

PRE-GAME CHECKLIST – Back Judge



POINTS OF EMPHASIS		
• SLOW DOWN!! Process the play	• OWN YOUR POSITION	• Discuss pass keys and switches with HL & LJ
• Make it BIG	• Be a blind side block crew saver	• Illegal Substitution: In formation – no attempt to leave – kill it, dead ball foul; if running off field with snap imminent, kill it even if ball gets snapped. Only bad things can happen if you call it live ball.
• Be sure there is a foul and then throw the flag.	• Record all time outs	• Illegal Participation: If you are trying to complete the count as the play is being snapped – continue the count and let the play go. If Team B has 12, throw flag even though it's late - 15 yards. GET IT RIGHT!
• Officiate players	• Dead Ball Officiate	• Signal to referee if we need to reset the play clock.
• Know when under 2 mins	• Know #'s of all eligible receivers in formation.	• Clocks – be aware of both clocks EVERY play.
• Overtime timeouts - allow only one per team. Unused timeouts do not carry over to the OT period.		
• Measurements: firm hand on the ball, downfield position, shading away from the pressbox - press box has an unobstructed view of the ball.		
PRE-GAME		
• Introduce yourself to the head coaches	• Know where and how you will communicate with the press box	
• Know location of 1st/2nd half kickoff game ball (work with ball boys)	• Check Pylons, GL & EL lines – alert crew to possible confusing lines	
• Meet w/Play Clock & Game Clock Operators	• Observe kickers, QBs & receivers – find the studs	
• Meet with Special Teams Coach and returners, discuss FC signal, shading of eyes and “get away” signals.	• Control NO FLY ZONE (Keep teams separated)	
• 3 game balls from each team (unless we have bad weather).	• Record coin toss results.	
PRE-SNAP RITUAL		
• Know who is restricted and unrestricted on low blocks.	• Check play clock – make sure it started. Check game clock for status.	
• Set up 22 - 25 yds downfield – Shade slightly to keys side being careful not to give up too much field.	• Read pass-back pedal—be prepared to switch keys or zone up. • Read Run - stop and focus in front of POA.	
• Ball on or inside the 20 yard line: Set up on the end line. Move up to GL if running play.	• Count Team B with LJ every play.	
• Ball on or outside 25 yard line: Set up on GL	• Signals: thumb up = 11; fist down below waist = <11, If > than 11 whistle & flag (Count twice!)	
• Know and communicate when game clock is under 2:00 in 2nd & 4th quarters.	• If your key is not being pressed, help at the snap with other keys that are being pressed.	
• Play-Clock @ :00 - look to see if snap has been made, if not, whistle-flag	• Always know down, distance, yard line, & the formation	
Be a great dead ball official	Hustle – but don't hurry	
FREE KICKS		
• Ensure game clock is set at 12:00 for opening & 2 nd Halfkickoff.	• First touching - bag. Illegal block – flag.	
• Ensure play clock is set at :25 for KO's	• On-side kick to your side - ball responsibility - illegal touch by K before ball is touched or goes 10 yards. Stay on Sideline.	
• Make sure K has 11 – if more or less, fix it before leaving kicker.	• Deep Kick - Move to position inside the numbers and ease downfield 10-15 Yds from kick line. Keep a good cushion. • Always anticipate the runner will break it – you have GL!	
• BJ @ K's restraining line opposite press box side – working slightly in front of restraining line to get better look – Count K with LJ. Bean bag in hand. Always think it is a short kick!	• OFK-soft plane on deep kicks – hard plane on short kicks. Dead Ball foul.	
• At least 4 K players each side of kicker. Be alert for chase mode IBB.	• On-side kick to other side-watch “K” blocks before they are eligible to touch – Who initiates block? (IBK) illegal block on kick (10 yds)	
• Free kick OB - (Untouched by R) Live Ball-KOB (5yds) R-Has 3 Choices: 5 Yds & Re-kick, OB spot +5 yds, or 25 yds from spot of kick.	• If the kick is driven into the ground and “pops up” into the air above the height of the player's heads – blow whistle – dead ball foul – enforce 5 yards at previous spot.	
• K-Can recover but K can't advance a kick. K-can advance a fumble.	• Most common foul once the free kick is made: Live Ball – (BBW) block below waist on R (15 yds). Live ball – (IBB) block in the back & holding (10 yds). Live Ball – (IBK) illegal block on kick (10 yds)	
• R-Has the right to complete the catch with or without a fair catch signal.	• All fouls by “K” during a free kick can be tacked on to the dead ball spot. (Except Kick Catch Interference - KCI)	
• Fair catch – the ball is dead. Signaler gets protection, can't block until the kick has ended. Kicker or holder can't be blocked until they've gone 5 yards, or the kick has hit the ground or a player.	• KCI penalty: awarded fair catch after a 15 yard penalty at the interference spot or 15 yard penalty at the previous spot and replay the down.	
• All fouls by “K” during a free kick can be tacked on to the dead ball spot. (Except Kick Catch Interference - KCI)	• If a Team K player catches a free kick it is KCI if a Team R player is in the area, or first touching if there is no Team R player in the area.	
• Forced touching - Ignore touching when opponent is blocked into the ball, or ball is batted into opponent.	• K-Touching Allowed: (1) After ball touches R, or (2) Ball touches ground beyond R's line & Breaks R's plane. (In either order)	
• Free Kick after safety – adjust position to K 20 yard line		

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RUNNING PLAY			
• Check formation for restricted & unrestricted players in relationship to low blocks. If you read run, go to the POA while observing the action as it is developing in and around the POA.		• Key – second & third outside receiver in a trips formation.	
• Running Play – watch blocks in front of runner and at POA.		• Watch initial action on and by your key. Read play – then react.	
• Be alert for players going to ground and using leg to trip or whip.		• Keep your cushion – always assume runner will break it.	
• Holding - Must have a visual restriction and have an effect on the play. Stay away from quick grabs that don't stop the tackler from going where he wants to go. No IBBs or OHs on guy that makes the tackle!		• Before signaling TD on SL run, make eye contact with HL or LJ to confirm. Turnover - watch for BBWs & BSBs and clean up behind play.	
• Stay inside the hash on runs until you are sure the play is over.		• Ball snapped at 25, start on GL. Snap on 20 – start on EL. Easier to run forward than backward. If you read run, try to help with the GL when snapping 15 yards and out. Talk to the short wings!	
• Let the wing officials get the dead ball spot even on longer runs – it's only a critical spot if it's close to the GL.		• Keep officiating into the dead ball period.	
		• Never leave opposing players behind you!	
		• Talk to players and use preventive officiating.	
SUBS	Check Play Clock		Assist with Game Clock
PASS PLAY			
• Read initial action on and by Key	• Don't officiate air!	• LBs & DBs – no BBW against	Complete the process of a Catch!
• When in doubt – it is catchable!	• Key outside receiver to strong side – in a balanced formation "LJ" is the strong side		Be aware of switches
• Coordinate with HL and LJ on switches of keys in trips formation both in pre-game and throughout the game.			
• PASS INTERFERENCE: Requires (1) Obvious intent to impede, (2) Physical contact, (3) Catchable ball (not technically required, use common sense)			
• Once ball is in the air, think of both A and B as receivers, each with a right to the ball			
• OPI – Begins at snap (15yds): (1) Block downfield, (2) Creates separation, (3) Drives through established defender, (4) Pick Play			
• DPI – Live Ball with ball in air: You must place the action into one of six categories.			
(1) Not playing ball, (2) Playing through back, (3) Grab/restrict, (4) Arm bar, (5) Cut off, (6) Hook & turn			
• Watch for Receiver pushing off and creating separation. Focus on players (and their hands) while the ball is in the air.			
• Airborne player toward SL – Look @ feet, ball, then check & see if he completed the process of a catch.			
• Bang, bang, plays = incomplete – NO DPI.			
• Once key is NOT threatened – zone UP!		• Hustle but don't hurry – manage speed to accommodate situations.	
• ODD PLAYS: Safety – B intercepts, fumbles (provides impetus), ball inside 5yd line & ball becomes dead in or out of the EZ			
Offensive pick play – Be especially aware inside 20yd line (read formations)			
Bubble screen – No OPI if ball caught <1yd downfield (if something is "close" you have nothing!)			
• CATCH: Firm possession and contacting ground with any part of the body (must complete the process!) If receiver is going to the ground, continue to watch him until he completes the process. Turnover: Be Alert for BSBs & BBWs and Clean up Behind the Play.			
• Pressed coverage is defined as defender being able to reach across line and touch receiver – if receiver is 3 yds off the LOS and defender is at the line – this is not pressed! If your key is not pressed, shift focus at the snap to another receiver, then come back as play develops.			
• KEEP YOUR CUSHION!	• Momentum rule-between 5yd line & GL. Catch or recovery inside the 5 yard line – Bag it!		
SCRIMMAGE KICK			
• BJ has responsibility for FC signal. Initial position 10-12 yards outside and 3-5 yards behind "R" shoulder to HL's side of field to enable you to get wide angle and with a few yards behind receiver at catch. Bean bag in hand – Marks the end of kick inbounds. Count "R" & signal the LJ. Punts inside the 45 yd line – line up on the GL. Illegal touching by K – bean bag. Receiver has an unimpeded opportunity to make the catch with or without FC signal.			
• First touching by K – bean bag	• R in chase mode? – HOLD/IBB	• K can recover a muff – NO ADVANCE	• K can advance a FUMBLE
• Fair Catch – ball is dead, signaler afforded protection, cannot block (ILB – illegal block 15yds) & R CANNOT advance after fair catch (Dead ball – DOG 5 yards)			
• Forced touching is not touching (ignore touching when opponent is blocked into ball or ball is batted into opponent) Actively Blocking is NOT forced touching			
• TOUCHBACK – ball breaks plane of GL – touched or untouched by R (dead ball)		• K player OOB on own, cannot return (hat and flag – Live ball 15 yards)	
• It matters WHERE the ball is, not the player's feet!!		• Interference with catch – KCI (spot – 15yds)	
• Block Below the Waist (BBW): live ball, K or R, 15 yards		• Illegal Block in the Back (IBB): live ball, K or R, 10 yards	
• ODD PLAYS:			
All fouls by K during scrimmage kick can be tacked on to R's dead ball spot, except KCI (spot foul)			
Momentum Rule – applies between 5-yard line and Goal Line (Catch or recovery inside the 5 – drop bean bag at spot (yd line) of catch/recover)			
Safety – B fumbles ball (provides impetus) inside 5-yard line & ball becomes dead in EZ or out of EZ			
K first touching – consequences of touching are eliminated if R touches the kick and then commits a foul, or if there is any accepted penalty			
Ball DOES NOT cross the NZ - either team can recover and advance (K can still pass or kick it) NOTE: KCI does not apply if ball does not cross			
Ball DOES cross the NZ – K can touch or recover but cannot advance			
• PSK: Foul during the Kick by R, ball crosses NZ, R in possession at end of kick. Enforce from end of kick or spot of foul if behind end of kick.			
• Punt OOB – Whistle, stop clock, stop at SL with hand up, look at Referee – if he signals, move up SL, (jog if it's a long way) stop when chopped in, Time Out signal, point in direction Team R will be going. If Referee is not looking, pick your own spot!			
• Field Goal: If ball hits the cross bar or goal post and bounces back into field of play, the ball is dead. Kick short of GL – treat as a punt.			
• Free Kick after Fair Catch – position at K's free kick line.			
Be a great dead ball official	Communicate with HL & LJ		Check game clock