near boundary lines, requesting assistance from management and from other officials as necessary.
- L** E. Spot checks player equipment, bandages, tapes, etc. Have trainer make any needed corrections.
- H, L** F. Five minutes before the kickoff notify the coaches of the time. Obtain captains and bring them to the sideline at their team area 4 minutes before game time.
- H, L** G. Organize your assistants, locate yardage chain and down marker and have assistants ready with all equipment on the sideline opposite the press box. An auxiliary box and line to gain indicator may be used on the press box side and will be under supervision of the **L**. Remain on the same side throughout the game. Check the chain for kinks, knots and weak spots. Check chain against 10-yard measure on the field. Check chain for tape marker at mid-point.
- H, L** H. Instruct your assistants to:
1. Set down marker, rods and clip where you indicated. Position ground markers adjacent to sideline. Box man places down marker on sideline where indicated. Chains then are set on sideline and clip attached on side of yard line closest to rear chain rod. When chains are set the box-man retreats six feet and establishes spot where chains are to be reset after clip has been attached. Emphasize that your assistants should move only at your direction and to step lively when a move is indicated. NOTE: Be prepared to give complete and through instructions to assistants if a different line to gain device is to be used in the game.
  2. See that the chain is taut and un-kinked at all times.
  3. Make no remarks to players or express opinions concerning any ruling.
  4. Never move down markers, chains or change the number of the down unless so directed by the **H**. The **H** will check with the **R**.



- 5. Remove themselves and all equipment outside the limit line for free kicks.
  - 6. Chains are to be laid down and only the down marker is used when there is a first down inside the 10-yard line.
  - 7. Remain neutral and follow instructions at all times.
  - 8. You are responsible for the conduct and performance of your assistants.
- L**
- I. Instruct auxiliary box operator concerning duties and use of line-to-gain indicator. Ensure that the auxiliary box is worked approximately six feet off the sideline. Auxiliary box operator is not to move until ball is ready for play on succeeding down.
  - J. Be sure the game balls are available and instruct ball persons on game duties.
- ALL**
- K. After completing pre-game duties, retire to visiting team's bench.

## SECTION 5. TOSS



Press Box

### ARTICLE 1. PROCEDURES

- ALL** A. Three minutes prior to kickoff, **R** will signal **L** and **H** to escort the captains to the center of the field. **L** is always on the right side of the captain on the press box side; **H** is on left side of his captains, facing **R**. Introduce captains to **R**.
- H** B. After captains are introduced to **R**, step back to 45-yard line. Keep team personnel behind 9-yard marks during toss procedure.
- L** C. Introduces captain(s) to **R**, then steps to opposite end of captains; remain with **R** to witness toss and verify choices.
- R** D. Have captains face each other with their backs to the sidelines. Ask visiting captain to call the toss. Ask the home captain to repeat what the visiting captain called. If either captain, or **L**, disagree seek clarification BEFORE making the toss. **R** shall allow the coin to hit the ground. If warranted by field conditions, **R** may catch the toss.
- E. Introduces captains to each other and advises of any irregularities in timing or special ground rules. Indicates winner of toss by placing hand on shoulder and obtains option (kick, receive, defend goal or defer choice to second half), then obtains loser's option. After choices, places captains with backs to goals which they will defend. Signal's choice of team with first option only, unless they elect to defend a goal, then gives appropriate signal for both teams.

## SECTION 6. GENERAL GAME DUTIES

### ARTICLE 1. TOSS COMPLETED

- ALL** A. When the toss is completed, meet at the center of the field and make a written record of the toss results. Run to kickoff positions. See that sidelines are clear.

### ARTICLE 2. SUBSTITUTIONS

- ALL** A. All officials are responsible for legality of substitutions.
- R, L** B. **R** is responsible for the correct number of players on the offensive team and **L** is responsible for the correct number on the defensive team. All officials have a secondary responsibility for the correct number of players.
- R, L** C. On free kicks **L** is responsible for the number of players on the kicking team while the **H** and **R** count players on the receiving team.
- D. Use the fist signal when the team you are counting has 11 players on the field. The open palm signal will be used when the team you are counting has fewer than 11 players on the field.
- E. In situations where Team A is either in a no huddle formation or has already broken the huddle and substitute(s) enter the field:
1. Either **H** or **L** (the official working Team A's sideline) should signal, by arms held with closed fists extended horizontal to the ground, that Team A is substituting and Team B is allowed the opportunity to do so as well.
  2. **R** should move to a position over the ball when seeing either this situation or signal.
  3. Upon completion of the substitution process by both teams, **R** will release to his normal position.

### ARTICLE 3. DURING GAME

- ALL** A. Convey any message you have for other officials promptly. Avoid any position which suggests a huddle of officials, unless necessary.
- B. Be alert for players being out of bounds before a snap or free kick, kicking team player going out during kicks and other out of bound's situations.
- C. Watch for fouls, being certain to know:
1. Spot where run or scrimmage kick ended.
  2. Spot of foul, position or number of offending player.
  3. Whether ball was loose, in possession or dead when the foul occurred.
  4. That clock is stopped before reporting the foul.

- D. Be ready for any type of play or unusual development. Always be prepared to rule on muffs, fumbles backward and illegal forward passes and know which team possessed a fumble or backward pass before it went out of bounds between goal lines. On recovered fumbles, nearest official must rule on possession by prompt signal. If possible, point to recovering player to assist press box. *Bean bags shall be used when the covering official actually sees a live ball fumbled, not just a ball loose and did not witness the fumble. The bean bag should be dropped parallel to the spot where the ball was fumbled, not thrown to a spot on the field where the fumble occurred.*
- E. Be alert to rule on dead ball behind a goal line. Indicate ruling by prompt signal.
- F. Signal time-out (S3) when the rules provide for stopping the clock or when time-out is charged to a team or to the **R**. Repeat time-out signal of other officials.
- G. Covering officials will use the dead ball signal (S7) when the play ends and there is no other reason to stop the clock.
- H. A winding signal (S2) may be used when the ball becomes dead close to the sideline and the covering official rules that the ball remained inbounds. When the covering official uses a winding signal, make only two complete rotations of the arm. However, if an obvious first down has been made by Team A or there is another reason to stop the clock, then the clock shall be stopped instead.
- I. Signal touchdown (S5) (without reference to any official) when the ball is legally in possession of a player on or behind his opponent's goal line. **R** checks for any foul which might affect the ruling, if none, then give touchdown signal.
- J. Check for false starts and feints.
- K. Leave no doubt in the minds of players or other officials, as to any ruling you make.
- L. Be alert for acts of misconduct (Rule 9-2-1-a-1 & 5).

#### ARTICLE 4. WRITTEN RECORDS

- ALL** A. Make written record of charged time-outs and fouls you call. The position of ball at end of first and third periods, including down and distance, is a shared responsibility. **L** is responsible for recording elapsed time and making certain the status of the clock is correct.

#### ARTICLE 5. AFTER EACH SCRIMMAGE DOWN

- R** A. After each scrimmage down, the **R** should go quickly to the approximate position of the ball, check the down and distance with the **H** and **L** and announce and indicate the new down. **R** is primarily responsible for lateral placement of the ball at the previous spot after an incomplete pass, penalty, etc. If the play clock is to be started on **R's** signal, **R** should declare the ball ready for play by blowing his whistle and giving ready signal (or wind the clock). Under unusual circumstances this procedure may vary and require discretionary action by **R**.
- B. If by rule the game clock should be started after Team A is awarded a first down, **R** will start the clock with a winding signal and soft whistle when the point of the new series of downs has been established by **H**.

- C. If by rule the clock should be started following a penalty, **R** will declare the ball ready for play by starting the clock when certain the players and officials are ready to resume play.
- D. When the offensive team is attempting to run a hurry-up play, after the ball is spotted, **R** will inform both teams simultaneously, that the ball may not be snapped until the whistle is sounded OR the **R** advises the offense that play can begin. **R** will then move along the neutral zone going into the offensive backfield through the first open line spacing, then will back away from the offensive formation and when in position will declare the ball ready for play OR will advise the offense play can begin:
  - 1. Recheck number of downs with other officials, showing numbers of fingers, closed fist indicates fourth down.
  - 2. Checking legality of backfield formation and one second stop following shift or huddle.
  - 3. Know which backs are eligible to touch a forward pass. On spread formations **R** is responsible for backfield group directly behind the ball as to illegal motion and eligibility.
  - 4. Primarily responsible for determining the legality of defensive signals, and for lateral placement of the ball at the previous spot after incomplete pass penalty, etc.
  - 5. Check blocking behind the line after the snap. Be alert for pass thrown toward you. Do not pursue the ball too closely. You are responsible for the ball and runner behind the line of scrimmage. When the runner crosses the neutral zone, he is the responsibility of the down field officials. **R** then is alert to the play behind the ball.
  - 6. When in position to determine that ball is legally in possession on or behind opponent's goal line, give the touchdown signal, then check for fouls by other officials before repeating the touchdown signal, signal time-out and proceed as usual.
  - 7. **R** is responsible for official score.
- L E. If **R** omits a required ready signal, remind him immediately, and:
  - 1. Take position to observe ball at the snap.
  - 2. Observe ineligible on the scrimmage line. Share this responsibility with **H**. You are primarily responsible for detecting any ineligible downfield on forward passes.
  - 3. Be alert for legality of player equipment and enforce the rules.
- H F. Check down marker for correct number and indicate placement to assistant. Be sure there are no fouls or other reasons for holding spot of previous down before signaling the assistant and:
  - 1. Signal number of each down by holding one arm aloft with correct number indicated by extending fingers. Closed fist indicates fourth down.
  - 2. Anticipate any call for a measurement and be ready on the sideline to bring chain when signaled by **R**.

3. Each time a new line to gain is established, personally mark the spot on the sideline where the down indicator is to be set and be sure that it is set correctly and then moved off sideline.

When a first down is awarded inside the 10-yard line, only the down indicator will be used. The chain crew will ensure the down indicator is returned to the proper spot if forced to move.

Be aware of the importance of assisting **R** in marking forward progress behind the neutral zone, particularly when the goal line is involved.

- H, L** G. Be alert for all possible pass receivers. Observe eligible receivers on your end of the scrimmage line. Each is responsible for players who spread to his side of the field. Be certain that all players are boxed in at the snap and that all offensive players have complied with the 9-yard mark restrictions and:
1. Do not jump over players as you mark progress with downfield out thrust foot (unobtrusively, not making a production of it). If necessary, come into the field as far as you can. Hold spot with foot until you are sure **R** or other official has spot.
  2. Check for encroachment, offside and other scrimmage infractions. Assist **L** on legality of numbers of interior offensive linemen on split or wide formations.
  3. For plays at the sideline, backside official should assist **R** with spotting ball at the inbounds spot.
- H, L** 4. Check for backs or linemen illegally in motion. Check backs on your side of the snapper for illegal motion and flankers on your side for one second stop after the huddle. Be alert for illegal blocks below the waist by players spread to your side more than 7-yards from the offensive middle linemen.
- ALL** 5. Be alert for all pass receivers. Give attention to play on tight end(s) moving off the line of scrimmage and to continuing action down field as well as play near the sidelines and out of bounds. Be aware of players who have not been inside the 9-yard marks following the ready for play signal.
- ALL** H. Be certain that the entire offensive team observes the 1-second shift requirement. Before a free kick or snap that starts any period, complete all prescribed duties.

## SECTION 7. TIMING

### ARTICLE 1. GAME TIMING

- L**      A. General
1. All game timing, except the 25-second interval, is under the direction of the **L**. He primarily is responsible for recording elapsed time and making certain the status of the game clock is correct.
- R**      2. All time intervals, team time-outs, between periods and half time are the responsibility of the **R**.
- L**      B. Pre-Game:
1. Make certain you have correct time. Other officials will check their watches with yours. Confirm starting time with home management and arrange for punctual arrival of officials on field. Have a stop watch (or watches) ready if necessary.
  2. Playing time shall be kept with a game clock, which may be a stopwatch operated by the **L**, or a field clock operated under the direction of the **L**.
  3. When a clock operator is assigned and a field clock is official be certain that clock equipment is in good condition. Arrange for relaying information and for signaling the operator, especially regarding 10-second runoffs.
- R, L**      4. If possible, the game clock operator will report to the **R & L** 60 minutes prior to the game. He will be instructed:
- a. To synchronize timer's watch with official game time as established by the **L**.
  - b. To advise officials as to the location of the clock operator in the press box or on the sideline, and to determine procedure for communications with timer and check this procedure preceding game.
  - c. To discuss coordination of starting and stopping the clock in accordance with the playing rules and for relevant signals related to the 10-second runoff. **The R extends both arms forward & slightly above shoulders with palms facing out and will flash all fingers on both hands towards the press box to signal a 10-second runoff is needed. This could be used when no microphone or other communication is available with the clock operator.**
  - d. The field clock is to start 30 minutes before game time and will run during the half time intermission. Half time will start when the players and officials leave the field. **R** will give the "start the clock" signal from the end zone. The field clock will run during the half time intermission. All pre-game and half-time activities will be synchronized with the official game clock.
  - e. The electric clock operator shall have an extra stopwatch available in case of failure of the game clock. He shall immediately contact the officials by field telephone, giving them the correct data regarding the official time. **L** will then pick up the correct game time on his stopwatch.
  - f. Should the field clock become inoperative and subsequently repaired, it will

not be used again until the next quarter. The public address announcer will indicate to the crowd that the field clock will not be official until the malfunction is corrected and subsequent announcement made over the P.A. system. The **L** will alert the P.A. announcer concerning remaining time as often as possible.

### C. Game Procedures for Officials and Timers

#### **TIMER**

1. On all free kicks, start the clock when the ball is legally touched in the field of play, unless the ball is caught or recovered by a player who is legally down. In this case, the clock will not start. The nearest official(s) will signal the legal touching of the ball by indicating that the clock should start. The clock will start when the ball crosses the goal line after being first touched by the receivers in the end zone. Usually, this will occur when a receiver carries the ball out of the end zone. It could occur on a muff or fumble, however. In any case, the covering official will indicate the clock should start.
2. Under NCAA football playing rules the official who declares the ball dead will be the first official to signal a time-out when the team in possession of the ball meets the requirements for first down. Key yourself on him, as the clock will usually stop on long gainers.
3. Any official may signal a team time-out; therefore, stay alert to stop the clock.
4. The clock is not to be stopped on plays near a boundary line unless an official so signals. Many times the ball goes out of bounds after having been declared dead in the field of play and no time-out legally occurs. If a pass is touched or caught out of bounds, the incompleteness signal will stop the clock. *Be alert for the covering official's signal.*
5. Game officials and clock operators should be sure that a time-out is indicated and the clock is stopped under the following circumstances:
  - a. Whenever a team or an official's time-out is charged.
  - b. After any score.
  - c. When a live ball goes out of bounds.
  - d. On a penalty.
  - e. When either team is awarded a first down.
  - f. Following an incomplete pass.
6. After the clock has been stopped, it will be started again on the **R's** (wearing the white cap) "Start the Clock" signal, or if no such signal is given, the game clock will be started on the snap or legal touching of a free kick.
7. In case of a pile-up anywhere on the field, be alert, that any official may stop the clock until the congestion is removed. **R** then may start the clock again before the ready for play signal.
8. The game clock should not be stopped if the 25/40-second play clock is started in error.
9. When time for half expires, start the field clock, or if not available, your stopwatch on **R's** signal when field is cleared of players and officials.

**L**



10. The **L** shall always be aware of the condition of the clock and the time remaining in any period. In the event the clock is running when it should be stopped, the **L** shall make and repeat the appropriate signal until the clock has been corrected (only **R** shall start the clock on the ready for play). If appreciable error is noted, or if inefficiency is habitual, the **L** shall call time-out and so advise the **R**. Officials will review these procedures with the timer before the game.
11. The **L** will keep the **R** informed of the time remaining in each period. Either official or the **R** will sound the whistle if time expires before the snap or advise the **R** at the end of the down if time expired while the ball was in play.
- R** 12. When the period ends, the **R** will so indicate by holding a ball overhead with one hand and arm extended. Following this signal, a horn or siren may be sounded.
13. Timing errors on the game clock, or by an official may be corrected by the **R**. Exact information as to the timing error must be available from the electric clock operator or game officials. These timing errors may only be corrected in the period in which they occur.

## ARTICLE 2. CLOCK OPERATION

- A. Clock Operators
  1. The electric clock operator is an integral member of the officiating crew and game administration. Unfair advantages accrue when the game clock is not started or stopped promptly. Great care must be exercised to see that no time lag occurs in starting or stopping the clock.
  - L** 2. The assigning agency will be notified immediately following the game if there is any breakdown in cooperation between game officials and the clock operator during the game, or if any malfunction of the electric game clock occurs. Timers are encouraged to report crews that are not cooperative or whose signals are not clear and accurate.
- B. Charged Team Time-Out
  1. Time each time-out interval. When 20 seconds remain (or when both teams indicate readiness to resume before that time), give notification to teams and officials.
- C. Intermission between Periods
  1. Time one-minute interval between quarters. When 20 seconds remain, give notification to teams and officials.
- D. Intermission between Halves
  1. When time for the half expires, start your stopwatch on **R**'s signal when field is cleared of players and officials.
  2. Keep official informed as to running time. Make sure crew arrives at field to start second half on time (at least 5 minutes before kickoff).

**ARTICLE 3. PLAY (25/40-SECOND) CLOCK****A. General**

1. All timing involving the play count is under the direct supervision of the **R**.
2. When play field clocks are available, they are the official delay of game time piece. The assigned play clock operator will work under the supervision of the **R**.

- B. Pre-Game:** The play clock operator should report to the **R** 60 minutes prior to the game. If the play clock operator does not visit the dressing room, it is advisable to attempt to discuss timing procedures with the individual.

He will be instructed:

1. To set the displays prior to plays.
2. To start the clocks on the **R**'s ready for play signal or an official's dead ball signal (see chart at end of this Article.)
3. To leave the displays at 00 seconds if there is a delay of game penalty.
4. To reset the displays immediately to 40 seconds when the ball is put in play if there is no delay foul.
5. To reset the displays to 25 seconds anytime the **R** interrupts the play count.
6. That if there is a malfunction, both clocks will be turned off until the problem is corrected. Both coaches will be notified if the field play clock is no longer official. The play count will then be restarted at plays with the **R** manually timing the count on his watch.
7. That with less than 40 seconds (or 25 seconds if the play clock is starting on the Referee's signal) remaining in any period and the game clock running, the play clock shall not run.

*NOTE: If the play clock is erroneously started, it shall be stopped immediately.*

**C. Duties Before Each Play**

- R**
1. Observe the start of the play clock with the **R**'s ready signal or an official's dead ball signal.
  2. Check time consumed in snapping and free kicking the ball and call play clock infractions. Stadium clock located at each end of the field operated under the supervision of **L** will officially time the play clock. In obvious field goal and scrimmage kick situations or when there is no field play clock, the **R** may assume responsibility for the count.
- R**
3. If visual clocks become inoperative, raise one arm straight overhead during the last 10- seconds. Drop that arm and extend it out to the side, fist closed, during the last 5-seconds

**PLAY (25/40-SECOND) CLOCK CHART**

**BASIC PREMISE:** The play clock will **ALWAYS** start at 40 seconds unless there is an *administrative* stoppage.

REFER TO THE FOLLOWING TABLE FOR SITUATIONS WHEN THE PLAY CLOCK WILL BE SET AT 25 SECONDS:

SITUATION	PLAY CLOCK	REFEREE SIGNAL
Administration of a penalty	25 seconds	Chop or Wind
At the start of a period	25 seconds	Chop
Measurement	25 seconds	Chop or Wind
Offensive (Team A) Helmet Off	25 seconds	Chop or Wind
Offensive (Team A) Injury	25 seconds	Chop or Wind
Defense (Team B) Awarded a First Down	25 seconds	Chop
After All Field Goal, Punt or Point After Touchdown Plays	25 seconds	Chop
Start of a Team's Possession in an Extra Period (OT)	25 seconds	Chop
Inadvertent Whistle	25 seconds	Chop or Wind
Timeout by Either Team	25 seconds	Chop
Timeout by Official	25 seconds	Chop or Wind
Touchback	25 seconds	Chop
Period Extension	25 seconds	Chop

If the R wants the play clock reset, regardless of whether or not it is running, he will signal the play clock operator to restart the play clock. For 40-seconds, the referee will signal with both palms open in an over-the-head pumping motion. For 25-seconds, the referee will signal with one open palm in an over-the-head pumping motion. There is usually no need to stop the game clock to reset the play clock unless the play clock operator does not reset upon the R's signal. The play clock should be reset to 25-seconds when, through no fault of the players, the ball is not ready for play and the play clock has run down below 25-seconds.

## SECTION 8. USE OF BEAN BAG AND HAT

### ARTICLE 1. USE OF BEAN BAG

- A. The bean bag will be dropped on the approximate yard line, herein after referred to as "spot". **DO NOT THROW THE BEAN BAG!**
- B. Drop the bean bag to mark the appropriate spot:
  - 1. When a scrimmage kick ends inbounds. (This marks the Post Scrimmage Kick enforcement spot. Normally, only one official will mark this spot with his bean bag.)
  - 2. When the covering official actually sees a live ball fumble anywhere on the field. **SEE THE BALL FUMBLED, NOT MERELY LOOSE!**
  - 3. When a hand-off or backward pass occurs beyond the neutral zone or when there is no neutral zone.
  - 4. When a Team A player illegally touches a free or scrimmage kick.
  - 5. When a Team B player intercepts a forward pass, fumble or backward pass between his 5-yard line and the goal line.
  - 6. When a Team B player catches a free or scrimmage kick between his 5-yard line and the goal line.
  - 7. When necessary to mark forward progress when the runner/passers is driven back.
  - 8. When the potential Team A passer is tackled behind the line of scrimmage.
  - 9. When a fair catch signaler muffs the kick but can complete the catch before it touches the ground.
  - 10. When there is an inadvertent whistle and the covering official marks the spot of the ball at the time of the whistle.

### ARTICLE 2. HAT MECHANICS

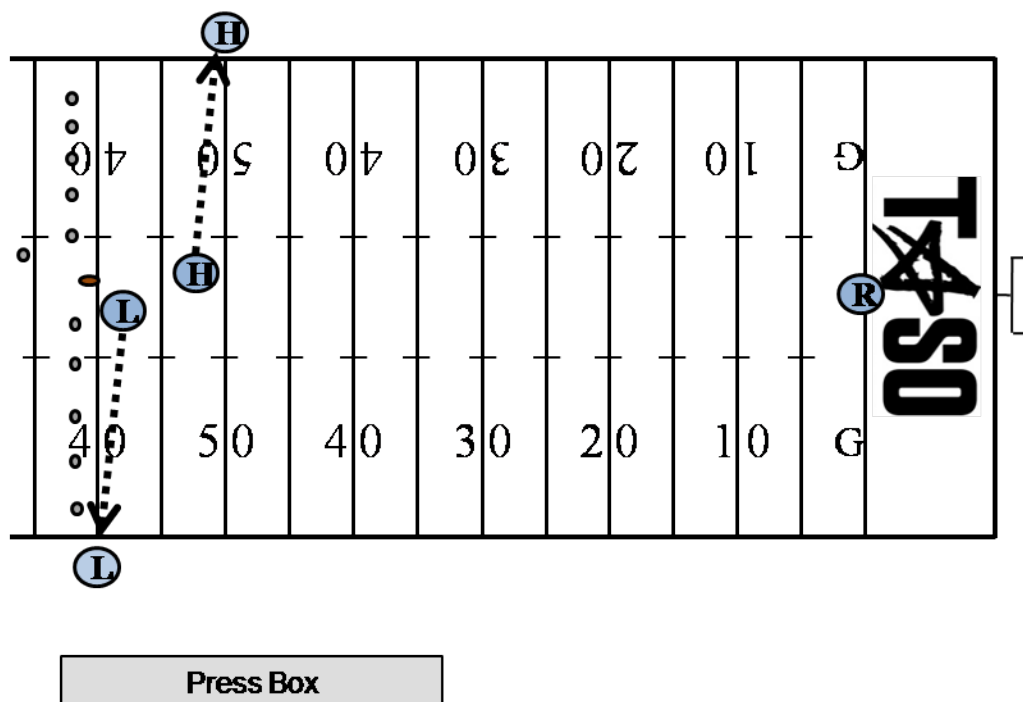
- ALL**
  - A. Use your hat to mark appropriate spots as follows:
    - 1. When an eligible Team A pass receiver voluntarily goes out of bounds.
    - 2. When an eligible Team A pass receiver fails to return inbounds immediately after being blocked out of bounds.
    - 3. When a Team A player voluntarily goes out of bounds or fails to return inbounds immediately after being blocked out of bounds during a free kick play or scrimmage kick play.

### OPPOSITE SIDE OFFICIAL

- B.
  - 1. Be alert for a hat on the ground.
  - 2. Cover the yard line while calling official reports action to **R** and **U**.

## SECTION 9. FREE KICKS

*NOTE: UIL high school kick-off is from the 40-yard line, unless relocated by rule.*



## ARTICLE 1. KICKOFFS

- R** A. Take a position slightly behind and to the side of the deepest receiver, and aware that the **R** still has goal line, end zone and end line responsibilities.
- H, L** B. Take initial positions in center of field; after explanation to kicker, move briskly to kick off positions on prearranged signal. Move to restraining line on your side of field and ensure that you have line of sight along the restraining line to the end line, with no one between the restraining line and the sideline.
- H** C. Take position opposite press box, outside the sideline on Team B's restraining line.
- L** D. Take position to press box side, out of bounds, off the sideline on Team A's restraining line.

## ARTICLE 2. DUTIES

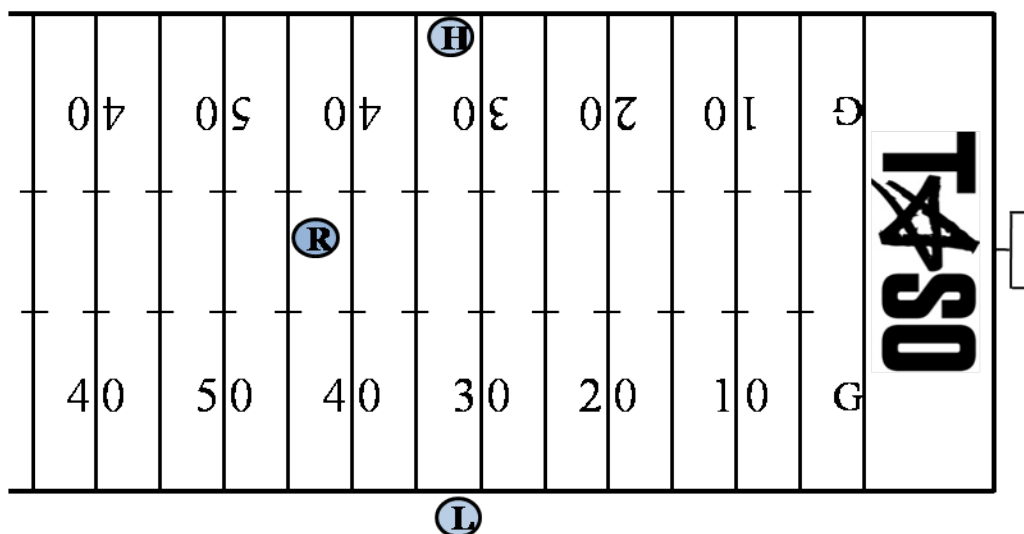
- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>L</b>    | A. Count the kicking team for the correct number of players. Explain to kicker to kick only on <b>R</b> 's signal. Point out <b>R</b> on each free kick. |
| <b>H, L</b> | B. Check sidelines to make sure all non-players are out of the restricted area. Ensure Team A players have complied with the 9-yard mark requirements.   |
| <b>R, H</b> | C. Count the receiving team for the correct number of players.   |

- ALL** D. Raise hand clearly above head when ready, then drop arm when **R** drops arm and sounds whistle. Always be prepared to rule on muffs, fumbles, backward passes, etc.
- L** E. When the ball is kicked, ensure the correct numbers of players are on each side of the kicker. Watch for unnecessary roughness on holder or kicker. Watch for illegal kicks. Observe action on kicker until five-yard requirement has been met.
- L, H** F. Watch for short kicks and whether the ball is touched or recovered legally or illegally. Watch for any infractions involving your restraining line. Be in position to take runner if ball is advanced beyond 35-yard line.
- ALL** G. Mark the out of bounds spot when kick, in flight or rolling, goes out of bounds. (Bean bag if touched, otherwise flag.)
- L, H** H. Maintain position enabling coverage of your sideline at all times.
- ALL** I. Give signal starting the game clock when kick is first touched after being touched by Team B. Signal to start clock should be given only by official who has the ball in his area of responsibility. Observe any player who is out of bounds before or during the kick. Be alert for fair catch signal, valid or invalid. Be alert for interference with opportunity to catch a kick.
- R** J. If kick goes deep, retreat to position to observe actions involving the goal line, end line. Watch for handoffs and crisscross, do not give play away.
- ALL** K. Be alert for illegal handoffs.
- ALL** L. Watch for Team A blocks prior to Team A becoming eligible to touch the ball.

### **ARTICLE 3. FREE KICK AFTER SAFETY**

- ALL** Assume same relative positions and duties, as on kickoff when ball is put in play by place kick, drop kick or punt.

## SECTION 10. PLAYS FROM SCRIMMAGE



Press Box

### ARTICLE 1. BASIC POSITIONS

- R** A. After making the ball ready for play, be in a position to see the ball and the backs, 11 to 15 yards behind the line of scrimmage. Initial position is near the center of the field.
- H, L** B. In the neutral zone extended and WIDE. When the ball is to be snapped near your inbounds line, be on or outside the sideline. Indicate offensive line of scrimmage by an extended foot to wide offensive players.
- H** C. Be in position to see the ball, the backs and a man in motion. Be opposite press box, on the line of scrimmage and wide, in the neutral zone, extended.

### ARTICLE 2. DUTIES BEFORE BALL IS SNAPPED

- H, L** A. Check for a maximum of four offensive players in the backfield. Check wing back(s) and slot back for being in proper position. Indicate with extended arm toward offensive team's goal line if wide man nearest you is in the backfield. Check lineman for interfering with opponents before snap. Check and know eligible pass receivers. Check for any type of violation by lineman and backfield players. Keep position outside all flankers. Responsible for motion man when he is on your side of the snapper - DOES NOT RELIEVE YOU OF MAKING AN OBVIOUS CALL.
- L** B. Responsible for the correct number of players on defensive team.
- R** C. Check for 5 offensive players on scrimmage line with numbers 50-79.

Responsible for the correct number of players on the offensive team. Assume primary responsibility for legality of defensive signals.

- ALL** D. Check for false starts and other violations.
- R** E. Position yourself where you have continuous view of the ball. Know the number of players on both teams. Check legality of offensive formation. Check backs directly behind the ball and the players on your side. Check and know backfield players eligible for pass. Check time consumed in putting ball in play. Watch for illegal shifts and false starts.

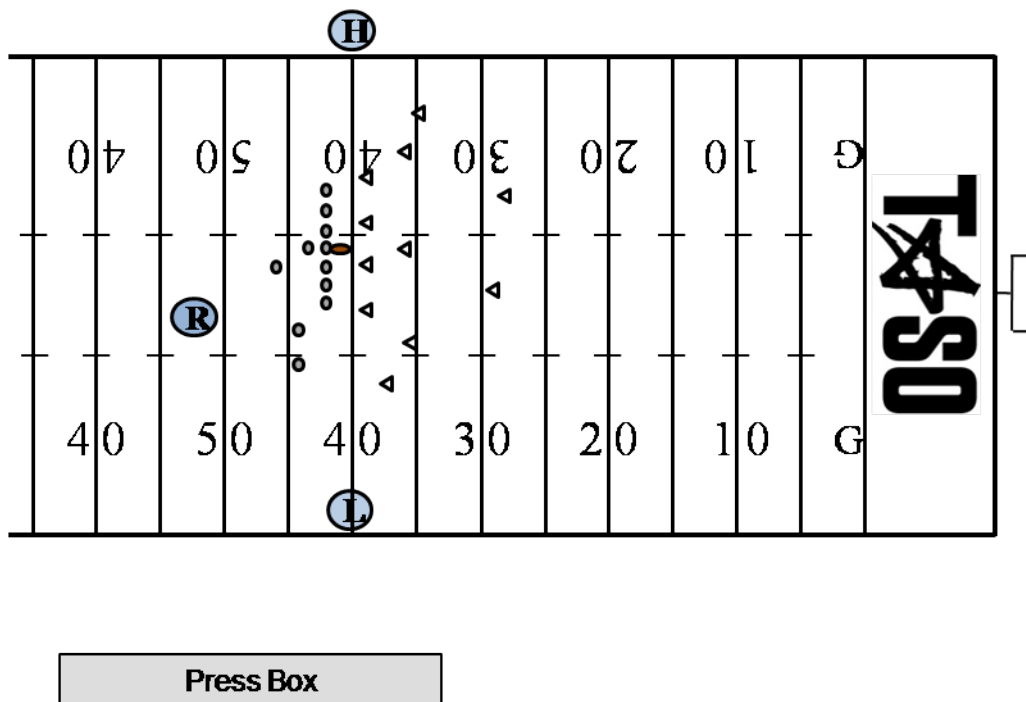


## SECTION 11. RUNNING PLAYS

### ARTICLE 1. AFTER BALL IS SNAPPED

- R** A. Watch for illegal action by blockers leading the runner. Check for legality of forward pass. Follow the runner to the sideline behind the line of scrimmage. Retrieve ball if runner's forward progress is stopped and driven back. Make sure all blocks and play are legal behind scrimmage line. Watch for fouls behind runner after he crosses neutral zone. Responsible for player(s) in position to receive a backward pass, discuss in pre-game. Observe initial charge of lineman for infraction by players of either team. Be alert to cover forward progress of runner. If play goes away from you, observe action in offensive backfield behind runner and behind flank official. Be in position to cover runner if he returns into your area.
- H, L** B. Responsible for all neutral zone infractions by players of either team. Be alert to cover forward progress of runner. If play goes away from you, observe action in offensive backfield behind runner and behind **R**. Be in position to cover runner if he returns into your area. Pinch in when necessary, especially on short yardage for first down and if possible, on every play within 10-yard line and goal line. Rule on all neutral infractions. Be prepared to rule on forward progress. Responsible for blockers and action on ends and linebackers.
- H, L** C. On plays into your side zone area and on wide offensive plays, be prepared to take runner and ball to goal line. **R** covers behind you.
- H, L** D. Responsible for clipping zone and illegal blocks below the waist blocks. Watch for out of bounds plays on your sideline, hold spot, another official will retrieve ball. Clean up out of bounds. Do not get boxed in or turn your back to the ball. Be ready for kick or pass which may start out as a running play. When ball becomes dead in your area, relay ball to **R**. Responsible for sideline, end line to end line.
- ALL** E. Watch for any illegal action around runner when the ball is declared dead by another official, then assist in spotting ball. If ball goes out of bounds, signal time out immediately, other officials will follow, hold out of bounds spot, another official will retrieve ball. When ball is declared dead in your area, do not move ball unless you are sure what the next down will be. Pinch in when necessary, especially on short yardage for first down and, if possible, on every play within 10-yard line and goal line. Always be prepared to rule on forward progress. On plays into your side zone area and wide offensive plays, be prepared to take runner and ball to goal line. Opposite side officials should assist with forward progress if the covering official is not in position to rule.

## SECTION 12. FORWARD PASSES



## ARTICLE 1. BEFORE THE PASS IS MADE

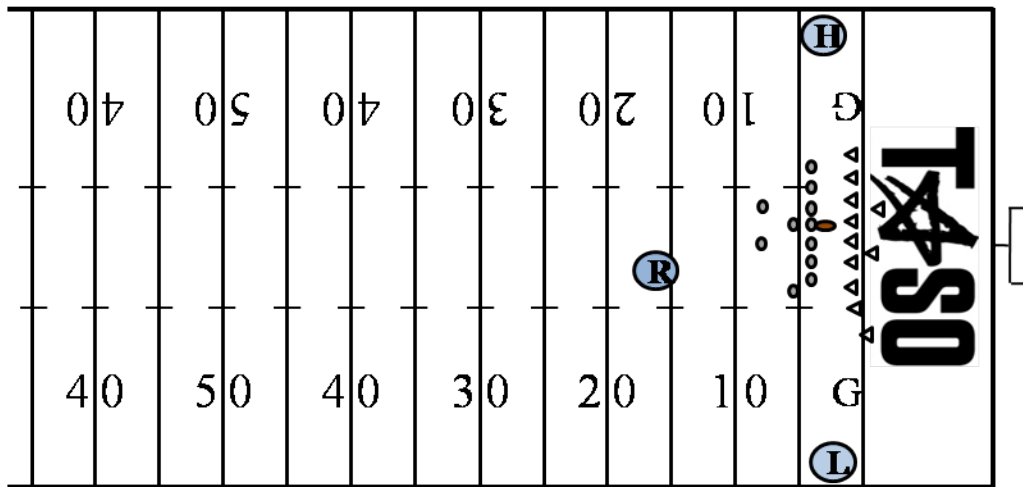
- R** A. Watch blockers in backfield protecting passer. Know eligible receivers on your side. Check for legality of forward pass. Be ready to rule on direction of quick QB pass. Be alert to proper position and coverage should passer decide to run. Check legality of offensive interior linemen's numbers. Cover line play same as any scrimmage down. Observe action of players on and directly behind the neutral zone.
- H, L** B. Cover line play as in any scrimmage down. Know eligible pass receivers on your side, including slot man. Watch for offensive ends and backs blocking defensive linebackers and halfbacks before ball is thrown. Watch for eligible receivers going out of bounds. Know ineligible pass receivers on scrimmage line. Watch for ineligible players beyond neutral zone. Be alert to proper position and coverage should passer decide to run. Assist **R** in checking legality of offensive interior linemen's numbers. Watch for holding and illegal blocking of eligible receivers by defensive players.
- ALL** C. Be alert for runback of interceptions.
- H** D. Cover line play as any scrimmage down. Watch for offensive ends and backs blocking more than one yard downfield before ball is thrown. Watch for eligible receivers going out of bounds. Cover line play the same as any scrimmage down. Know ineligible receivers. Watch for ineligible players beyond the neutral zone. Observe action of players on and directly behind the neutral zone.

- R** E. Cover same as any scrimmage down. Know eligible receivers directly behind the ball. Be ready to rule on direction of QB pass. Be alert to recover for proper position and coverage should passer decide to run. Assist **H** in checking legality of numbers of offensive interior linemen.
- H, L** F. Know eligible pass receiver(s) on your side, including slot man. Watch for holding and illegal blocking of eligible receivers by defensive players.

## **ARTICLE 2. AFTER BALL IS THROWN**

- R** A. Protect the passer before and after the ball is thrown. Determine if drop back pass is forward or backward. Determine if pass is legal or illegal and if forward pass crosses the neutral zone. Assist on passes thrown behind the line and in the flat, when possible. Has sole responsibility for intentional grounding of a pass. Verbally alert defenders when passer releases the ball.
- H, L** B. Cover long passes and flat passes down your side of field. Watch for offensive players blocking defenders before pass is touched. Always be prepared and be in position to cover any pass near sideline, caught inbounds or out of bounds. While pass is in flight, move to the most advantageous position to judge the play. You have entire sideline on your side. Cover short receiver over the middle. The covering official, toward whom the ball is thrown, should signal, by extending one arm horizontally in the direction of the passing team's goal line, if the pass is ruled backward.
- ALL** C. Responsible for pass being complete or incomplete on all screen passes. Watch for ineligible receivers down field. On every forward pass, watch for touching or catching by ineligible receiver. Assist on button hooks, traps, etc. Assist on forward pass thrown to or near your area and on incomplete pass. Observe players for any illegal action and be alert to retrieve the ball. In case of disagreement on incomplete or complete pass, concede call to official facing the receiver. When contact occurs on a pass that is uncatchable, and the covering official does not drop his penalty marker, the covering official will give the uncatchable pass signal (S17).

## SECTION 13. GOAL LINE PLAYS



Press Box

### ARTICLE 1. PROCEDURES

- ALL** A. Position and duties are the same as for any scrimmage down. When the ball is snapped on or inside the 5-yard line, work with bean bag in your hand, drop bean bag at spot of fumble if ball becomes loose. See the ball before declaring it dead or awarding score.
- H, L** B. Indicate score by touchdown signal only when in position to determine ball penetrating the plane of the goal in possession. If ball's forward progress stops short of goal line, move in on the ball, mark and hold the dead ball spot until ball is spotted for next down, if any. When snapped at or inside the 5-yard line, move toward the goal line and rule on the score. Work back to the ball to establish forward progress. Use "Reverse Goal Line" mechanic to provide goal line coverage when Team A snaps the ball on or behind its 3-yard line. At the snap move immediately to the goal line.
- H, L** C. Initial position must be wide enough so you will not be trapped by a quick wide play. Move toward the goal line and rule on the score or on accurate forward point when you see the ball. Be alert for a forward pass.
- R** D. Position and coverage the same as for other scrimmages with the forward point of advancement usually determined by the wing official. Signal score only after being positive all requirements are met.

## **SECTION 14. FUMBLES**

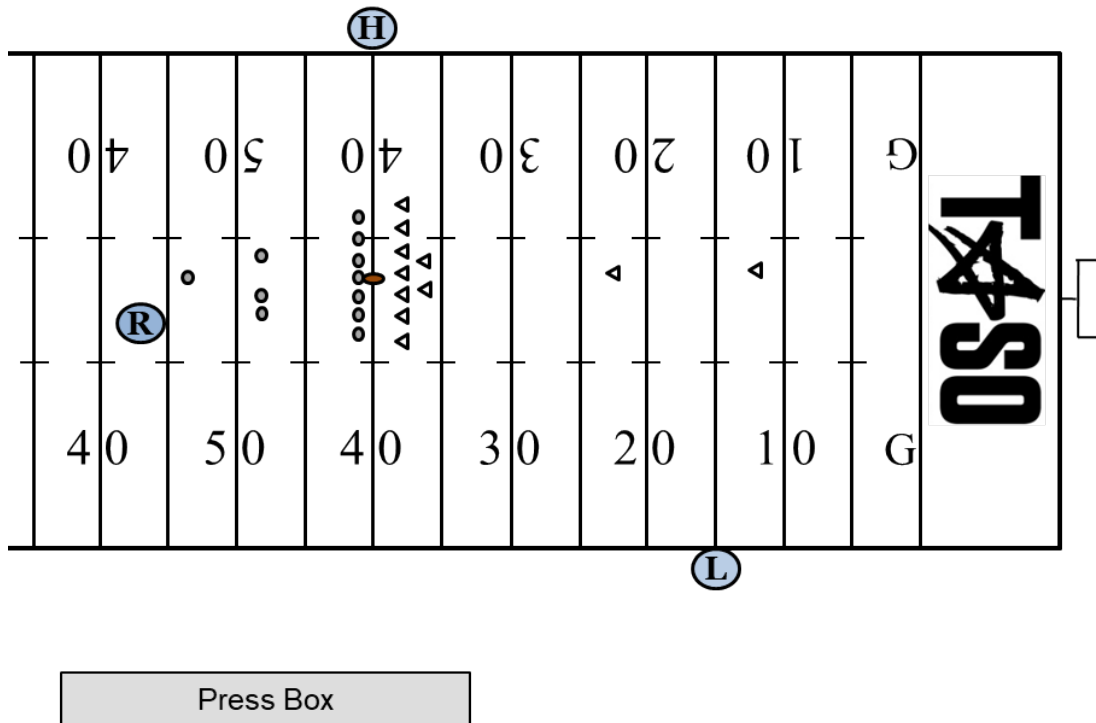
### **ARTICLE 1. MECHANICS**

- ALL**      A. The nearest official should point in the proper direction, no matter who recovers. **R** will then signal the next down when he makes the ball ready for play.

### **ARTICLE 2. DIGGING OUT FUMBLES**

- ALL**      A. Should it become necessary to “dig it out”, the nearest official should dig for the ball, the next official should stop the clock and look at the clock to insure it is stopped. The stop the clock signal should be relayed by the remainder of the crew. The second official should assist removing players from the pile. The third official must remain away from the pile to control the other players and watch for a player escaping from the pile with the ball. When the digging official determines possession, he should verbally relay possession information to the nearest standing official, normally the **R**, who will then signal the proper direction. The digging official should press the ball into the recovering player’s stomach and stand up together. If possible, the signaling official will point to the recovering player to assist the press box. Only the **R**, if he is not the signaling official, should relay the direction signal. See Section 8 for bean bag mechanics on fumbles.

## SECTION 15. SCRIMMAGE KICKS



### ARTICLE 1. POSITIONS BEFORE SNAP

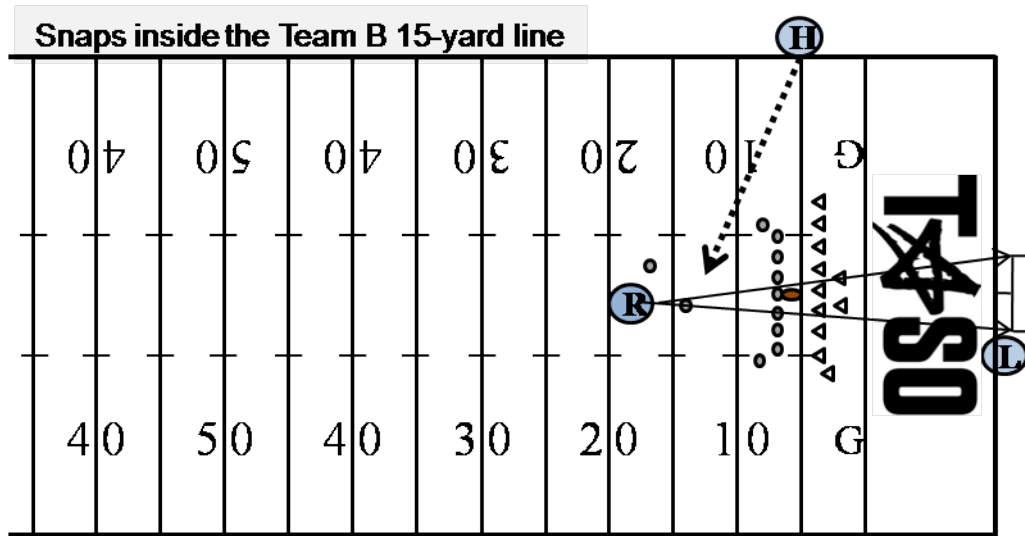
- R** A. Be in position slightly behind (no more than 5-yards) and to the **L** side of the kicker, wide enough to observe the snap and the flight of the ball to the kicker. Be in position to see the blockers and kicker at the same time and be prepared to rule on any contact with the kicker when the ball is kicked. If the kicker is near the end line, take position on the end line and remind the kicker if he is on or outside the end line prior to the snap. Adjust to the situation.
- L** B. Take position on your side of field short of deepest receiver and adjust to play area. Stay wide.
- H** C. Same as any scrimmage down.

### ARTICLE 2. AFTER THE SNAP

- R** A. Watch blocking and illegal action by players behind the line. Observe action of and against the kicker. Be alert for blocked kick, recovery and advance. When certain the kick will not be blocked, the kicker will not be fouled, or the ball will not go directly out of bounds, observe action in the center of the field. Be prepared to pick up runner if play breaks deep.
- L** B. Responsible for ruling on all fair catch signals in your area. Responsible for ball if player signals for a fair catch and does not touch the ball. On short kicks, observe action around the ball, other officials are responsible for receiver and ball. On long kicks out of bounds in the air, assist **R** in spotting the ball. If rolling kick

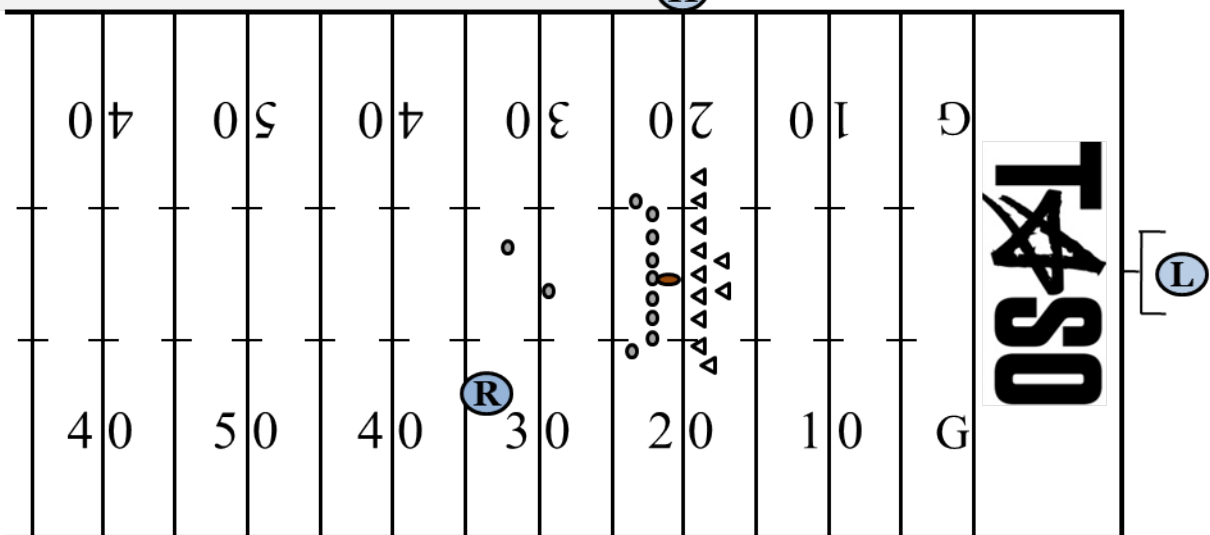
goes out of bounds on your side, mark the spot. Responsible for goal line and end line. Mark the spot where kick ends. Be alert for blocked kick in your area and for its recovery and advance.

- H** C. Responsible for the entire line of scrimmage at the snap. If kick is short or partially blocked, know if it crossed the neutral zone. If kick to your side goes out of bounds on the ground, mark the out of bounds spot. If kick goes out of bounds in the air, assist **R** in spotting the ball. If player signaling for fair catch does not touch the ball, observe legality of his action until the ball becomes dead. Responsible for action around the receiver. Responsible for your side on kick return. After the ball has crossed the neutral zone, move with Team B players who are covering the kick. Be alert for blocked kick in your area and for its recovery and advance.
- ALL** D. Be alert for blocking below the waist, fair catch signal, illegal signal, any waiving signal, etc. Watch for interference with the opportunity to catch a kick, hand-off, fumble, laterals, etc. Be alert for automatic touchback situations and kick return coverage. Be alert for blocked kick going into your area and for its recovery and advance.

**SECTION 16. FIELD GOAL ATTEMPTS**

Press Box

**Snap on/outside the Team B 15-yard line**



Press Box



**ARTICLE 1. BASIC POSITIONS AND COVERAGE**

- R**      A. When snap is on or outside the Team B 15-yard line, take a position the same as on any scrimmage kick down. Make sure you can see holder receive the snap.
- B. When snap is inside the Team B 15-yard line, take a position directly behind spot ball will be kicked.
- L**      C. When snap is on or outside the Team B 15-yard line, takes a position 5 to 7 yards behind goal post. Kicks inside the 15-yard line, take position to side of goal post.
- H**      D. Take your regular position, same as any scrimmage down.

**ARTICLE 2. DUTIES**

- R**      A. Responsible for ruling on field goal attempts when ball is snapped inside the 15-yard line, except when ball passes very near crossbar or strikes goal.
- B. Responsible for illegal action against kicker and holder when ball is snapped on or outside the Team B 15-yard line.
- H**      C. When snap is inside the Team B 15-yard line, responsible for action on the kicker and holder.
- L**      D. When snap is on or outside the Team B 15-yard line, sole responsibility for ruling on field goal attempts. If attempt is short and ball remains alive, do not give a signal. Officiate as a scrimmage kick. When snap is inside the Team B 15-yard line, rule on field goal attempt only when ball passes near crossbar or strikes the goal.
- ALL**    E. While ball is alive, field goal attempt is treated same as a scrimmage kick. **R** is responsible for muff/fumble by holder.

**ARTICLE 3. TRY FOR POINT**

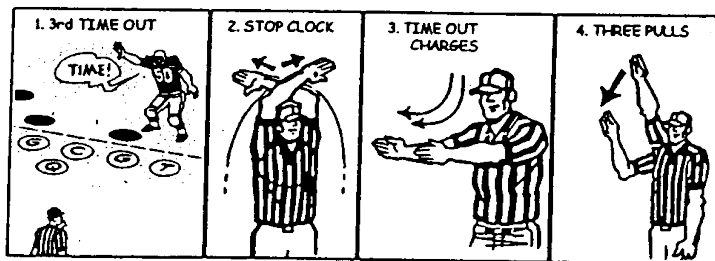
- ALL**    A. Positions and duties are the same as any field goal attempt. Officiate all try downs as a normal scrimmage down and do not sound whistle until ball is dead by rule. Discuss in pre-game.

## SECTION 17. TIME-OUTS

### ARTICLE 1. PROCEDURES

- ALL** A. Repeat time-out signal.
- R** B. Indicate a full length charged time out by facing the Press Box. Give time out signal then extend one arm in pointing fashion, horizontally, in direction of requesting team. Indicate a third charged time out by following this signal with three tugs on an imaginary steam whistle. Time the length of time-out. Do not sound whistle.

#### *THIRD CHARGED TIME OUT*



- ALL** C. Record time-outs. Check with each other during each time-out. When relaying the number of time outs, relay the number the teams have remaining. Record time left on clock and number of requesting player when charged team time-out is requested.
- R** D. Responsible for the ball. When 20 seconds remain before the ready-for-play signal is to be given, signal **H** and **L** to inform the teams to return to the field, or when both teams indicate readiness to resume before that time, get ready signals from each captain, go to position behind the offensive huddle, and declare the ball ready for play. Responsible for counting number of players on the offensive team.
- E. Do not huddle as a group.
- H, L** F. Take a position near your team on the sideline so you have a clear view of **R**. Locate a coach not directly involved in the team instruction and inform him of how many timeouts remain for each team and of the remaining time in the period. When **R** indicates 20 seconds remain, notify teams and move to position for succeeding play. Notify the head coach when free time outs are exhausted.

### ARTICLE 2. REFEREES TIME OUT

- R** A. Signal time out then indicate **R**'s time out by tapping chest with hands. Stay at the ball.
- B. Only **R** may stop the clock for a coach's conference. If the coach is not correct on

his reason for requesting a coach's conference, he will be charged with a time out. After the time out has been charged to the coach, the procedure for a team time out will be carried out. This includes a full- time allotment.

- C. Signal time out when Team A is awarded a first down.
- D. Declare ball ready for play as soon as need for time out has been met.
- ALL** E. Signal time out and carry out usual duties.
- F. When either team is in possession of the ball in advance of the line to gain, covering official indicates time out.
- G. If game is disrupted for any reason, record down, team in possession, position of the ball and time remaining in the game.

### **ARTICLE 3. INJURY TIME OUT**

- ALL** A. Same procedure as free time out (limited). Permit as much time as is necessary. SAFETY OF INJURED PLAYERS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE. MOVE TEAMMATES AWAY FROM INJURED PLAYER. DO NOT ALLOW ANYONE TO TOUCH INJURED PLAYER UNTIL TRAINERS ARRIVE. Use signal (S3), followed with tapping hands on chest. It is acceptable to allow water attendants on the field during injury timeouts.

## SECTION 18. MEASUREMENTS

### ARTICLE 1. PROCEDURES

- R** A. When spotting the ball after each scrimmage, be sure there is no need for measurement before announcing the down. If close, or by captain's request, measure. If in doubt, signal time out and measure. See that the **H** and **L** are ready. Observe the relative position of ball and point to be gained then announce your ruling. Remain over the ball and announce down and distance. Get ready signals from captains while **H** is resetting the chain. When **H** signals ready, declare the ball ready for play.
- L** B. Clear area for measurement and take the rod at the forward end of chain. Hold the rod perpendicular to the ground at the side of ball. Check for kinks and see that the chain is taut.
- H** C. Grasp chain at point of its intersection with the back edge of the marked yard line nearest the back rod end (use clip or snap). Have box man place box at spot vacated by front stake, maintaining previous down. Place the correct point of the chain on the back edge of the proper yard line. Call ready; be sure the chain is not jerked from your hands.
- R** D. Clear area and indicate placement of clip for **H**. When ball becomes dead in a side zone or out of bounds, any measurement should be at the dead ball spot. Once chain is stretched, make decision quickly. If short of first down, obtain a new ball leaving the measured ball in place. Use the forward point established on the chain when spotting the ball at the inbounds line. Once the new ball is spotted at the inbounds spot and chain is reset, remove measured ball from the field.
- H** E. If not a first down, retain firm grasp and personally set the chain at its original spot off the sideline. Check with front point marked by the box man.

### ARTICLE 2. FIRST DOWNS

- ALL** A. Be aware and notify all if play is close to a first down. Talk to each other. If you are certain the play results in a first down, stop the clock. Assist **R** in starting clock after awarding Team A a first down. (Only **R** should signal)

### ARTICLE 3. OPERATING BOX

- ALL** A. Know the down and yardage to be gained on each down.
- R, H** B. Verify the preceding down before changing the box.
- R** C. Verify each down prior to ball being declared ready for play. Signal **H** to move chain and box on first downs and scrimmage kicks.

## SECTION 19. CALLING FOULS & ENFORCEMENT

### ARTICLE 1. PROCEDURES

- ALL**
  - A. Signal time out when ball is declared dead.
  - B. Official calling foul, report to **R** verbally as follows:
    - 1. Type of foul. Describe foul when necessary.
    - 2. Offending team, including jersey color and A/B, offense/defense or kicking team/receiving team.
    - 3. Offending player's number or position.
    - 4. Spot of foul, end of run or end of kick.
    - 5. Status of ball when foul occurred.
- R**
  - C. When a foul or fouls are reported to the **R**, he will immediately give preliminary signal(s) before explaining options to captains. For pre-snap fouls, preliminary and dead ball signals are not required. Notify both captains if loss of down is part of the penalty. Give dead ball signal before giving the signal for a dead ball foul. For pre-snap fouls, visual signals are acceptable.
  - D. If a choice is obvious, announce it and proceed with enforcement or declination. Otherwise explain options to captains. State options briefly, correctly, clearly and courteously. Do not carry the ball. It should remain at the dead ball spot until you call for it.
- ALL**
  - E. Do not place a hand on or point to the offending player. Official calling foul shall stand by and check **R** when explaining options. Assist each other in holding dead ball spot and spot of foul. Cover foul marker, when possible, facing the direction the offending team is defending. Be sure the chain and down marker are not moved.
  - F. Responsible for knowing that proper yardage has been stepped off. Correct any mistakes immediately. Alert **R** on penalties enforced half the distance to the goal line.
  - G. When giving a sideline warning, throw your flag. Notify head coach, go to **R** and report the violation. Each of you record; let the **R** signal sideline receiving the warning.
  - H. Official who calls disqualifying foul notifies coach. Nearest official will notify coach of other fouls by his team stating position and number.
- H**
  - I. Hold yard line enforcement spot if different from previous spot.
- R**
  - J. When a penalty is to be enforced, instruct **L** as to point of enforcement and yardage to be marked off.
- L**
  - K. Take a position near **R** when he explains options to a captain. If penalty is to be enforced, follow **R**'s instructions in marking off the penalty. **L** will carry ball and place in position when penalty is enforced. Verify visually with **H**.

- H** L. If satisfied with enforcement, proceed to succeeding spot.
- R, L** M. When fouls are committed that require enforcement at the spot of the next free kick, **R** will give preliminary signal and point to the next free kick spot. **L** will repeat the signal following enforcement from the succeeding spot.
- R** N. After penalty is completed, take position in a clear area where you can be seen. Give signal to each side of the field.
1. If penalty is accepted, signal foul and extend one arm in pointing fashion, horizontally in direction of offending team.
  2. If penalty is declined, signal foul, extend one arm in pointing fashion, horizontally in direction of offending team and then give the no-play signal.
  3. If penalties offset, signal one foul, extend one arm, in pointing fashion, horizontally in direction of offending team, repeat this procedure for foul by other team, then give no-play signal.
  4. Start clock after a penalty is completed if it was not otherwise stopped by rule.
- NOTE: Official calling foul is responsible to see that **R** enforces the penalty correctly in every respect.*

## SECTION 20. CLOSE OF A PERIOD & INTERMISSIONS

### ARTICLE 1. PROCEDURES

- ALL** A. Be conscious of the remaining time.
- L** B. Responsible for clock when **R**'s back is to the clock.
- R** C. Responsible for clock when facing the clock.
- R, L** D. When time expires and ball is declared dead, sound whistle and point to clock. The termination of a period is indicated by the **R** declaring the period complete and holding ball overhead with one hand indicating time has expired, (S14). **R** is primarily responsible for determining the end of any period. He should enlist the aid of the **L** when the only field clock is at his back.
- H, L** E. Leave the ball alone. **R** will handle it at the end of each period.
- ALL** F. At the close of first and third period, verify down and distance to be gained before moving ball and chain. **Record yard line, down, and distance to be gained.**
- L** G. Know what yard line the ball was on at the end of the quarter.
- ALL** H. Observe players as they move to the other end of the field. Move briskly to other end of field and mark the spot where the ball will next be put into play.
- H** I. After recording down, distance and yard line, find the clip while facing into the field. Instruct the person operating the down indicator to go to where the **R** sets the ball. Direct the person carrying the stake nearest the goal line to lead into the field taking care to avoid the team. Follow the first chain person advising the other to follow. As you approach the clip yard line, alert the crew. Place the clip in position while facing out. Instruct the chain crew to stretch the chain.
- R** J. Move up to corresponding yard line beyond the 50-yard line and spot the ball. Do not resume play until one minute has elapsed.
- ALL** K. After **R** spots ball, verify correct spot, down and distance to gain. Trainers and water containers are permitted on the field as long as they do not interfere with official's duties. Trainers and water containers must leave the field when directed by officials. After prescribed duties are completed, take position for next play.
- R** L. Time the one-minute intermission between periods and the one-minute intermission after a safety, try or successful field goal. When 20 seconds remain in the intermission, sound your whistle three times, short but sharp. When intermission expires, ensure both teams are ready to play, then immediately declare the ball ready for play.

## SECTION 21. INTERMISSION BETWEEN HALVES

### ARTICLE 1. PROCEDURES

#### END OF SECOND PERIOD

- R**      A. From the end zone, give start the clock signal when the field is clear of officials and players.
- L**      B. When time for end of the half expires, start your stopwatch on **R**'s signal when the field is cleared of officials and players.
- C. Keep other officials informed of remaining time. Make sure crew arrives at field to start second half on time.
- D. Secure and retain game ball(s).

#### PRIOR TO KICKOFF

- R, L**    A. Check with other officials regarding the second half choices.
- R, H**    B. Five minutes prior to the end of half-time intermission, go to the team that occupies the team area opposite the press box.
- L**      C. Five minutes prior to the end of half-time intermission, go to the team that occupies the team area on the press box side.
- H**      D. Prior to kick off, make certain your assistants are ready and send them to receiving team's 20-yard line. Remind them to stay behind the restraining line during the kick off.
- ALL**    E. Arrive at your kickoff position no later than one minute prior to kickoff.



## SECTION 22. POST-GAME DUTIES

### ARTICLE 1. PROCEDURES

- ALL**
- A. Note total elapsed time from initial kickoff to final whistle, including all intermissions.
  - B. Join other officials and leave together. Neither seek nor avoid coaches.
  - C. Complete any required game reports and submit them immediately.

### ARTICLE 2. INCIDENT REPORTING

The University Interscholastic League has directed that certain incidents be reported. *ANY EVENT THAT DISRUPTS THE NORMAL FLOW OF THE GAME*, officiated by TASO officials, requires a report. Examples included, but are not limited to:

- Abuse from coaches, players or fans
- Fighting by players, coaches and fans
- Serious Injuries
- Unsafe Playing Conditions
- A half time lasting longer than 28 minutes at a Varsity game
- Coach Ejection – ALL levels of play
- Player Ejection – ALL levels of play
- ALL Targeting Fouls
- ALL 15-yard penalties involving the sideline
- ALL 15-yard penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct in sub-varsity play, *especially* middle schools or junior high
- For a Varsity game when no Game Administrator is identified

The game administrator is to be informed of the problem the night of the game, when available. Written reports from each official directly involved in the incident shall be submitted within twenty-four hours and may be filed electronically using the TASO or UIL websites. In addition, the official should notify his/her Chapter leadership of the report.

Reporting of other incidents should be done in accordance with Chapter policies and such policies that TASO may adopt.

### ARTICLE 3. FIGHT REPORTING PROCEDURES

- A. The official who calls the foul will inform the player, squad member or coach and his head coach of the disqualification.
- B. Within 24 hours of the contest **R and all officials who called the foul or witnessed the action** must complete the UIL or Private School Incident Report available at [www.taso.org](http://www.taso.org).
- C. Players who are disqualified from a game must remain in the team area for the remainder of the game.
- D. Coaches who are disqualified from a game may not be in the Playing Enclosure during the remainder of the game.

## SECTION 23. SIX-PLAYER FOOTBALL

### ARTICLE 1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES:

The exciting 'wide-open' style of play commonly found in Six Player football, combined with such rule differences as all players being eligible to touch a forward pass necessitates alternate officiating mechanics for those contests. The high percentage of forward passes and long runs requires officials to maintain a 'deep' mindset. When there are only three officials on the field, this deep mindset requires that each official on the field take a larger area of responsibility and the entire crew of three must work to coordinate their efforts.

The essential elements of the mechanics for a crew of three while officiating a Six-Player football game are the same as those included in this manual for the 11-player game with the Six-Player football rules applied.

### ARTICLE 2: SIX PLAYER FOOTBALL RULES

#### UIL EXCEPTION FOR SIX-PLAYER FOOTBALL:

General: Texas Six-Man Football Rules are the same as NCAA Football Rules with UIL Exceptions, except for the following variations. (Note: NCAA Rule References to the 2021 Rule Book are indicated in parenthesis).

#### NCAA RULES SIX-MAN RULES VARIATION

(1-1 & 2) 1. Each team has six players. Number of players changed to NO MORE THAN SIX players each in UIL Six Man Games. In UIL Six Man Games, a team needs at least six players to start the game and can play with five or four, but less than four available players should result in suspension of the contest. Unless necessary to use the eleven-man field, the six-man field is 80 yards by 40 yards, with the 40-yard line being the center of the field. The two inbound lines (hash marks) are 40 feet from the sidelines. There will also be marks that are measured 13 feet from the sidelines. Goal posts are 25 feet apart and the crossbar is 9 feet above the ground.

(1-1-3) 2. When one team is 45 or more points ahead at the end of the first half or if a team achieves a 45-point lead during the second half, the game is ended immediately. The UIL Exception to the NCAA tiebreaker system will be used when a game is tied after four periods. NCAA football-playing rules apply, with these exceptions:

- First overtime period – each team has an opportunity to be on offense from opponent's 25-yard line unless a change of possession results in a score. Team scoring a touchdown can attempt a 1 or 2 point try.
- Second overtime period – each team has an opportunity to be on offense from opponent's 25-yard line unless a change of possession results in a score. Team scoring a touchdown can only score on a 2-point try (place or drop kick).
- Third and subsequent periods – each team has an opportunity to be on offense for a 1-point try (run or pass) from the 7-yard line.

(3-2-1) 3. Length of quarters is 10 minutes; between quarters, 2 minutes. Between halves, 15 minutes.

For State Championship games only, halftime may be extended to a maximum of 20 minutes with coaches' concurrence.

- (3-5-3) 4. Team A may not break the huddle with more than 6 players nor keep more than 6 players in the huddle or in a formation for more than three seconds. Officials shall stop the action whether or not the ball has been snapped. PENALTY: Dead ball foul. 5 yards from previous spot (S22). Team B is allowed to briefly retain more than 6 players on the field to anticipate the offensive formation, but it may not have more than 6 players on the field when the ball is snapped. The infraction is a live-ball foul. PENALTY: Live-ball foul. 5 yards from previous spot (S22).
- (4-1-3-d) 5. During a try after touchdown the ball becomes dead when Team B gains possession or it is obvious that a kick is unsuccessful.
- (5-1-2-a) 6. Offense must advance 15 yards instead of 10 yards in four downs.
- (6-1-1/6-1-7) 7. Unless relocated by penalty, the kicking team's restraining line on a kickoff is the 30-yard line on a six-man field and the 20-yard line for a free kick after safety. The receiving team's free kick restraining line is 15 yards from the point of kickoff. There is no requirement to have a minimum number of players on either side of the kicker. If the result of a Free Kick is a touchback for Team B, and the placement of the ball is not relocated by penalty, the ball will next be put into play from Team B's 20-yard line.
- (6-1-3-a) 8. The ball must travel 15 yards on a kickoff (or place kick/punt after a safety) or be touched by the receiving team before members of the kicking team are eligible to touch it.
- (6-2-1) 9. A free kick out of bound between the goal lines untouched inbounds by a player of Team B is a foul (A.R. 3-IV). PENALTY—Live-ball foul. Five yards from the previous spot; or five yards from the spot where the subsequent dead ball belongs to Team B; or the receiving team may put the ball in play 20 yards beyond Team A's restraining line at the inbounds spot (S19).
- (6-5-1-a) 10. If a Team B player makes a fair catch of a Free Kick behind Team B's 20-yard line, Team B will next snap the ball at its own 20-yard line.
- (7-1-4) 11. Unless the ball is kicked or forward passed, it may not be advanced beyond the neutral zone until AFTER AN EXCHANGE has been made between the receiver of the snap and another player. EXCEPTION: Any player of Team A may advance a loose football after it has been touched by a Team B player. Forced touching of a ball by Team B is disregarded. PENALTY: 5 yards plus loss of down (illegal procedure) from previous spot (S19 & S9).  
An exchange is completed when possession of the football is gained by a receiver of the snap, given up **voluntarily or involuntarily** by the receiver of the snap, and possession is regained by another player of Team A.
- (7-1-4) 12. If the snap is muffed and a Team A player catches or recovers the ball beyond the neutral zone, he may not advance it. ENFORCEMENT: Loss of down from previous spot

(S9). PENALTY: Loss of down and 5 yards from the previous spot for illegal procedure is assessed if the Team A player advances or attempts to advance the ball (S19 & S9). If a Team A player catches or recovers the muffed snap behind the neutral zone, he may legally advance it only after a legal exchange.

(7-1-4-a-4) 13. No more than 3 Team A players shall be in the backfield at the snap.

(7-1-6) 14. The ball may be handed in any direction to any player during a scrimmage down behind the neutral zone. A lineman may receive a forward hand-off at any time and is not required to be 2 yards behind his line of scrimmage and does not have to face his goal prior to receiving the hand-off. EXCEPTION: The ball may not be handed forward to the snapper through his legs. PENALTY: 5 yards from previous spot and loss of down (S19 & S9).

(7-3) 15. The ball is dead when a passer catches his own forward pass (untouched by B), and it is ruled as an incomplete forward pass.

(7-3-3-c) 16. All players are eligible to catch a forward pass, except that a pass is ruled incomplete when caught by the passer (see preceding rule). If a forward pass is thrown to the snapper, it must travel at least one yard in flight.

(7-3-2-h) 17. It is not a foul if the passer is or has been outside the tackle box and throws the ball so that it crosses or lands beyond the neutral zone or neutral zone extended. (The last sentence of the exception is changed to read) This applies only to the receiver of the snap and the player who receives the legal exchange in the backfield.

(8-1-1) 18. Field goals count 4 points; successful try, 2 points if successful through place or drop kick and 1 point if successful by pass or run. The defense may not score on a try. Exception: 1 Point awarded to the defense for a Safety on the Try.

(9-1-14) 19. When a team is in an offensive or scrimmage kick formation, and no player is in position to take a hand-to-hand snap, a defensive player may not initiate contact with the snapper until one second has elapsed after the snap.

### ~ APPROVED RULINGS ~

#### Section 1: Exchanges:

- I. First down and 15 from A's 35. A10 throws a backward pass to A28 who muffs the ball. A10 picks it up and runs to B's 35. RULING: Illegal advance by A. Penalize 5 yards plus loss of down.
- II. First down and 15 from A's 25. A10 throws a backward pass. It strikes B72 and is loose on the ground. A10 picks up the ball and runs to the 40-yard line (midfield). RULING: A's ball first down and 15 on the 40. NOTE: by definition, when the ball strikes B72, it has been touched by Team B player.

- III. A15 hands the ball to A40. While still behind the line A40 hands the ball forward to A15 who advances beyond the line for a 10-yard gain. RULING: Legal advance by A15.
- IV. A12 receives the snap and possesses the ball. He hands the ball forward to A60, the snapper by handing it back between his legs. A60 advances 5 yards. RULING: Illegal Advance by Team A. PENALTY: 5 yards and loss of down.
- V. A15 receives the snap and hands off to A38. A38 fumbles the ball and it is picked up by A45 (1) behind the line of scrimmage; (2) beyond the line of scrimmage. A45 advances for 10-yard gain. RULING: A legal exchange has been made. A45 may advance the football in (1) & (2) as long as it is not fourth down.
- VI. A12 receives the snap and throws a backward pass to A45 who muffs it and is attempting to catch the ball (bobbling it) as he crosses the neutral zone. A45 then catches the ball and advances for a 5-yard gain. RULING: Illegal advance by A. PENALTY: 5 yards and loss of down.
- VII. A's ball first down and 15 at A's 20-yard line. A8 muffs the snap. It is picked up by A25 behind the neutral zone and advanced to A's 30. RULING: Illegal advance by A. Penalize 5 yards plus loss of down from the line of scrimmage. No legal exchange has been made since A25 was the first to possess the ball after the snap and then advanced the ball beyond the neutral zone without an exchange.
- VIII. A's ball second and 5 at A's 24. A13 receives the snap and fumbles the hand-off to A30. A30 recovers the fumble and hands the ball back to A13 who advances it to A's 32. RULING: A's ball first down and 15 at the 32-yard line.
- IX. A10 muffs the snap from A50. The ball rolls a few yards beyond the neutral zone where A6 (1) picks up the ball and advances; or (2) falls on the ball for the recovery. RULING: (1) Illegal, 5 yards previous spot plus loss of down. Penalty marker is dropped, play continues. (2) Legal recovery, no foul, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage, loss of down. A legal exchange has not been made prior to advancement of the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
- X. A25 receives the snap and immediately throws a backward pass to A40 who muffs it. A40 scoops up the ball from the ground and advances beyond the neutral zone. RULING: Legal, a backward pass has been thrown and a legal exchange has been completed.
- XI. A's ball first and 15 from B's 22. A10 receives the snap and hands the ball to A20. The ball is fumbled by A20 and A70 recovers at B's 19. RULING: Legal advance by A, unless it is 4th down.
- XII. A's ball 4th and 1 at B's 30. A10 receives the snap and fumbles the hand-off to A22. A22 picks up the football and advances to B's 25. RULING: Ball is dead when A22 picks up the football. No advance is allowed. NCAA Rule 4-1-3-j applies and prohibits

advance. A10 may pick up the loose ball and complete an exchange for a legal advance.

- XIII. Third down and 4 at the A-30. A10 receives the snap and possesses the ball. Rushing defender B55 is legally blocked by A61 and falls to the ground in front of A10. A10 reaches out with the ball and touches it to the shoulder pad of B55, and then runs the ball to the B-38 where he is tackled. RULING: Illegal advance for no legal exchange in the backfield. Forced touching is disregarded by rule. Penalize 5 yards from the previous spot and loss of down. A's ball 4th and 9 at the A-25.
- XIV. Team A lines up in scrimmage kick formation for either a Field Goal attempt or a 2-point Try. A19 muffs the snap and the kicker, A12, picks up the ball and:
- 1) Drop Kicks it through the uprights and over the cross bar
  - 2) Passes it forward to A56 in the end zone
  - 3) Makes a backwards pass to A19 who runs it into the end zone
  - 4) Runs the ball into the end zone
- Rulings: 1) Legal; 4 points for the Field Goal or 2 points for the Try
- 2) Legal; 6-point Touchdown for Field Goal attempt or 1 point for a Try
  - 3) Legal; 6-point Touchdown for Field Goal attempt of 1 point for a Try
  - 4) Foul for advancement beyond the neutral zone without an exchange.
- Enforcement: Field Goal attempt on 4th down - Assess the 5-yard penalty from the previous spot and loss of down; Team B's ball at the succeeding spot. Try – No points, and since the penalty includes loss of down, the Try is over. Team A will kick off from the A-30 unless relocated by subsequent penalty. Note that the 5-yard penalty for illegal advancement does not carry over to the kickoff.

## Section 2: Passing

- I. A15 attempts a forward pass which is batted in the air by B73. A15 catches the ball and advances it 10 yards. RULING: Legal. Ball was touched by B.
- II. First and 15 yards to go for A at their 15-yard line. A9 hands the ball forward to A30. A30 runs to the left and passes the ball to A60 while still behind the line of scrimmage. RULING: Legal pass by A30.
- III. A15 receives the snap and retreats 10 yards to his own 20-yard line. Due to a heavy pass rush, he immediately passes the ball to A50, his snapper, who is standing on the 21-yard line. RULING: Legal pass since the ball traveled at least one yard when passed to the snapper.
- IV. A8 attempts a pass at the line of scrimmage. B75 tips the ball and it is caught by A55, the snapper, at the line of scrimmage. The ball has only traveled 1/2 yard in the air. RULING: The tipping by B makes A55's reception a legal catch and A55 may advance the ball.

- V. A's ball 4th and 4 at B's 22. A10 throws a pass which strikes A73 and bounces into the air. A10 catches the ball and advances 5 yards where A10 fumbles the ball. RULING: Incomplete forward pass. B's ball first and 15 at their 22-yard line. (Six-Man Rule variation No's 15 & 16)

### Section 3: Other Plays

- I. Team A lines up at the line of scrimmage with three men on the scrimmage line next to each other in a three-point stance. A80 located on the right side of the snapper raises up and shifts out 7 yards. RULING: Since A80 is at the end of the line this is a legal shift.
- II. Team A lines up with four men on the line of scrimmage next to each other in a three-point stance. A62 who is covered up by A80 (1) raises up from his three-point stance before the snap; or (2) receives a forward hand-off and advances 4 yards; or (3) catches a forward pass 10 yards beyond the line of scrimmage. RULING: (1) False start. (2) & (3) Legal.
- III. Team A lines up with 4 men on the scrimmage line next to each other. A88, on the end line, leaves his position and goes in motion before the snap. At the snap, he is (1) moving toward his opponent's goal line; (2) moving away from his opponent's goal line and 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage. RULING: (1) Illegal motion since A88 cannot be moving toward his opponent's goal. (2) Illegal motion by A88. He must set for one second after leaving line. A lineman may not be in motion at the snap.
- IV. Team A's kickoff from their 30-yard line rolls out of bounds untouched inbounds by Team B at B's 38. RULING: B may snap the ball at their own 38 (penalty declined), 30 (20-yards in advance of the spot of the kick), Team A's 37 (5-yards in advance of the out-of-bounds spot), or accept the penalty against A for illegal procedure and have Team A re-kick from the A-25.
- V. B is leading 60-19. They return the second half kickoff 65 yards for a touchdown. RULING: Game ends.
- VI. B is leading 50-10 in the second half. B intercept's A's pass and returns it 16 yards for a touchdown. B44 clips on the run back. RULING: If A declines the penalty the game ends and there will be no try for point.
- VII. A's ball 4th down and 5 from their 20-yard line. A14 punts the ball which is blocked and goes straight up in the air. A45 catches the punt behind the line of scrimmage and advances to the 40-yard line. RULING: Legal advance by A, first down and 15 yards to go.
- VIII. Team A attempts a try from any legal point and:

(1) Team B recovers a legal fumble, picks it up and advances the ball into Team A's end zone; or

(2) Team B intercepts a fumble or forward pass and advances the ball into Team A's end zone; or

(3) Team B blocks the try and gains legal possession and advances the ball into Team A's end zone; or

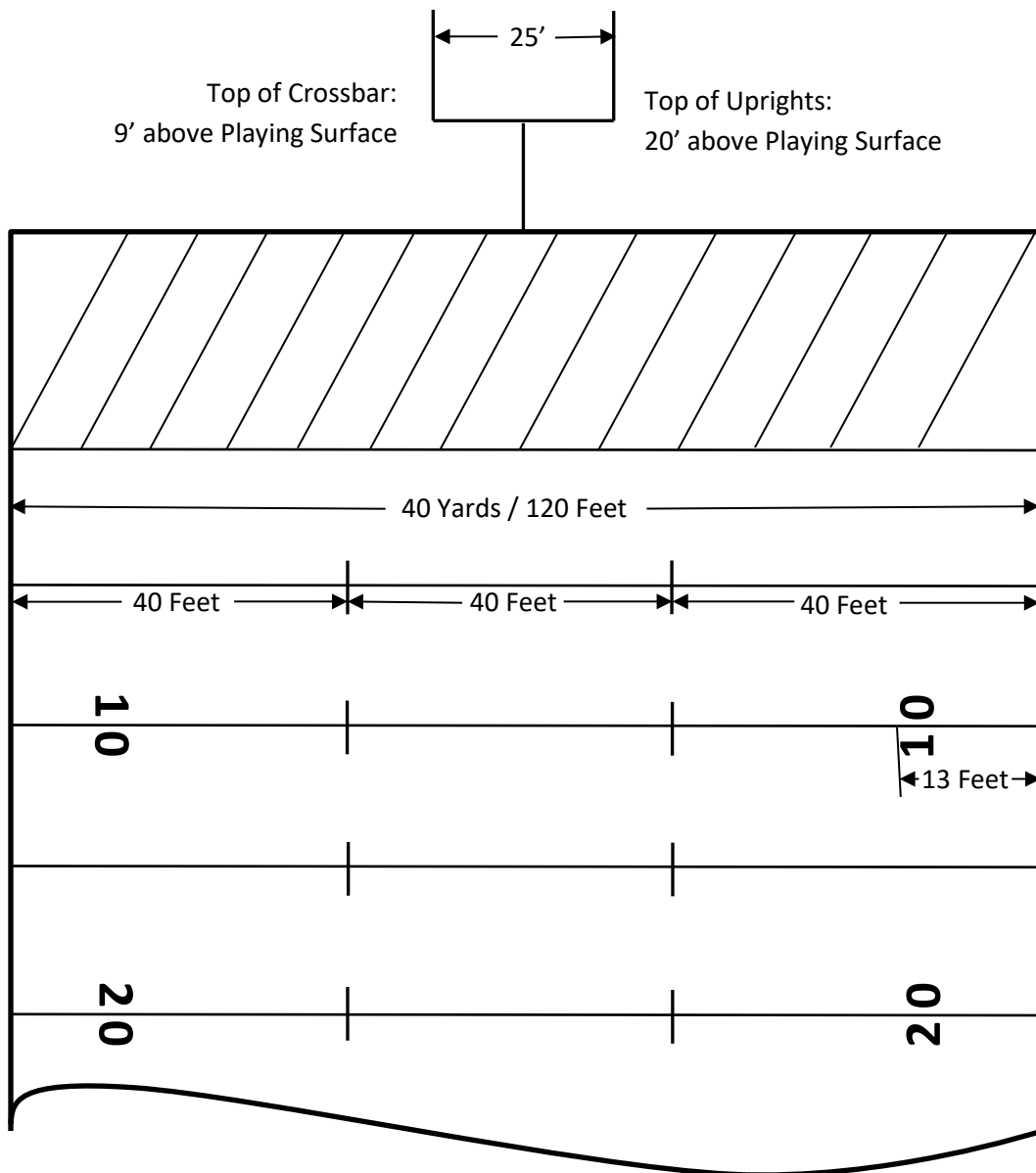
(4) Team B blocks the try and A12 picks up the ball and advances into Team B's end zone.

**RULING:** No score in all cases. Ball is dead on the try when Team B gains possession or it is obvious that the kick is unsuccessful.



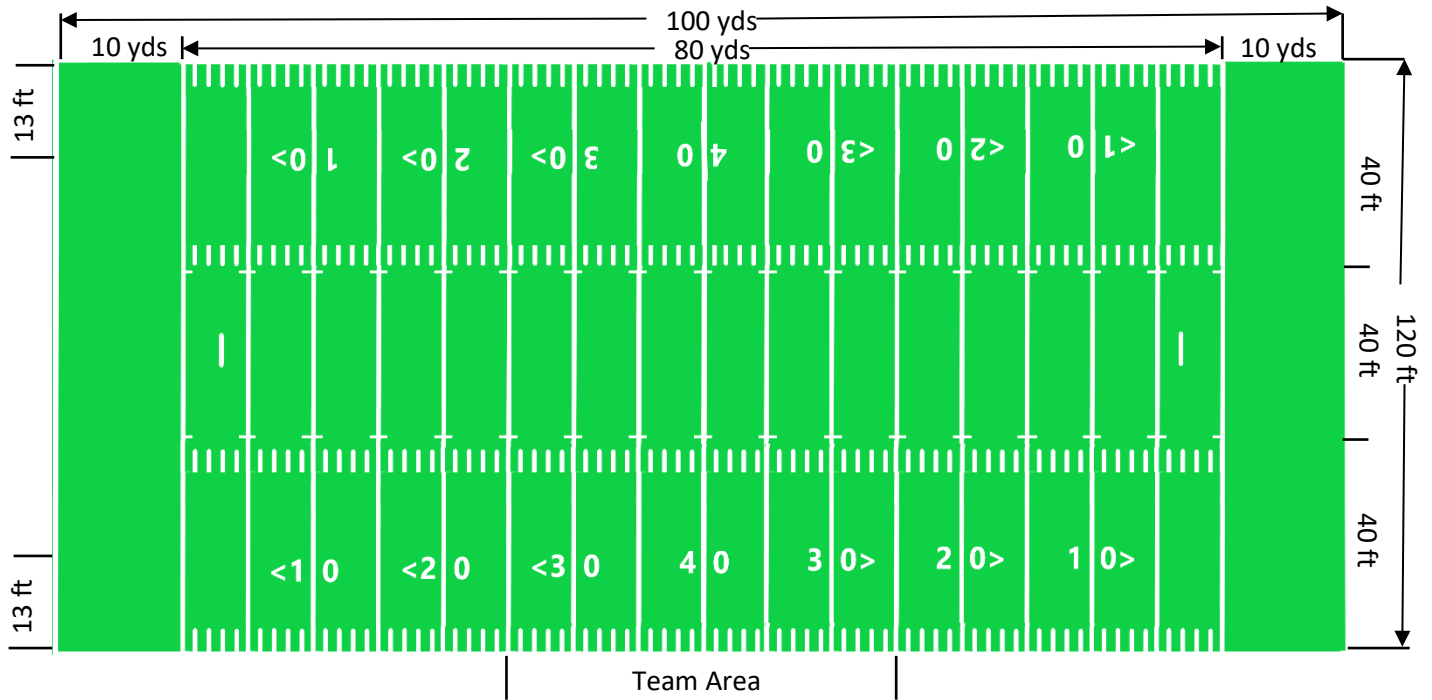
# SIX-MAN FOOTBALL

## GOALPOST DIMENSIONS



# SIX-MAN FOOTBALL

## FIELD DIMENSIONS



## SECTION 24. TASO OFFICIATING PHILOSOPHIES

### Guidelines and Tips for Texas High School Football

Officiating Philosophies, Points of Emphasis, Guidelines, and Tips are to be used in connection with the 2021 NCAA Football Rules, Texas High School Football Rule Exceptions, and TASO Football Officiating Mechanics. They are not intended to be in conflict with any rule, exception, or mechanic. An Officiating Philosophy is not part of the rules. Points of Emphasis are special actions we want to take before, during, and after the game. Guidelines are to help simplify some rule and game situations. Tips are saying and advise that has been passed down and shared among officials.

Officiating Philosophies do not take the place of common sense and good judgment by officials. They are not intended to replace the continued study of the Rule Book and Mechanics Manual. They are an aid to officials in an attempt to provide consistency in officiating certain types of plays, so as much as possible, eliminate the differences from crew to crew, game to game, week to week, and chapter to chapter.

#### Abbreviations used:

<b>CHB</b> ....Chop Block	<b>KO</b> ..... Kickoff
<b>CLP</b> ....Clipping	<b>LTG</b> .... Line to Gain
<b>COP</b> ....Change of Possession	<b>LOS</b> ... Line of Scrimmage
<b>DH</b> .....Defensive Holding	<b>NZ</b> ..... Neutral Zone
<b>DOG</b> ...Delay of Game	<b>OFK</b> ... Offside Free Kick
<b>DOF</b> ....Defense Offside	<b>OH</b> ..... Offensive Holding
<b>DPI</b> .....Defensive Pass Interference	<b>OB</b> ..... Out of Bounds
<b>DQ</b> .....Disqualification	<b>OPI</b> ..... Offensive Pass Interference
<b>EZ</b> .....End Zone	<b>PF</b> ..... Personal Foul
<b>FOP</b> ....Field of Play	<b>POA</b> ... Point of Attack
<b>FST</b> ....False Start	<b>RPS</b> ... Roughing the Passer
<b>GL</b> .....Goal Line	<b>RTH</b> ... Roughing the Holder
<b>IBB</b> .....illegal Block in the Back above the Waist	<b>RTK</b> ... Roughing the Kicker
<b>IDP</b> .....Illegally Downfield on Pass	<b>TB</b> ..... Touchback
<b>IFP</b> .....Illegal Forward Pass	<b>TD</b> ..... Touchdown
<b>ILF</b> .....Illegal Formation	<b>T. O.</b> ... Time Out
<b>ILS</b> .....Illegal Substitution	<b>UNR</b> ... Unnecessary Roughness
<b>ILM</b> .....Illegal Motion	<b>UNS</b> ... Unsportsmanlike Conduct

**Aiding the Runner:**

- A foul only if the runner is “picked up” by teammates or if he is “pulled” into end zone by a teammate.
- It is not a foul if “driven” into the end zone or forward by his teammates.
- Most of the time, this happens near the GL or short yardage situations, but illegal and legal actions apply anywhere on the field.

**Announcements:**

- Practice your microphone skills. The fans love this part of the game.
- Practice even when you do not have a microphone.
- Be sure to turn the microphone off after your announcement.

**Backward Pass:**

- When in question, the pass is forward, not backward.
- When the QB’s hand starts forward with the ball, rule the pass forward even if he is contacted and the ball goes backward.

**Bean Bags:**

- Fumbles: Officials shall drop the bean bag only when they see the ball fumbled, not when they see the ball loose.
- Punts: Officials shall drop the bean at the spot the kick ends or the spot of illegal touching.
- Be accurate. You are marking a potential enforcement spot.  
Do not drop your bean bag after an interception, except when inside the 5-yard line.

**Blocking:**

- If there is a potential OH, but the action occurs clearly away from the POA and has no (or could have no) effect on the play, OH should not be called.
- It is not blocking below the waist if the initial contact is above the waist, and the blocker then slides down and makes contact below the waist.
- To be a foul for IBB, the initial contact of the block must be from behind and above the waist. When in question, the block is below the waist. First contact is the key, not the position of the blockers helmet.
- It is not a foul for IBB if the initial contact is from the side.
- If the blocker is in a CHASE MODE, ALL of the contact must be on the side.
- You should not call OH on a double team block unless there is a takedown or the defender breaks the double team and is pulled back.
- A block from behind below the waist is a CLP. Clipping is legal if within the Tackle Box and above the knee if the ball has not left the Tackle Box.
- If a defender has beaten the blocker, be alert for OH. If he is beat, the blocker is going to cheat. Watch the feet.

**Ball Persons:**

- Have good communication and a good pre-game meeting.
- Keep them in the game. Keep them off of the field.
- Tell them you will let them know when you want a new ball. Don't let them make that decision.

**Catch:**

- If the process of the catch includes going to the ground, the receiver must maintain possession of the ball when he contacts the ground to be awarded a catch. The ground can cause an incompletion. This is the same in the FOP and the EZ.
- These requirements are the same for interceptions and fumble recoveries.
- There is a difference in the ball moving within the receivers control and moving from a loss of control.
- If the receiver is contacted simultaneously with or immediately after he controls the ball with one foot down and loses possession, rule the pass incomplete.
- A play that would be ruled a catch/fumble in the field of play would be ruled a catch/TD in the end zone.

**Catchable Forward Pass:**

- For a pass to be ruled uncatchable, it must be BLATANTLY uncatchable. If there is any question the pass shall be ruled catchable.
- Give the uncatchable signal only if you would have thrown a flag for OPI or DPI if the pass had been catchable.

**Chain Crew:**

- Remind the chain crew they are part of the officiating crew and are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. No cheering or comments. Instruct them to move only on the H's signal.
- If TASO Officials are on the chain, include them as much as you can.

**Chop Block:**

- High: If a blocker is engaged with the defender above the waist, a teammate may not block the engaged player below the waist. A high/high block is legal.
- Low: if a blocker is engaged with the defender below the waist, a teammate may not block the engaged player above the waist. A low/low block is legal.
- It is a foul for a CHB even if the high blocker has just disengaged with the defender when the low blocker contacts the defender.
- There must be contact by both the high and the low blocker to be a CHB foul.

**Clocks:**

- Game Clock: The Referee may make any clock adjustments necessary.
- Game Clock: If an official sees time remaining on the Game Clock, when a timeout is called, put time back on the game clock even if reads 0:00 when the officials get the game stopped for the timeout.

- Play Clock: Once the play clock reads: 00 the official will look for the ball. If the ball is still on the ground and not in the process of being snapped it is a foul for DOG. If the ball is being snapped, no foul for DOG.
- Play Clock: The Referee may reset the play clock to: 25 if necessary.
- If the clock operators do not come to the dressing room prior to the game report it to the Athletic Director. If they are TASO Officials, report it to the Chapter.
- If time is being kept on the field turn the scoreboard clock off.
- Know the signals used if the play clocks are not working. Turn both off if one is not working.
- Be sure the crew has a watch to time if necessary.
- If the game clock has less than 0:02 seconds remaining when ball is snapped, this will be the last play of the game unless the period is extended by rule.

**Coach to Coach Communication System:**

- This is not covered by the rules, and the officials are not involved.
- If one team's communication goes down, the officials may notify the other Coach, however, there is no rule of Equity and no obligation for the other team to put theirs down unless there is a district rule

**Coin Toss:**

- Make this a memorable experience for the captains and their families.
- Make the captain call the toss before you toss the coin. Repeat his choice back to him.
- Let the coin hit the ground. Give good signals to the Press Box.

**Consistency:**

- Coaches want consistency in what is and is not a foul so they know what to coach.
- Do not call a foul in the 4<sup>th</sup> Q that you passed on earlier in the game.
- Do not pass on a call in the 4<sup>th</sup> Q that you called earlier in the game.
- Do not call a foul near the goal line that you passed on near midfield.
- Do not pass on a call near the goal line that you called near midfield.
- Be consistent in marking the ball ready for play throughout the game.

**End of Game:**

- If an offensive team goes into a victory formation, officials should use common sense officiating and make every attempt to not call fouls that have no bearing on the outcome of the game.
- Personal Fouls and Player Safety Fouls should always be called regardless of time and score.
- If the Referee stops play for any reason, the game is suspended and not over.
- The official's jurisdiction ends when the game is over.

**Equipment:**

- Both teams must certify in writing before the game that all of their players are equipped according to rule and have been instructed the proper use of their equipment.

- If equipment becomes illegal through play, the team will not be charged a T.O. however, the player must leave the game until the illegal equipment is corrected.

**Face Mask:**

- Touching the Face Mask or a grab and release is not a foul. There must be a pull or twist and turn to be a foul.
- The grab, pull, twist, and turn of any helmet opening is a foul.
- Face Mask restrictions apply to the offense and defense.

**False Start:**

- A flinch is a flinch and a FST. This applies to both Lineman and Backs.
- If an ineligible offensive player is going from a 2-point stance to a 3-point stance when the ball is snapped, this is a FST.
- If an eligible offensive player is going from a 2-point stance to a 3-point stance when the ball is snapped is ILM.
- QB head bobs or jerks are FST. QB hard counts are not fouls.
- Ineligible offensive lineman who have their hand on or near the ground can turn and look at the QB to hear the signals if they are slow and do not lift their hand.
- Pointing at the defender as part of the offensive signals is not a FST.
- If the snapper flinches, head bobs, or moves the ball, this is a FST. Especially if this is only done on 4<sup>th</sup> downs or short yardage situations.
- Be alert for the defense calling the offensive snap count that causes a FST.
- A defender making a non-football move that causes the offense to FST is a foul for DOG.

**Field:**

- If both teams are on the field, an official must be on the field to keep the teams separated. Jurisdiction is 60 minutes prior to KO, but use good judgment if there is a potential for problems.
- The Referee will request a change to anything in, on, or around the field he believes is unsafe.

**Flags**

- There is no such thing as a "late flag". Sometimes, it is necessary to wait until all of the action has stopped to make a ruling.
- Go slow. See the play, read the play, then, make the call.
- There is no such thing as "that's not your call ". All officials are responsible for their primary area and secondarily responsible for ruling on action legal or illegal anywhere on the field.
- Do not throw flags at players. Throw your flag up in the air unless it is a spot foul.

**Fighting:**

- If player actions are deemed to be "fighting", the player must be DQ.
- When in question, such actions will be deemed pushing and not fighting.
- If players come off of the bench on to the field, they are deemed to be fighting by rule.
- In the pre-game, be sure the Coach understands this is an automatic DQ by rule.

**Formations Defense:**

- A defender is considered on the LOS if any part of his body is inside the rearmost part of a down lineman's body.

- If the snapper adjusts or moves the ball forward after the defense has established position on the LOS, the defense should not be penalized for DOF as they have been put into this position by actions of the offense.

#### **Formations Offensive:**

- Officials will work to keep offensive lineman legal and call ILF only when obvious or when warnings to the Player or Coach are ignored.
- Do not wait until the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter to start enforcing this rule.
- A wide receiver or slot back is covering up a tight end if there is no stagger. When in question, it is not a foul.
- Do not be technical in determining if a wide receiver or slot back is on or off the LOS. When in question, it is not a foul.

#### **Free Kicks:**

- The kicking team restraining line for regular deep or pooch kicks will be a SOFT plane, and the officials will not be technical on calling OFK.
- The kicking teams restraining line for an onside kick will be a HARD plane, and the officials will call OFK if the kickers (other than the kicker) break the plane of the kicking teams restraining line before the ball is kicked.
- The receiving team restraining line is a plane, and a kickoff has gone 10 yards when the ball has broken the plane and remains beyond the plane of the receiving teams restraining line. (The wind could blow it back)
- If the kickoff results in a TB or Fair Catch do not call a foul for an illegal wedge formation or OH.

#### **Fumbles:**

- When in question, the runner fumbled the ball and was not down.
- When in question, the ball is passed and not fumbled during an attempted forward pass.
- The ground cannot cause a fumble. If the runner with the ball in his possession, contacts the ground with something other than his hand or foot and the ball comes out simultaneous with the contact the ball becomes dead. You cannot fumble a dead ball.

#### **Fouls:**

- See the play, read the play, make the call. Go slow in calling fouls.
- If you think it's a foul it is not. If you know it's a foul it is.
- If you don't see the entire play don't throw a flag.

#### **Game Balls:**

- There is no such thing as a kicking ball. All balls submitted for approval prior to the game must be rotated in and out of the game as necessary.
- When the U places the ball on the ground, he has deemed the ball acceptable for play.
- Do not let a team request a new ball late in the 25 count to keep from getting a DOG
- Good crew ball mechanics is a very important part of the game.
- The crew must have an air pressure test gauge, an air pump, and a marker, to test, inflate and mark the game balls in case the officials' dressing room does not have these items.

#### **Game Control:**

- Control of the game is not lost in one play. It happens a play at a time until control is lost.
- Preventive officiating will keep the game pace and eliminate potential fouls.



- “Let them play” does not mean let them foul.
- Fouls that create an unfair advantage or player safety should be called anytime during the game regardless of time and score.

**Goal Line:**

- When in question it is not a Touchdown.
- When considering whether or not a receiver has taken the ball out of the end zone on a kick, interception, or recovery, it is the position of the ball rather than the position of the player or his feet that will determine if the entire ball is out of the end zone.
- The entire ball must be in the FOP or it is a touchback or safety when coming out.
- The entire Goal Line is in the end zone.
- When in question a foul occurred in the FOB and not in the end zone
- Consider an interception or catching a kick inside the 1-yard line to be in the end zone.

**Hide Out & Trick Plays:**

- Formations and actions during the execution of a trick or unusual plays must be completely legal.
- Any play that uses a substitution to deceive as part of the play is illegal.
- If a play can only be run in front of a team's bench area it is probably illegal.
- Officials must be aware of all substitutions, especially ones that could create an ILS foul.
- A player may fake a spike and throw a pass.
- A player may not fake “taking a knee”. This makes the ball dead.

**Holding Defense:**

- It is not DH if the defender is restricting the offensive player in a personal attempt to get to the ball or the runner.
- A grab of the receiver's jersey that restricts and takes away his feet is DH.
- Do not call DH if the action occurs clearly away from the POA and has no effect on the play.
- If a defender holds and restricts an offensive player and a teammate shoots the gap this is DH
- If the defender holds and restricts an offensive player and no one shoots the gap this is not DH unless this action prevents the offensive player from getting to their blocking assignment. (next level)

**Holding Offensive:**

- To have OH there must be a clear and visible material restriction: a pull, a yank, or a jerk.
- Make the defense “show you something” Like trying to get away.
- Categories of OH: Tackle, Pullover, Grab & Restrict, Hook & Restrict, Take Down, Jerk & Restrict.

**Horse Collar Tackle:**

- To have a Horse Collar Tackle the runner does not have to be tackled. If the immediate action buckles the runner's knees but he is strong enough to fight through the action it is still a foul.
- It is not a foul for a Horse Collar Tackle inside the tackle box.

**Illegal Forward Pass:**

- The second forward pass from behind the LOS is IFP.
- If beyond the LOS the spot from where the ball was first touched or hits the ground must be in advance of the spot where the ball was released to be IFP.
- For the QB to be called for IFP the QB's ENTIRE BODY and the BALL must be beyond the LOS when he RELEASES the ball.

**Ineligible Downfield:**

- For a restricted offensive player to be illegally downfield on a forward pass that crosses the LOS the ENTIRE player's body must have been more than 3 yards past the LOS before pass is RELEASED to have a foul for IDP.
- If the QB is throwing the ball away do not call IDP.

**Intentional Grounding:**

- The QB can throw the ball anywhere if he is not under pressure. Exception: Cannot spike the ball to stop the clock unless it is immediately after the snap.
- The QB can throw the ball at the feet of an eligible receiver even if he is not looking.
- If the QB is outside the pocket and throws the ball away to avoid a sack and there is a question as to if the ball went beyond the LOS rule that it did.

**Kicking a Loose Ball:**

- When in question, if a loose ball was kicked, it will be ruled accidental and not a foul.
- Intentionally kicking a loose ball and illegally kicking the ball are not the same.

**Leaping:**

- Jumping straight up to block a Try or FG is not a foul. Landing on a player is the foul.
- Know who on the defense is in a restricted leaping position.
- It is a foul to leap over a blocker behind the NZ (punt shield) when attempting to block a kick.

**Line of Scrimmage:**

- Defensive players who jump into the NZ and are moving back will be ruled to be DOF anytime there is a question as to did they get back on side before the snap.
- If the defense is crowding the NZ, any forward movement by the defense puts them into the neutral zone.
- 2 Offensive Players Protected: If a defender moves into the NZ in the gap between 2 offensive linemen causing one of the linemen to react it is a foul for DOF.
- 3 Offensive Players Protected: If a defender moves into the NZ head up on an offensive lineman causing that lineman or an adjacent lineman on either side to react it is a foul for DOF.
- Backs and Split Receivers are not protected.
- The defender must be in the NZ when the offense moves for this to be DOF.
- If the offense moves and the defender was not in the NZ this is a FST.
- Contact by the defense prior to the snap is DOF.
- The defense cannot touch the ball after it has been made ready for play.
- Rule a defender as "unabated" when his charge takes him past the hip of the offensive tackle before the ball is snapped.

**Measurements:**

- Always allow a reasonable request for a measurement.
- Do not allow a team a measurement to keep from a DOG penalty.
- Do not allow a measurement after a touchback. The ball must touch the appropriate yard line to be a first down.
- Do not allow a measurement after a kickoff OB that was spotted 30 yards from the kickoff spot. The ball must touch the appropriate yard line to be a first down.
- Be sure the Press Box or TV cameras have a clear view of the measurement.
- Rotate the ball with the nose facing the goal line before measuring.
- Don't move the ball then measure.
- Hold the ball to keep it from moving prior to the measurement.
- Be sure the chain has tape in the middle. Never walk off a 5-yard penalty then measure.

**Momentum:**

- If a pass is intercepted near the goal line (inside the 1-yard line) and there is a question as to whether possession is gained in the FOP or the EZ, make it a TB.
- If intercepted inside the 5-yard line and the players momentum take him into the EZ where he goes down, give him the ball at the spot of the interception.
- Use the same philosophy in ruling if the catcher of a free or scrimmage kick should be a TB or possession in the FOP.

**Out of Bounds:**

- If you think a runner stepped OB he did not.
- Throw your hat when an eligible receiver steps OB.

**Overtime:**

- You must know the Overtime Rules and if the District plays Positive Points.

**Pass Interference Defense:**

- There must be contact to have DPI and the legal pass must be untouched and catchable by rule.
- There can be no DPI on a pass that does not cross the LOS. There can be DH but not DPI.
- There is no face guarding rule.
- Both offensive and defense have equal rights to the ball.
- No DPI on an eligible receiver who went OB on his own.
- Most DPI fouls will fall into these categories:
  - Not playing the ball
  - Playing through the back of the receiver.
  - Grabbing the receiver's arm.
  - Arm Bar to slow receiver down.
  - Cutoff the receiver's route.
  - Hook & Turn. Must turn before ball gets there. Hand on back or waist is not a foul without the turn
- DPI is not coached.

**Pass Interference Offense:**

- Blocking downfield on a pass that crosses the LOS.
- Push off creating separation

- Pick plays.
- Must be more than 1 yard beyond the LOS to be a foul.
- Do not call OPI or IDP if an attempted screen pass is overthrown and lands beyond the LOS.
- OPI is coached.

**Personal Fouls:**

- Spitting on an opponent is a DQ.
- When late hits occur away from the ball near the end of the play, when in question make them dead ball PF not live ball.
- Flagrant PF is a DQ.
- Contact fouls are UNR. Non-contact fouls are UNS.

**Pocket:**

- Pocket is not an NCAA Rule Book term. The rule book uses the term Tackle Box.
- The pocket (tackle box) goes from tackle to tackle all the way back to the passers end line.
- The pocket (tackle box) goes away when the ball leaves the pocket and does not come back even if the ball comes back into the original pocket area.

**Pre-game**

- A good pre-game conference is vital to the success of the crew.
- Use the time on the field during warm ups to get some snaps and reps at your position.

**Professionalism:**

- From the time you arrive at the stadium until you leave, how you dress, act, talk, and treat other people is a reflection on you, your fellow officials, and your Chapter.

**Pylon:**

- The Goal Line pylon is OB behind the goal line.
- If the ball in player possession touches the Goal Line pylon it is a TD.
- A player who touches the Goal Line or End Line pylon is OB
- A loose ball that touches any pylon is OB.
- The End Line Pylon is OB and not part of the end zone.

**Roughing/Running into Holder, Kicker and Passer**

- The holder can be roughed. Be careful in calling running into the holder. Remember he can get up and run. If contact is very late it is RTH.
- When in question it is RTK. If the defender hits the kicker's plant leg it is RTK. If he hits his kicking leg it can be either RTK or RNK.
- When in question it is RPS if the defender is attempting to punish.
- RPS can be the result of a legal hit that was late.

**Sideline:**

- Use common sense in working with the team on your sideline to stay back.
- Let them coach but don't let them interfere with you doing your job.
- Sideline control is a safety issue.
- Good communication with your sideline is an important part of the game.
- Be respectful and reply to questions. Do not reply to comments.

- Conduct sideline conferences with the Coach on the sideline. Not on the field.

**Signals:**

- The dead ball signal kills the play just like a whistle.
- Good signals by the officials make the game play better.
- Do not signal TD unless you are the covering official. Don't repeat another official's TD signal.

**Spots:**

- Always mark the forward progress spot with your downfield foot.
- Spot the ball with the same pace throughout the game unless there is an up-tempo offense or time is running out. Do not let a hurry up offense take you out of your game. Hustle to get the ball spotted when necessary but you must mechanically do your pre snap responsibilities first even in a hurry up offense.
- The ball should be spotted where it was when it became dead not where it became dead.
- The wrist is part of the hand and the ankle is part of the foot. Rule a player down when something other than his hand or foot touches the ground.
- The back of the hand does not make the runner down.
- **H & L** practice cross field mechanics.
- Know when you see a double action. Don't give the runner too much progress.
- If the penalty for a foul says it is from the previous spot, go back to where the ball was snapped and then enforce the penalty yardage for the foul.

**Targeting:**

- When in question, it is a foul for targeting.
- When there is no question there is a foul for targeting, it shall be deemed to be a flagrant foul and the penalty will include disqualification, regardless the number targeting fouls the player has previously committed during the game.

**Touchdown:**

- If the ball in player possession breaks the plane of the goal line it is a TD and the ball becomes dead. Go slow in ruling TD. Look at the other officials if you need help before you signal.
- Your TD signal kills the play and the ball becomes dead.

**Touching the Ball:**

- If a player who is passive and not blocking is blocked into the ball, he is not deemed to have touched the ball.
- If a player who is active and blocking touches the ball it is touching.
- On a punt when in question the ball was not touched by kickers or receivers.

**Trys & Field Goals:**

- The 4<sup>th</sup> down fumble rule applies on try.
- A kick that hits the cross bar or upright can score a goal, otherwise it becomes a dead ball.
- A pass, free kick, punt, or fumble that hits the goal post is dead.
- Check with the Offense before spotting the ball for a 2 point try. They may want to put it on the right or left hash mark. If it is placed at a hash mark by request of the offense it can only be moved if the offense calls a T. O.

**Unsportsmanlike Conduct:**

- Allow for brief, spontaneous, emotional reactions at the end of plays.
- Do not allow prolonged actions or taunting actions made toward an opponent.
- Actions such as throat slash, gun references, sexual motions, spiking the ball, or actions that are aimed to draw attention are UNS fouls.
- Kicking or throwing an official's flag is a DQ.
- A player disqualifies himself. We only enforce the rule.

**Video:**

- Watch and study as much video of yourself and others as possible.
- Watch games on TV from your position.
- Practice your keys when watching TV or video.

**Weather:**

- Know the weather and lightning rules for stopping and restarting the game.

**Whistles:**

- Officials are instructed to blow the whistle only when they see the ball dead in player possession.
- It does not matter what type of whistle you use or if you have it in your mouth or not during the play.
- What matters is why and when you blow the whistle.
- There will be no inadvertent whistles if the officials go slow and blow the ball dead only when it becomes dead by rule.

**X's & O's**

- Learn some football coaching terms.
- This will help when communicating with coaches.

**Yard Lines:**

- The ball can be spotted on a yard line to begin a new series after a COP. Exception: If the COP occurs after a failure to make the LTG because of an incomplete forward pass or a run that was short of the LTG after a measurement you do not move the ball.
- At all other times the ball will be spotted where it becomes dead.

**Zones:**

- Know your zones.
- Tackle Box
- Legal Clipping Zone
- Legal Blocking Below the Waist Zone
- Neutral Zone
- Side Zone
- Outside/ Inside numbers.
- Free kick blocking zone

## PRE-GAME CONFERENCE IN DRESSING ROOM

- ALL** Coordinate watches. Review rule changes and bulletins. Check equipment; Whistle, plus spare, flag, game cards and pencil, bean bag(s) and down indicator, watch, clip, etc.
- R, L** Conduct pre-game conference with coaches (Home Team Coach first) one hour fifteen minutes prior to game time.
- R** Take over game balls and instruct ball persons.
- L** Have correct time of day and extra stopwatch. Have instructions to clock operators.
- H** Work chain opposite press box.
- R** Discuss with coaches; time of day, half time intermission, five-minute notification (half time) and unusual plays. Arrange for the chain and chain crew (home team responsible, but visiting team may provide crew member(s)) unless crew is previously assigned. Ensure that exact center of the chain is marked. Captains report to 50-yard line the toss, 4 minutes before game time.
- R** Time everything except the game.
- L** Responsible for the field clock. Time the game if clock is inoperative.
- ALL** Mark forward progress without fanfare and hold until you are sure **R** has the spot. Keep written record of toss, timeouts, all accepted fouls, disqualifications and sideline warnings. Know status and position of ball on fouls. Report jersey color on possession of fumbles. Discuss dig-out procedure. Know when to start and stop clock. Know down and distance of each play. Use proper ball retrieval mechanics. HUSTLE!

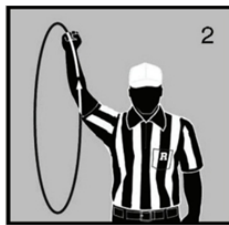
## APPROVED SIGNALS



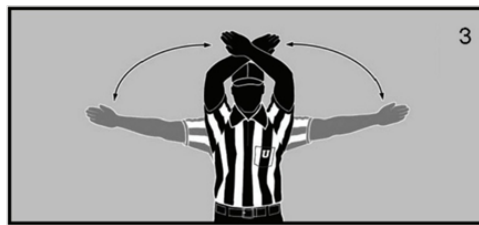
### Official Football Signals



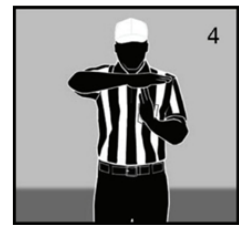
1  
Ready for play  
\*Untimed down



2  
Start the clock



3  
Stop the clock



4  
TV/radio timeout



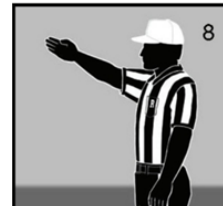
5  
Touchdown  
Field Goal



6  
Safety



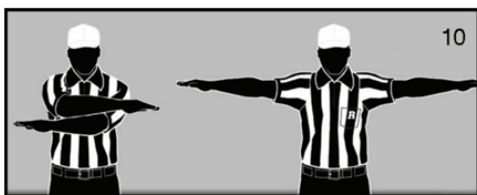
7  
Dead-ball foul/  
touchback  
(move side to side)



8  
First down



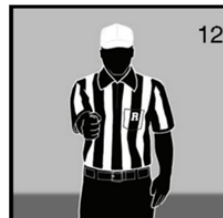
9  
Loss of down



10  
Incomplete pass/unsuccessful try or  
field goal/penalty declined/  
coin toss option deferred



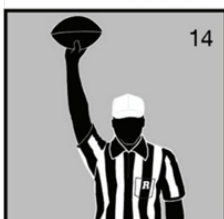
11  
Legal touching



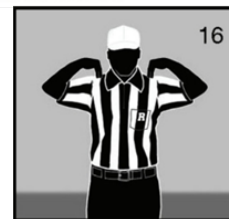
12  
Inadvertent whistle



13  
Disregard flag



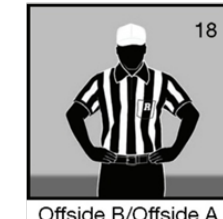
14  
End of period



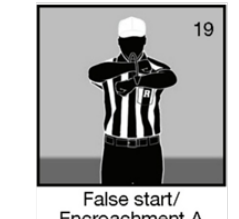
16  
Illegal touching



17  
Uncatchable pass



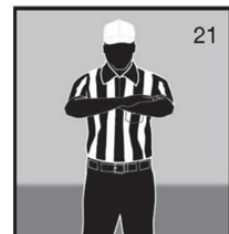
18  
Offside B/Offside A  
or B on kickoff



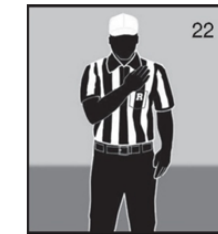
19  
False start/  
Encroachment A  
Illegal formation



20  
Illegal motion (1 hand)  
Illegal shift (2 hands)



21  
Delay of game



22  
Substitution  
infraction





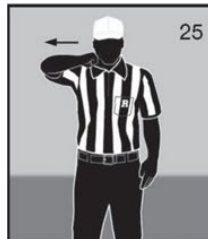
## Official Football Signals



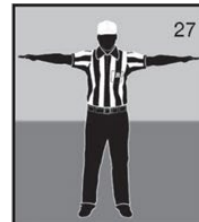
Equipment violation



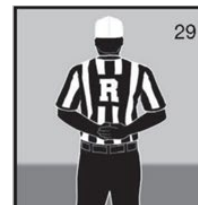
Targeting



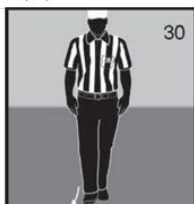
Horse-collar



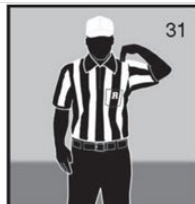
Unsportsmanlike conduct



Sideline interference  
Note: Face press box when giving signal.



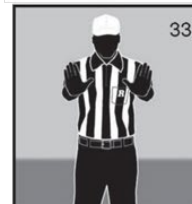
Running into or roughing the kicker or holder



Illegal batting/kicking  
(for illegal kicking, follow with a point toward foot)



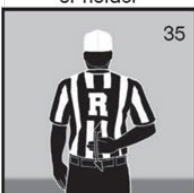
Illegal fair catch



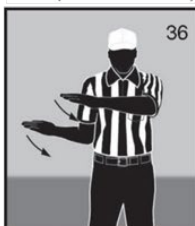
Pass interference  
Kick-catching interference



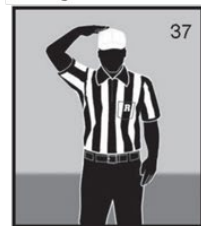
Roughing the passer



Illegal pass  
Illegal forward handing  
Note: Face press box when giving signal.



Intentional grounding



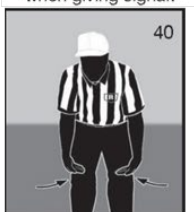
Ineligible downfield on pass



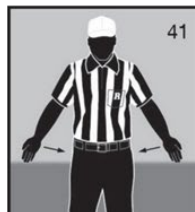
Personal foul



Clipping



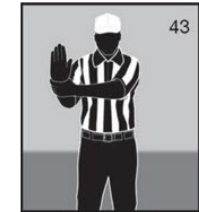
Block below the waist  
Illegal block



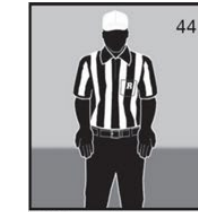
Chop block



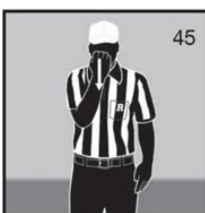
Holding  
Obstructing  
Illegal use of the hands or arms



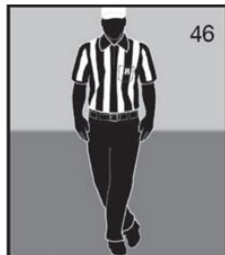
Illegal block in the back



Helping the runner  
Interlocked blocking



Grasping of face mask or helmet opening



Tripping



Disqualification