

PRE-GAME CHECKLIST – REFEREE



POINTS OF EMPHASIS		
• SLOW DOWN!!	• Process the play	• Get crew involved (conference) so they can communicate with coaches.
• Make it BIG!	• If you “think”, it’s NOT	• Any forcible contact to QB above shoulders is a foul.
• Take enough time to get it right.	• Run-OOB-Clock- RFP	• Give a preliminary signal to press box if multiple fouls or a delay in announcement.
• Be sure, then flag	• Know Clock Status	• Play clock status on injury: 0:40 defense & 0:25 offense
• Know when under 2 minutes left in either half.	• Helmet-Off Play Clock Rules 0:40 defense & 0:25 offense	• Look coaches in the face, eye to eye; be honest and sincere.
• Know Helmet Off, Eligibility, & Timing Rules. Helmet off player re-engages or blocked = Personal Foul		
Be the calming influence when a coach is upset and wants an answer.		
PRE-GAME		
• Enter field with entire crew	• Know location of game day manager/security!	
• Meet both coaches’ w/crew - Introductions & discussions.	• Review Position Mechanics prior to game day.	
• Discuss pertinent information from coaches with the crew	• Work plays, observe kickers, talk with QB’s	
• Check with game management about weather & lighting evacuation procedures.	• Check – Game Clock & Visible Play Clock	
• Sportsmanship talk with team on SL – after intros – don’t interfere with the anthem – right before coin toss is best		
PRE-SNAP RITUAL		
• Check & know Game Clock & Play Clock status	• Helmets off & injury – play clock rules:	
• Know when under 2:00 (restarting clock) Communicate it with crew prior to snap	• 0:40 if defensive player	
	• 0:25 if offensive player	
• Check down & distance: Know 5-yard tape on chains. 5 Yard Dead Ball Foul on Defense – Will it be a 1 st down?	• Know lateral ball position (incomplete pass, penalty enforcement)	
• Position: right side of QB, 12-15 yds deep & about 1 yd wider than TE	• Recognize substitutions – count offensive team and confirm with U	
• Visualize the Free Blocking Zone: TE - In or Out? DE – In or Out?	• Take tackle(s) as formation dictates	
• Find landmarks for FBZ – may need for possible ING ruling		
Be a great dead ball official	Hustle – but don’t hurry	
FREE KICKS		
• Make a decision if a short kick is possible: Signal crew to adjust their position (4 in box). Move to Center of Field at Goal Line.	• Touching/Possession: Possession by A (if muffed by B) = Dead Ball. Fumble recovery = A can advance. A may possess provided it is not KCI, kick has gone 10 yds & touched the ground, or has been touched by B.	
• Normal Positioning: Set up on GL between top of #s and hash on HL’s side of the field – adjust as receiver moves to catch the ball.	• Pop-up Kick is illegal (ball driven into the ground and bounces higher than player’s heads. DEAD BALL Foul – 5 yds previous spot & rekick.	
• Observe kicker in pregame – if he can reach the GL in the air, both R & U need to be on GL at the pylon.	• Illegal Touching by A and no B penalty is involved – A can’t get the football. If B fouls – A can get the ball.	
• Keys: Work first threats in middle of field and threats in front of runner.		
• Free Kick Out of Bounds: (Untouched by B) B has the choice of 5yd previous spot, 5 yd tack on or 25 yds from spot of kick. (35 yd line)	• Forced Touching = No Touching (ignore touching when opponent is blocked into the ball, or ball is batted into opponent)	
• All Fouls by A during a free kick can be tacked on to dead ball spot if Team B has possession – except KCI. (KCI is enforced as an awarded Fair Catch 15 yards from the spot of the foul, or 15 yards at the previous spot & replay down.	• Kickers Illegal Formation: (Less than 4 on each side of the kicker when ball is kicked - dead ball foul when kicked - 5 yds previous spot & rekick.)	
• Watch for illegal forward handoffs – 5 yards from spot of the foul	• Be alert for Blind Side Blocks!!	
	• Free Kick after a safety: Adjust position by 20 yards – be aware of GL!	
Be a Great Dead Ball Official	Check Game Clock & Play Clock	

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RUNNING PLAY	
Clocks – Check & know status.	BE A GREAT DEAD BALL OFFICIAL!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keys: Key tackle on opposite of the formation. Responsible for false starts by backs. Know FBZ & linemen that are restricted from Blocking Below the Waist. As the running play develops - take the front side of the POA. If the QB keeps the ball you need to cover him all the way to SL. Always protect the QB! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be aware of H/L & L/H blocks (CHB) (Low has to be below the knee) Watch RB blocks for CHB & BBW. Watch for LB blocking the lead back below the waist. Option Play – The back side should clean up the QB. Check with LJ & HL to make sure they have your back.
PASS PLAY	
Keys: Key tackle on opposite side. Responsible for false starts by backs. Watch backs who step up for low blocks & CHB. As the pocket breaks down focus on the QB and most threatening defender. When you have a potential foul by your key and potential contact to the QB – ALWAYS work the contact on the QB first! Move to a better angle to improve look. Stay with QB and protect him until any threat of contact is over.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward Pass/Fumble: Watch throwing hand – empty hand = fumble. Hand past apex = forward pass unless player, with control, clearly brings the ball back into his body. 	
Intentional Grounding: If QB is under duress, think ING. Be aware of the FBZ BEFORE the start of the play. If QB is close to being outside FBZ, he's out. Get eye contact with LOS official, go to spot of throw and look for HELP!	
Illegal Pass thrown from beyond the LOS: Must be CLEARLY BEYOND! Pre-Game mechanics discussion with Umpire	
Forward or Backward pass? If wings have moved downfield you might have to rule on it – be prepared!	
IF QB is sacked continue to Dead Ball officiate – spot is NOT critical unless it's near the GL! Help wings when possible.	
Field Goal/Kick Try	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position: Face the holder-3 yards behind & 5 yards wide of kicker, looking in at holder's face. Take a quick look for holding or BBW on the opposite side. Look in on the holder/ball. Be aware if he muffs the snap. Prior to snap, give rolling arms signal to crew while yelling "Live Ball, Live Ball!!" FG - Stay with kicker after a blocked kick. Kick Try – Whistle ball dead after blocked kick. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roughing the Kicker (RRK)/Running into the Kicker (RNK): General Rule: Plant leg – Roughing. Kicking leg – Running into Holder Roughed – 15 yards Holder displaced – Running into – 5 yards 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reminders: Think about what holder can do with football. If he has his knee on the ground when receiving the snap, he must rise before kicking, passing, or handing the ball off, otherwise the ball is dead. If he rises to catch a high snap and puts his knee back down the ball remains alive. If he has to leave his position to retrieve the ball and then puts his knee down the ball is dead. Unsuccessful FG rolls dead in field of play – treat like a punt. If it breaks the plane of the GL (touched or untouched by Team B) – Touchback, 20 yard line. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clocks: Check the game clock. Check the Play Clock. Game clock always stops after a legal kick down when either team is awarded a new series & starts on the succeeding snap or Free Kick. 	
PUNT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PUNT Position: Always on right side, 3-5 yards wide of TE and 2-3 yards behind kicker. Watch opposite side wing for holding & BBW. Watch shield protectors for holding & BBW RRK/RNK: No RRK or RNK if it is not apparent that a kick will be made. General Rule: Plant leg – roughing Kicking leg – running into 	
All Fouls by A on legal kick plays where B will next put the ball in play can be tacked on, EXCEPT – KCI Clocks – Know & Check Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Touching: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consequence of first touching is cancelled if there are offsetting fouls or Team B touches the ball and thereafter commits a penalty. Ball does not cross the neutral zone – Either team can pick it up and run (A can also pass or kick legally) Ball does cross the neutral zone and B touches – A can touch or recover but not advance. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Punt OOB – move behind spot where ball was kicked – arm up for BJ or LJ – wave upfield and chop in at the spot where kick crossed sideline If you don't have a spot don't try to fake it – let the BJ & LJ do that (Pre-game discussion!) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game clock always stops after a legal kick down when either team is awarded a new series & starts on the succeeding snap or Free Kick. Free Kick scoring attempt after a Fair Catch: adjust position to Goal Post Upright opposite press box side of field – Umpire: whistle & over/under. 	
OVERTIME	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crew Meeting: Meet with the crew at mid-field to discuss procedures & carry-over fouls 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coin Toss: (ONLY Once!) Visitor calls toss. Loser of the toss gets first option in subsequent even numbered periods. Choices: Offense, Defense, End of Field. Only do coin toss with captains for 1st OT period All subsequent OT periods use signals to show who is on offense and end of field where that period will be played. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time Outs: Extra periods – allow one timeout only per team. Unused timeouts in regulation play do not carry over. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If Team B gains possession the ball is dead immediately and the Team A offensive series is over. If the offensive team scores a safety, they are awarded 2 points. If the defensive team scores a safety or a touchdown the game is over. (Highly Unlikely!) 	