

## **PRE-GAME RESPONSIBILITIES: 2023**

(To be carried out in dressing room and/or on field before game)

### **REFEREE:**

With umpire, have both head coaches certify player equipment in compliance with rules.  
Obtain names and numbers of captains (get speaking captain) give coaches list of game officials.  
Question length of half (15 or 20 minutes) and pre-game or half time activities.  
Advise coaches of speed up mechanics:  
    5-yard dead ball fouls automatic.  
    Extra point ball place in middle.  
    Kick-off out of bounds coach's option.  
Inquire as to any unusual plays officials should be aware of be sure to inform other officials of unusual plays.  
Ask which coach will call timeouts and if a coach or the captains will make penalty decisions.  
Ask if QB, P, and K are right-handed (footed) or left.  
Advise on head injury/concussion protocol.  
Ask about Clap Cadence  
Inform coaches of time captains will be required for coin toss.  
Approve game balls.

### **UMPIRE:**

Check and certify any player equipment as necessary.  
Assist in checking playing field for any hazards.  
Mark approved balls with Sharpie marker.

### **HEAD LINESMAN:**

Secure chain crew from home team management.  
Check line to gain equipment and down marker with back judge.  
Instruct chain crew of their responsibilities.  
Chains should be off field and go to sideline mark each first down.  
Start on a tick.  
Assist in checking player equipment.

### **LINE JUDGE:**

Assist in checking playing field for hazards.  
Along with back judge, instruct ball boys as to their responsibilities:  
    1) Stay along sideline at scrimmage line.  
    2) On incomplete pass change ball and retrieve other.  
    3) On kick try-have ball at goal post for the back judge.  
    4) Do not run onto field, toss or hand ball to back judge.  
Assist in checking player equipment.

### **BACK JUDGE:**

Responsible for correct starting time.  
Have stopwatch and/or timing device with you if needed.  
Continuous communications with ball boys.

Give list of officials to P.A. announcer.

Tell timekeeper to put time on clock at halftime followed by 3 minute warmup.

Check with play clock operator on 25/40 second clock if on-field.

Meet with timekeeper 30 minutes before game.

**BEFORE GOING TO FIELD, ALL OFFICIALS SHOULD CHECK TO SEE THEY HAVE:**

Down indicator- someone have extra.

Whistle-someone have extra.

Game card and pencil or marker.

Penalty flag-try to carry in front not back pocket.

Linesman has 2 clips.

Coin.

**COIN TOSS AND STARTING GAME**

Coin toss is to be held 3 minutes before start of game.

Before toss give sportsmanship talk.

Get captains to their respective sideline 5 minutes before game time.

4 captains, referee with home team, umpire visiting team. Come are opposite each other with R facing the clock.

**Umpire & Head Linesman & Back Judge:**

On side with chain crew.

Umpire opposite referee.

Signal when ready to come on field.

Umpire introduces captains to referee.

**Referee & Line Judge:**

Signal and come on field when ready.

Referee will be facing scoreboard.

Back judge to go with linesman.

**Coin toss and Starting Game**

Referee and Umpire on field only.

Umpire to step up to verify coin toss and options taken.

Have visiting team captain call the coin toss prior to tossing the coin.

Explain and get options to coin toss winner.

Explain and get options to coin toss loser.

Place captains' backs to goals they will be defending.

Signal press box options taken.

All officials come together at center of field and write down winner of toss and option chosen.

## **FREE KICK:**

### **Head Linesman:**

Position on R's 30-yard line outside same side as line-to-gain equipment.

Count number of R players.

### **Umpire:**

Position self on R's 20-yard line outside sideline opposite Head Linesman.

Count R players.

### **Head Linesman & Umpire:**

Get sideline clear, everyone is to be in team box area.

Carry bean bag in your hand to be ready to mark first touching.

### **Back Judge:**

Take charge of ball.

Hand ball to kicker and instruct him to wait for referee's whistle.

Count K players.

Check off with line judge and run off field.

Position K's free-kick line, move to position outside sideline on K's free kick line on the line-to gain equipment side.

At the time the ball is kicked, at least four K players must be on each side of the kicker.

Carry bean bag in your hand to be ready to mark first touching.

### **Line Judge:**

Come out to numbers.

Count K players and checkoff with back judge.

Back off the field facing the action.

Position R's free kick line outside sideline opposite Head Linesman.

Carry bean bag in your hand to be ready to mark first touching.

### **Referee:**

Position at goal line on Head Linesman side just outside hash marks.

Rule on goal line/touchbacks.

Carry bean bag in your hand to be ready to mark momentum.

### **All Officials:**

All officials, record the score and time on the clock when they get to their free kick position. Head Linesman and Line Judge – record information when you are still on the sideline before coming onto the field to line up teams.

When you are ready, in position and have sidelines clear, give a good clear hand signal and hold it until referee blows ready for play.

### **After Free Kick Has Been Made:**

#### **Back Judge & Line Judge:**

Be aware of encroachment of free kick line and restraining line-blow.

Rule on "pop-up" kicks. Blow play dead.

Whistle-drop flag-dead ball foul.

Do not rush down field.

Be aware of short kick.

Back judge watch for action against kicker &/or free kick holder, and circle onto field.

K cannot block any R players until he has gone 10 yards, or ball is touched by R.

#### **Referee, Head Linesman, & Umpire:**

Be aware of ball crossing plane of goal line with kick as force.

Wind clock when ball is legally touched.

Pick up ball carrier on your side of field-follow until given off to up field official.

#### **Back Judge:**

Move to center of field.

#### **Touching of a Free Kick:**

If ball crosses plane of goal line-touchback.

Out of bounds last touched by:

R-ball put in play at inbound spot.

K- options for R:

Put into play at inbound spot.

Put into play at inbound spot plus 5-yard penalty.

Put into play 25 yards beyond free kick line.

5-yard penalty and re-kick.

In neutral zone touched by:

R-covering official wind clock.

K-in air-throw flag (K can never catch free in the air).

After touching ground-bean bag 1<sup>st</sup> touching.

**Fouls by K during kick; R has option to take from succeeding spot – 2018.**

### **Scrimmage Kicks:**

#### **Umpire:**

Position 10 yards deep.

Required numbering NOT required in kicking formation.

Remind lineman about not roughing snapper/kicker.

Snapper in kicking formation has extra protection.

Determine if kick crosses line of scrimmage.

#### **Head Linesman:**

Normal position, hold line.

If no back judge present break after snap.

**Back Judge:**

With deepest receiver.

Remind deepest receiver what valid fair catch signal is.

If 5-man crew: back judge with deepest receiver favor side opposite line judge.

**Line Judge:**

Line judge start on line and move down field right after snap.

Officials breaking down field will be responsible to cover the blocking in front of deepest receiver.

**Judges:**

Deepest official will assume coverage of the main receiver and the ball.

Short punt Line Judge has receiver BJ has action.

**Referee:**

Position: outside tight 2-3 yards deeper than kicker, on kicking leg side.

Has total responsibility for kicker in most cases-will not move chains down field.

**All officials be aware for kick catching interference. On short free kick, signal does not have to be made, receiver must be given opportunity to make catch. Remember, kick catching interference rules for free kick are different from those on a scrimmage kick.**

**All Officials:**

If kick goes out of bounds in the air, referee knows spot-will hold arm up.

Covering official (Back Judge or Line Judge)-move toward referee-will chop in at spot.

Referee does NOT know spot-will hold up bent arm.

Kick or interception possessed inside 5-yard line-mark with bean bag as momentum rule may come into effect.

**General Information:**

Kick crossing plane of B's goal line is a touchback.

Player who signals for a fair catch CANNOT block until after kick has ended-valid or invalid.

After fair catch signal has been given (valid or invalid) ball CANNOT be advanced by either team:

- K can NEVER advance a kick (muff).

- Caught by R-kill play-fair catch.

- Muffed by R-caught or recovered by another R-kill play-NOT a fair catch, player catching ball does NOT have protection.

Scrimmage kick 1<sup>st</sup> touched by K in the air beyond the line is kick catching interference if there is an R in position to catch the ball.

Kick 1<sup>st</sup> touched by K after hitting ground beyond the line is first touching.

Kick beyond line touched by R can be recovered by K but NOT advanced.

### **KICK CATCHING INTERFERENCE:**

Catch does not have to be made, but the opportunity must be given to make the catch.

R has 4 options:

- 1-Result of play.
- 2-15-yard penalty and awarded fair catch at the spot.
- 3-15-yard penalty-replay the down
- 4-Awarded fair catch w/o yardage.

During scrimmage kick beyond the line, K may catch, touch, bat or muff a kick in the air so long as there is no R player in position to catch the ball.

Kicks that have been both grounded and recovered behind the line of scrimmage may be advanced by K.

**Fouls by K during kick; R has option to take from succeeding spot. - 2018**

### **Running Play & Pass Play:**

#### **Umpire:**

Normal position 5 to 8 yards deep.

Check for correctly numbered interior linemen (50-79).

Responsible for interior line blocking.

During passing play, step up to line, watch ineligible linemen.

Determine if forward pass has crossed line and which side of neutral zone pass was thrown from, may have to drop bean bag and later determine position of passer on roll out pass.

Counts A players with referee.

Will move outside hash to the numbers to retrieve ball.

#### **Referee:**

Position 14 yards deep behind the offense just outside the tackle or tight end on the quarterbacks passing arm side.

Always on side of quarterback's passing arm.

Responsible for grounding and roughing passer.

Keys tackle on opposite side.

#### **Head Linesman and Line Judge:**

Normal position straddling the line of scrimmage on sideline.

Should not have to come inside hash mark.

Most often responsible to mark forward progress.

Primarily responsible for man in motion going opposite you- if he turns around you are still responsible for him.

Give hand signal if widest man to your side is off the line.

Watch split backs and ends for "crack back" blocks.

**Head Linesman**-must count 5 on the line on every play and no more than 4 in the backfield.

**Line Judge**- must count 5 on the line on every play and no more than 4 in the backfield.

Counts B players with back judge.

Move down field as soon as he sees it is a pass.

Responsible for quick pass to sideline (forward or backward).

**Back Judge:**

Counts B players with line judge.

Position behind deepest B player generally to open or “strongest” side of field, with most receivers-stay between hash marks.

Responsible for all deep passes.

Trips-has 2 OUTSIDE receivers, works inside out for pass coverage.

Has 40/25 second clock (**ARM EXTENDED AT 10 SECONDS/COUNT DOWN AT 5 SECONDS WITH CHOPPING MOTIONS**).

**All Officials:**

Will work “the triangle” when retrieving ball.

Umpire will spot ball.

If back judge is present, he should become point man of apex on all plays beyond the line of scrimmage.

Be sure to give good clear signal if there is an incomplete pass, then call time out.

**General Information:**

Be alert and box all plays in.

Be aware of legal blocking below the waist in the neutral zone.

Legal blocking below the waist in the neutral zone:

Both players must be stationary in the zone at the snap.

There can NOT be pass interference if the pass does not cross the line of scrimmage.

If an ineligible A player *intentionally* touches a forward pass behind the line, this is illegal touching and is enforced from the spot of the foul-**5 yards-loss of down**.

If quarterback takes snap, stands up quickly and throws ball into side zone, linesman and line judge be ready to rule if the pass is forward or backward.

Pass play with Back Judge that is close to sideline:

Side official should watch ball to determine possession.

Back judge has receiver’s feet to determine possession inbounds.

Both officials must communicate with each other!! Make eye contact!

**Goal line Play:**

**Umpire:**

Normal position.

Do NOT signal touchdown unless absolutely certain ball is in.

**“I have it here” touchdown.**

**Head Linesman & Judge(s):**

Back Judge-responsibility for end line-10-yard line and in.

Responsibility the same as normal running or passing play to get forward progress, if ball crosses plane of goal line touchdown signal.

If short and close, come in quickly and indicate good spot.

Outside 10-yard line-back judge has goal line.

Pass in corner of end zone-BJ has end line, sideline official Head Linesman or Line Judge has sideline-eye contact before call is made.

Inside 5-yard line wing official move to goal line at the snap.

### **Field Goal &/or Extra Point:**

#### **Judge(s) and/or Head Linesman(outside the 5) and/or Umpire(inside the 5):**

At goal posts-totally responsible for kick being good or no - agree on call.

Come out signal together.

Back Judge-blows whistle has crossbar and upright.

Line Judge/Head Linesman has upright only.

#### **Head Linesman and/or Line Judge:**

5 man-has entire line of scrimmage.

4 man-has roughing kicker and holder 15-yard line and in.

#### **Umpire:**

Position on judge's side at least as wide as tackle(outside the 5).

Position on the upright(inside the 5).

Watch action on snapper.

#### **Referee:**

Position parallel to kicker and holder on vacated side.

2 to 3 yards to side of kicker facing holder and able to see holder receive ball.

Must be able to see all 11 offensive players.

Responsible for action on kicker and holder.

Reflect good or no good signal from judges.

4 man-makes call 15-yard line and in, has roughing 15 yard line and out.

#### **Muffed or Fake Kick Attempt:**

**Line Judge:** If under – run endline to see the vacated sideline.

**Linesman:** If under - run endline to see the vacated sideline.

**Umpire:** Responsible for goal line vacated side of field.

**Referee:** Responsible for sideline vacated side of field.

**Back Judge:** Has endline.

#### **General Information:**

Kick is good if it touches R beyond line and goes through.

Kick is good if it touches K behind line and goes through.

4 man-Umpire blows whistle when TRY goes over his head.

Referee and Umpire remind each other that no whistle is to be blown during a field goal attempt.

Communicate with all officials that ball is alive during field goal attempt.

Field goal attempt, ball crosses plane of goal line-touchback otherwise can be returned. Same as punt that can score 3 points.

Observe unnecessary contact away from ball, especially defenseless players.



**Fouls by B on Successful Try:**

2 point try-if accepted penalty assessed from succeeding spot.

Kick try-A has 3 options:

- 1) Decline penalty.
- 2) Accept distance penalty and retry.
- 3) Accept 1 point score and have penalty assessed from succeeding spot.

Referee to give signals-back judge just give ball to kicker at succeeding spot.

**Timeout:****Referee:**

Give proper timeout signal for charged timeout.

Record on game card team timeout.

**Umpire:**

Maintain position over ball.

**Head Linesman & Line Judge:**

Move to position halfway between ball and your sideline.

At the 15-second warning, go to team huddle and say "Coach, ball will be marked ready- for-play in 15 seconds."

Be alert for attempts to use substitutes for deception.

**Back Judge:**

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

Coaches: Head Coach may call timeout, or may designate another coach for this purpose, designee for entire game.

1 coach only and 11 players on field.

Any number of players and any number of coaches within 9 yards of sideline, may use phones and/or headsets, still photographs, videos and/or Internet depictions.

**During injury or Official's timeout, maximum of 3 attendants may go to team on field, coach may attend to injured player only. Teams must go to inside 9 to confer with coaches!**

**Between Periods and Half time:****Head Linesman:**

Record on game card position of ball, distance to line to gain, down number and position of clip.

Check with referee that ball and chains are in proper position.

**Referee & Umpire:**

Secure ball, inform judges of position of ball, number of next down, and distance to line to gain.

**All Officials:**

Confirm information with referee.

**At Half Time:****Referee:**

Start field clock when both teams have left field, mandatory 3 min. warm up period to be put on clock.

**All Officials:**

Leave field together, assemble in dressing room or another private place.

Discuss overtime procedures if applicable.

Return to field at least 5 minutes before second half is to begin.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Half Options:**

DO NOT BRING CAPTAINS OUT.

Referee and Umpire get choices.

**Penalty Procedure:**

If possible, throw flag up into air so it can be seen, don't just drop it.

For spot foul be sure to drop it at the proper spot.....

When ball becomes dead, stop clock and get referee's attention with whistle.

Give referee all possible information:

What penalty is.

Number of offending player (don't guess).

If live or dead ball foul.

If foul was during run or loose ball.

If scrimmage kick situation, was it a post scrimmage kick foul.

If foul was before or after any change of possession.

Do not shout out penalties, especially during false start or encroachment penalties. Come in to referee and discuss the penalty or use radio communications.

**Referee:**

Give preliminary signal on live ball or major dead ball fouls only.

Give options to offended team.

Give signals to press box side only.

Announce number of the offending player.

**Umpire:**

Assist in getting offended captains to referee.

If distance penalty is accepted, assess proper distance.

Remain over ball while referee is giving signals.

Signal distance to head linesman and set ball down only when you're in agreement.

### **Head Linesman:**

Do not let downs marker move.

Proceed to succeeding spot.

Be ready to have line-to-gain equipment moved after penalty administration.

Relay penalty information to appropriate sideline.

### **Judges:**

Hold enforcement spot.

Relay penalty information to appropriate sideline.

Help obtain ball.

Assist in holding spot of foul.

Retrieve any penalty markers.

Go to succeeding spot wait for umpire to get there-make sure umpire assesses penalty from proper lateral spot.

### **Fouls & Enforcement:**

Loose ball foul by A behind the previous spot is enforced from spot of the foul.

All live ball fouls by B during scoring plays A can accept penalty and take points, enforce from succeeding spot or kickoff (dead ball after TD on try only).

Non-player fouls are assessed from succeeding spot.

Pass interference by A **DOES NOT** include loss of down.

Ineligible down field-5 yards.

**Automatic first down:** roughing passer, kicker, or holder (roughing snapper in kick formation or shotgun, quarterback at least seven yards back).

Unsportsmanlike conduct-assessed "like dead ball foul" from succeeding spot. Illegal use of hands, holding interlocking interference-10 yards.

Aiding runner-5 yards.

Loss of Down Penalties – Intentional grounding, illegal forward pass, illegal forward handling, and illegal touching.

### **Post-scrimmage kick application (PSK):**

PSK *Never* applies on Made FG (R does not have ball).

PSK *May* apply on missed FG.

PSK *May* apply on scrimmage kick (punt).

PSK *May* apply in Overtime.

### **Extending a period:**

A period is extended if:

A foul is accepted by either team, except a foul for unsportsmanlike conduct, during the last play if time expires on the play.

A double foul occurs.

An inadvertent whistle in which the down is replayed.

If a touchdown is the last timed down, try will be part of that period then ends and sides will be switched for the free kick.

It is NOT extended if penalty includes loss of down.

**Clock will start on the Snap when:**

Following a fair catch.

There is a change of possession.

B is awarded a 1<sup>st</sup> down.

New series after a legal kick.

After any accepted penalty for delay of game.

Inside 2 minutes remaining in either half if the offended team chooses to delay the start.

**Measuring for first down:****Referee:**

Give time out signal.

Signal Head Linesman to bring chains onto field.

**Umpire:**

Take forward rod from chain man.

When linesman ready tighten chain and hold until referee makes decision.

**Line Judge:**

Align Head Linesman so measurement is accurate.

**Back Judge:**

Tend ball at time of measurement.

**Special Information:**

Be sure all officials have identity of anyone charged with unsportsmanlike foul

Drop bean bag in the following situations:

Out of bounds-follow and observe action out of bounds.

Spot of fumble-this is the beginning of loose ball play.

Spot of 1<sup>st</sup> touching.

Spot of passers feet when he releases ball near neutral zone.

Spot of catch of kick.

Spot of possession of kick or interception inside 5-yard line.

Spot of A or K intentionally goes out of bounds.

Every Play:

Umpire and referee count A players (use fist down signal).

Judges count B players (use fist down signal).

Head Linesman MUST make sure there are 5 on the line and no more than 4 in the backfield!

Procedure if Inadvertent Whistle (IW) occurs:

If penalty occurs and is accepted IW is ignored.

Loose ball play-down is automatically replayed.

During backward pass, illegal pass, illegal kick, or fumble-option to replay down or team with last possession at that spot and down count.

Running play-option of replay or where ball became dead, down counts.

*Communication during the game is important. All officials should be talking with each other to give pertinent information. This is extremely important during two situations. First, following long pass play or kick down field, when the referee gets to the spot tell him what occurred and what the status of the ball is. Second, when a penalty happens; give the referee all the information: what penalty was, who committed the foul, number of the offending player, during run or loose ball play, and before or after change of possession if change of possession occurred. Please don't make referee guess what happened or must question you at length as to what happened. Radio communication can greatly enhance a crew's game administration. REMEMBER: the radio channel is not secure; therefore, do not say anything you would not want broadcasted over the public address system.*

### **End of Game:**

#### **Linesman:**

Get your clips with less than 1 minute remaining in the game, depending on situation.

If any official's equipment has been left near the chains, retrieve it when time expires.

Judge may have to retrieve equipment if it is on his side of field.

All meet at 40-yard line nearest to the field exit and leave together!

Go directly to dressing room.

Do NOT discuss game with coaches or press.

### **Overtime Procedure:**

1) Three (3) minute break at end of game.

2) All officials gather at center of field.

3) Each team gets 1 time-out per overtime period, no carryovers.

4) Coin toss in center of field. Same procedure as beginning of game. Winning captain CANNOT defer options. Will choose offense, defense, or end of field to use.

5) Start at 20-yard line anywhere inbounds - may get first down.

6) After 1<sup>st</sup> series, other team will get series using same end of field.

7) If score still tied, a 1-minute rest period, bring captains to center of field as before, the loser of the overtime coin toss will be given 1<sup>st</sup> choice of options.

8) During overtime period, if possession changes, B gets possession, the down and series both end. Exactly the same as would occur during a try.