

SAN DIEGO COUNTY FOOTBALL OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION

4 & 5 Man Mechanics Study Aid

2025 - 2027



All content in this guide is a direct copy/paste from the mechanics manual. I did NOT create any of this information, I simply reformatted it to make my personal studying easier. I take no credit for the *content* of this guide.

This guide was created to make learning the mechanics for a single position easier. All content was taken directly from the SDCFOA Mechanics Manual. If there is ANY discrepancy from the Official Mechanics Manual provided by the association, THE MANUAL is correct, and the error is in this study guide.

The main reason that I created this manual is so that I can learn *all* of the mechanics of a single position, without having to flip pages back-and-forth for each phase of the game. Please **DO NOT** use this study guide to *replace* reading the Mechanics Manual. There is vast amounts of information that I removed to make this study guide more easily digestible. Read the *entire* Mechanics Manual... *read it again*... and maybe a third time before using this guide to help you prepare for your assignment.

I hope that you find this guide helpful, and please do not hesitate to let me know if there are things that I can do to make this guide better. We are all on the same team, and if this helps you at all, please pass it along to someone else so that they can use it as well. If you find mistakes, please let me know so that I can fix them and keep this guide usable for years to come.

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4 Man Mechanics

(by Position)

MECHANICS – 4-Official - Referee

PRE-SNAP ROUTINES

Great officials understand the importance of and have developed their ability to concentrate and focus on every play... one play at a time. They let the last play go and prepare themselves mentally and physically for the next play. Your Pre-snap routine is a tool that will help you move past the last play and get you into the flow of the game and improve your ability to officiate the next play correctly. Here are examples of effective Pre-snap routines:

1. Accordion in and determine next down by looking at *LINE JUDGE*, who will indicate the status of the ball relative to the line to gain (forward stake).
2. Confirm the status of the clock
3. Confirm next down with *HEAD LINESMAN* and signal *HEAD LINESMAN* to move the box
4. If 1st down, wind or hack as soon as the box is near new spot and ball is in the process of being placed – push the pace.
5. Confirm the status of the clock
6. Change down indicator on hand
7. Make a note of the down and distance
8. Move to a new position while observing: chains, ball relay, and ball spotting by *UMPIRE*
9. Confirm the status of the clock with *BACK JUDGE* and other officials to determine wind or no wind
10. Observe substitutions and player equipment
11. Count offense & signal umpire
12. Observe readiness of the crew
13. Hold *UMPIRE* (*UMPIRE* prevents the center from snapping) if the offense wants to snap and the crew not ready
14. Signal *UMPIRE* to move to the pre-snap position (if he's holding the offense)
15. Signal ready for play (hack or wind) if a 25-second play clock is required by rule & change down indicator on hand – unless you've already done this due to 1st down
16. Re-count offense (if possible), identifying formation and key players
17. Anticipate the type of play-based upon down and distance, formation, and location of key players
18. Observe the cadence of the QB looking for hard counts that simulate the snap
19. Use read vision while determining run (and direction of run) or pass
20. Other pre-snap possibilities based upon the situation and location of the ball include:
 - a. Punt – *LINE JUDGE* off, kicker receiving the ball with knee down, roughing/running into
 - b. Punt – observe signaler's cadence (may be the protector)
 - c. End line going out of the end zone or punter in the end zone
 - d. Intentional grounding, incomplete pass/fumble, roughing the passer
 - e. Field Goal – live ball – observe holder's cadence

When the dead ball period ends, do it again. Do it every play!

COIN TOSS PROCEDURES

1. The *REFEREE* and *UMPIRE* only will meet with the captains at the center of the field for the coin toss
2. *REFEREE* instructs captains. Visiting captains will call the coin toss. The visiting captain is required to indicate heads or tails prior to the toss of the coin

3. Once both teams have made the choices, move the captains so their backs are to the goal they're defending. The *REFEREE* will indicate winning captains and choice or option deferred. If the captain's choice is to defer, the *REFEREE* will give the proper signal (signal #10), then move to the other captains and give the signal for the appropriate choice
4. After the toss, all officials will meet in the middle of the field, record results, then jog to their specific kickoff positions

QUARTER

1. Be aware of the last-minute of play. If the ball is not in play when the clock runs out, step in to prevent the snap
2. *REFEREE*, announce the end of the quarter by holding the ball over your head
3. Record the down, distance, clip location, and relative field location
4. *REFEREE* release the *HEAD LINESMAN*
5. Jog to the new spot on the opposite side of the field and spot the ball
6. Check to make certain the down, distance, and yard line is correct
7. When officials are ready, and the *LINE JUDGE* indicates the intermission is over, declare the ball ready for play

HALFTIME

Meet and review the first-half. See Halftime, Post-Game, and Crew Self-Evaluation – the Use of Game Video.

1. *As soon as teams leave the field, look at the timer and wind to start the half-time clock*
2. *All officials will meet away from teams and coaches to review the first half*

FREE KICK MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

ALL OFFICIALS

HUSTLE TO POSITION!

1. Take position at the goal line (or as appropriate behind the deepest receiver) in the middle of the field
2. Count the receiving team (use eyes, not fingers). Signal accordingly for less than/greater than/equal to 11 players
3. Signal *HEAD LINESMAN* to confirm count by extending your arm with a closed fist
4. Upon the ready signal from *UMPIRE*, when the receiving team is in position, blow the ready for play whistle
5. On anticipated short free kicks, may cheat-up if possible
6. On a free-kick following a safety, take position five yards deeper than the receiver(s) but not further from the goal line than the 20-yard line

FREE KICK FOLLOWING A FAIR CATCH

- *REFEREE* – Position with the kicker.

FREE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Identify your keys, the nearest receivers
2. Consider your areas of protection; goal line and sideline
3. Quickly check the direction of the ball (short, long, left, or right). If it is a short kick, move up and provide dead-ball support.
4. On a kick out of bounds, move toward the out of bounds spot and throw flag to the out of bounds spot if in your zone
5. When the ball is touched in your coverage area, start the clock (two winds)
6. When the kick breaks the goal line plane (touched or untouched), signal touchback
7. Observe action around the receivers and watch the middle players of the receiving team moving down the field. Cover blocking and other action on and by your keys

8. When the runner is downed in your coverage zone, stop the clock. Duplicate other official's signals if the play does not end in your coverage zone. Place the ball at your feet and wait for the *UMPIRE* to relieve you
9. As the runner moves further downfield, assume coverage in behind the ball carrier. Maintain an inside-out view of the action around the field

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Touchback and kick out of bounds
- Fair catch, including illegal signal
- Knee on the ground on catch
- Forward handing during return
- Batting
- Blocking below the waist and clipping
- Interlocked interference
- Action on the wedge when coming towards you
- Continuing action dead ball action out of bounds
- Momentum exception
- Short free-kick support

FREE-KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Keep play and runner boxed in and sidelines covered at all times.

RETURNS DOWN THE CENTER OF THE FIELD

1. Cover the secondary areas and view the blocking and other illegal activity

RETURNS INTO HEAD LINESMAN SIDE ZONE

1. Cover behind and to the side of the runner, keeping a distance to view activity by other players, not around the play

RETURNS INTO THE LINE JUDGE SIDE ZONE

1. Cover behind and to the side of the runner, keeping a distance to view activity by other players, not around the play

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- The closest official to the runner has the responsibility to declare the ball dead if and when the runner is tackled or downed
- There should always be two officials covering the secondary areas away from the ball carrier.
- All officials should dead ball officiate after the play
- All officials will hustle and efficiently prepare for the start of the next series

SCRIMMAGE PLAY MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

1. HUSTLE and assist in obtaining the ball/a new ball for spotting
2. Note the status of the clock (running/stopped)
3. Note down, distance, and game situation
4. Back into position, keeping a wide view of all players and dead ball action.
5. Signal up coming down to *HEAD LINESMAN* and then to rest of the crew
6. Drop the signal and start the 25-second play clock after making visual contact with all officials to determine they are ready
7. Assume a position about 12-15 yards behind the neutral zone and outside the tackle. Stay on the QB's right side, even if the QB is left-handed. This must be discussed and confirmed with the entire crew during the crew's pre-game conference.
8. Count Team A players (in the huddle, if possible) and signal to *LINE JUDGE* and *HEAD LINESMAN*.
9. Identify formation and observe initial keys: snap, QB hard count and head bob, false start, and tackle on the opposite side.

RUN MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP

1. Concentrate on your area of responsibility. “Fish in your own pond”
2. Verify no false starts, encroachment, and legal snap
3. Observe the snap, then read the action of the Quarterback, Backs, and Lineman to determine the type of play
4. Allow your reads to help you identify the point of attack while maintaining primary responsibility for action on and by the quarterback

RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE SNAP

1. Know when you have responsibility for the runner and progress and when you have responsibility for action away from the ball
2. Maintain separation from the players and other officials and keep a wide view, even when you have responsibility for the runner and progress
3. As the previous scrimmage play is signaled dead inbounds by you or another covering official, start your 40-second play clock. Provide a visible countdown for the final 5 seconds.
4. Retrieve the ball from the runner or obtain a new ball from another official or ball boy. Hustle outside the hash marks as needed to assist the crew and *UMPIRE* in retrieving the ball and spotting it.
5. If the game clock was running and a first down was achieved inbounds, re-start the game clock with the use of a silent wind.
6. If the down requires the use of a 25-second play clock (see new 40-25 Second Play Clock Mechanics Insert), make visual contact with all officials to determine if they are ready and indicate “Ready for Play” with a short whistle and hack or long whistle and wind (two times). Start your 25-second play clock. Be sure to stay in view of the press box when giving the signal. Provide a visible countdown for the final 5 seconds
7. After determining the point of attack, shift your focus to the appropriate run zone. Know where the runner is, but he should not be your focus once he is beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - a. If the point of attack is toward you, you have responsibility for the legality of blocks in Zone 2
 - b. If the point of attack is away from you, you have responsibility for the legality of blocks in Zone 3
 - c. If the point of attack is up the middle, you and the umpire both have responsibility for the legality of blocks in Zone 2
 - d. If the point of attack is outside the hash marks, move to that side while maintaining your view of the action behind and around the runner
 - e. If the point of attack is between the hash marks, box in from the rear, again focusing on blocks behind at the point of attack and around the runner
8. After the runner is down, maintain a wide view of the dead ball action. If necessary, look for the appropriate signal from fellow officials indicating that the ball is dead and notifying you to start the 40-second play clock. Start the 40-second or 25-second play clock as dictated by rule. If the play ends out of bounds, hustle to the sideline and ensure players separate and return inbounds. Assist with getting the ball to the *UMPIRE*
9. If the ball is dead between the hash marks, hustle to that spot while keeping your head up to observe the action around the pile. If you declare the ball dead, inbounds well into the backfield, raise your arm to signal the start of the 40-second play clock and start your 40-second play clock. Assist the *UMPIRE*

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- False starts
- Illegal shift and motion
- Blocking around the runner and by team A backs
- Illegal acts around the runner
- Reverses and trick plays
- Free blocking zone

PASS MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. Observe the ball relay and spot the ball if necessary. Maintain wide vision, including a view of the clock, substitutions, movement of the box and chains, and the readiness of the crew to officiate the next play.
2. Accordion back out to your regular position.
3. View the legal cadence and movement of the QB.
4. Observe initial blocking of off-side tackle while determining the type and direction of the play.
5. Be alert for blocks by backs as you transition to “read/soft vision” and identify any threats (“bad color”)
6. On QB scrambles toward LOS, determine forward point where the ball is released
7. Announce “ball is away” and protect QB until immediate action is complete or QB moves to participate. You have all calls on QB behind the line of scrimmage
8. Use tip ball signal if pass is touched in or behind the neutral zone.
9. ANTICIPATE
 - a. Forward or backward pass
 - b. Pass attempt vs. fumble
 - c. Roughing passer
 - d. Illegal pass (beyond LOS or intentional grounding)
10. Continue to provide wide-vision of play until the ball is declared dead.
11. If you declare the ball dead, inbounds well into the backfield, raise your arm to signal the start of the 40-second play clock and start your 40-second play clock.
12. Dead ball officiate

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Forward or backward pass
- Pass attempt vs. fumble
- Roughing passer
- Illegal pass (beyond LOS or intentional grounding)

SCRIMMAGE KICK MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Observe substitutions as you hustle to your scrimmage kick positions
2. Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios by reviewing the Points of Emphasis for your position
3. Position to the *LINE JUDGE* side of the field and slightly behind the kicker (approximately 7 yards to the side and 5 yards deeper than the kicker)
4. Count the kicking team
5. View the lineman and know numbering exceptions
6. Observe the cadence and anticipate a hard count or a fake

SCRIMMAGE KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios based on your position.

1. Normal Kick – Watch blocking by Team A backs and protect the kicker. Stay with the kicker until all is clear. Be the last official down the field and box in all players from behind with wide vision. If the return breaks through the defense, be prepared to take the runner all the way to the goal line.
2. Bad Snap - When there is a bad snap on a scrimmage kick, and the play goes deep into the backfield, you will follow the ball back and bracket with *HEAD LINESMAN*
3. Kick Out of Bounds – If the kick goes out of bounds in flight, move to the spot of the kick and then proceed to line up the out-of-bounds spot with the covering official by signaling with a hack
4. After the Play - Indicate to *HEAD LINESMAN* when to move chains, hustle to the new spot, and indicate first down and direction of the ball.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Fake kicks
- Bad Snaps
- Blocked Punt
- Roughing or Running into the Kicker; Incidental Contact
- Illegal Blocks
- Illegal Use of Hands
- Clock Status before and after the play

FIELD GOAL & PAT MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

Prior to all field goal attempts, all officials should remind themselves of live ball by using the illegal procedure signal (#S19)

1. Take a wide position, 10–15 yards (or more) wider than the potential kicker and 2–3 yards deeper, on the open side of the holder. Help direct the appropriate official to be under the goal post with the *UMPIRE*
2. Count the kicking team
3. Beware of a fake field goal or PAT. Be ready to assist in covering the open sideline/pylon
4. Before the snap, observe any linebackers that may be attempting to shoot the gap to block the kick
5. Before the snap, check for any illegal locking of legs by offensive linemen

SWINGING GATE

1. All officials will be in their normal positions for a scrimmage down. However, if team A shifts to a formation normally used for a PAT or attempted a field goal, all officials will move to their appropriate positions.
2. If the play is a fake kick, attempt to get to your normal scrimmage position while maintaining your usual scrimmage play responsibilities.

FIELD GOAL & PAT KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. At the snap, observe the cadence of the holder with a wide vision of all kicking team members looking for any false starts
2. Immediately following a successful snap, mentally rule if the holder's knee was down upon receiving the snap
3. You are solely responsible if the kicker or holder is roughed or has been run into
4. Do not blow any blocked field goal dead as the ball is still live. If it is obvious that a PAT kick has been blocked and grounded, blow the play dead immediately.
5. After the kick and the kicker and holder are free of any foul, shift your observation to the offensive line to dead ball officiate. Do not hurry to see if the kick was judged successful by the officials under the goal post. Continue to dead ball officiate until the players cease their actions and begin to move to their benches
6. After you have observed the signals from the officials under the goal post, turn to the press box and repeat their signal
7. If a field goal is blocked, or a PAT or field goal is faked, or a bad snap causes the kicking team to abort the attempt, move so that all players are bracketed in and cover as you would any run or pass. You have primary responsibility for ruling on plays ending at the pylon if there is no flank official present. The *UMPIRE* and flank official will hustle and provide support if possible

MECHANICS – 4-Official - Umpire

PRE-SNAP ROUTINES

Great officials understand the importance of and have developed their ability to concentrate and focus on every play... one play at a time. They let the last play go and prepare themselves mentally and physically for the next

play. Your Pre-snap routine is a tool that will help you move past the last play and get you into the flow of the game and improve your ability to officiate the next play correctly. Here are examples of effective Pre-snap routines:

1. Confirm the status of the clock
2. Place ball at the proper spot and lateral location (positions 1-5)
3. If 1st down or after penalty enforcement, signal or verbalize the status of the clock to the referee so he can properly wind or hack
4. Confirm the status of the clock
5. Confirm new down and change down indicator and position indicators on hands
6. If 1st down, anticipate quick wind and leave the ball and move to a new position
7. Make a note of the down and distance
8. Observe substitutions and player equipment
9. Count offense, identify 5 players wearing #s 50-79, & signal referee
10. Hold the center to prevent the snap if the offense is in a hurry-up and wants to snap and the *REFEREE* has not released you, or in any situation where the the crew is not ready to officiate or play has been held up.
11. Move to pre-snap position when the *REFEREE* releases you when the offense is in a hurry-up
12. Identifying formation looking for the strength of the formation, unbalanced, and key players
13. Anticipate the type of play, based upon down and distance, formation, and location of key players
14. Feet then ball
15. Observe the legal snap and your initial keys (guard-center-guard)
16. Use read vision while determining run (and direction of run) or pass
17. Other pre-snap possibilities based upon the situation and location of the ball include:
 - a. Punt – *LINE JUDGE* off, numbering exceptions, legal long snap, roughing the snapper
 - b. Punt – loosen position wider and deeper
 - c. Goal-line – stay off the goal line
 - d. Goal-line – locate the ball relative to the goal line after the play and communicate “I have the ball” to flanks if the final resting spot of the ball is in the end zone.
 - e. Passing/screening/Run-Pass-Option teams – ineligible down field
 - f. Field Goal – live ball – numbering exceptions and roughing the snapper

When the dead ball period ends, do it again. Do it every play!

COIN TOSS PROCEDURES

1. The *REFEREE* and *UMPIRE* only will meet with the captains at the center of the field for the coin toss
2. After the toss, all officials will meet in the middle of the field, record results, then jog to their specific kickoff positions

QUARTER

1. Be aware of the last-minute of play. If the ball is not in play when the clock runs out, step in to prevent the snap
2. *REFEREE*, announce the end of the quarter by holding the ball over your head
3. Record the down, distance, clip location, and relative field location
4. *REFEREE* release the *HEAD LINESMAN*
5. Jog to the new spot on the opposite side of the field and spot the ball
6. Check to make certain the down, distance, and yard line is correct
7. When officials are ready, and the *LINE JUDGE* indicates the intermission is over, declare the ball ready for play

HALFTIME

1. *Meet and review the first-half. See Halftime, Post-Game, and Crew Self-Evaluation – the Use of Game Video.*

FREE KICK MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

HUSTLE TO POSITION!

1. Make certain the ball is inflated properly, has “pebble grain” and white stripes
2. Count the kicking team (use eyes, not fingers). Signal accordingly for less than/greater than/equal to 11 players.
3. Signal *LINE JUDGE* to confirm count by extending your arm with a closed fist
4. Hand the ball to the kicker and tell him/her not to kick until the *REFEREE* blows the whistle
5. Be in a ready position, away from and behind the ball, before you provide the ready signal (K may be in the huddle when you signal). Signal ready to the *LINE JUDGE* and *HEAD LINESMAN* who will then raise arm for the ready signal
6. Upon a ready signal from *LINE JUDGE* and *HEAD LINESMAN*, provide the ready signal to *REFEREE* (K may be in the huddle when you signal)
7. After the ready-for-play whistle by *REFEREE*, signal the kicker to kick
8. On anticipated short free kicks, move to a position on the kicking team’s restraining line on the sideline. Hold bean bag in hand. Anticipate first touching

FREE KICK FOLLOWING A FAIR CATCH

- Position under the goal post opposite the *LINE JUDGE*.

FREE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Identify your keys, the middle three players of the kicking team
2. Watch the action of the kick. Was it kicked into the air or did it bounce off the ground?
3. Quickly check the direction of the ball (short, long, left, or right). If it is a short kick, look for first touching by kicking team and use your bean bag as needed. Also, be aware of subsequent first touching spots plus the legality of team R blocks and illegal contact by team K on receivers.
4. On kicks out of bounds in the air, line up sideline official at the out-of-bounds spot. If the ball is re-kicked after a foul, you are responsible for signal and penalty enforcement
5. Observe action on the kicker and watch the middle three players of the kicking team moving down the field: cover blocking and other action on and by your keys. As the runner nears, assume coverage in front of the ball carrier. Be on the goal line before the runner. Maintain an inside-out view of the action around the ball carrier
6. Flank officials have progress to the goal line. You have the goal line

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Short free-kick
- First touching (subsequent first touches) – USE BEAN BAG
- Starting-stopping the clock
- Blocking below the waist and clipping
- Legal substitutions
- Kick catch interference and fair catch interference
- Knee on the ground on catch
- Forward handing, illegal forward pass
- Batting
- Interlocked interference and illegal blocking
- Continuing action out of bounds
- Players going out of bounds during the kick
- Rule on the legality of the kick (no “pop-up” kicks)

FREE-KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Keep play and runner boxed in and sidelines covered at all times.

RETURNS DOWN THE CENTER OF THE FIELD

1. Cover the secondary areas and view the blocking and other illegal activity
2. Responsible for the goal line, action in front of the runner, inside-out coverage on the runner to the goal line

RETURNS INTO HEAD LINESMAN SIDE ZONE

1. Cover the action in front of the runner, viewing blocking and other illegal activity

RETURNS INTO THE LINE JUDGE SIDE ZONE

1. Cover the action in front of the runner, viewing blocking and other illegal activity

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- The closest official to the runner has the responsibility to declare the ball dead if and when the runner is tackled or downed
- There should always be two officials covering the secondary areas away from the ball carrier.
- All officials should dead ball officiate after the play
- All officials will hustle and efficiently prepare for the start of the next series

SCRIMMAGE PLAY MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

1. HUSTLE and assist in obtaining the ball/a new ball for spotting
2. Note the status of the clock (running/stopped)
3. Note down, distance, and game situation
4. Back into position, keeping a wide view of all players and dead ball action.
5. Retrieve the ball from the runner or obtain a new ball from another official or ball boy. Hustle outside the hash marks as needed to assist in retrieving the ball and spotting it
6. After *REFEREE* signals next down, signal next down. Drop the signal after the *REFEREE* drops their signal.
7. If team A is in a hurry-up offense, stay at the ball until signaled off by the *REFEREE*. Otherwise, after the “ready-for-play” whistle, back away from the ball to your pre-snap position while keeping the ball in sight
8. Assume a ready position 7-10 yards beyond the neutral zone, typically between the inside shade of the guard and outside shade of the tackle, opposite side of the *REFEREE*. Starting position may vary throughout the game depending on the game/play needs.
9. Count Team B players and confirm with *LINE JUDGE* when Team A breaks the huddle
10. Count Team A players numbered 50-79. Know ineligible
11. Identify and observe your initial keys, (a) snap, (b) center, and (c) guard(s).

RUN MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP

1. Concentrate on your area of responsibility. “Fish in your own pond”
2. Verify no false starts, encroachment, and legal snap
3. Observe the snap, then read run/pass by observing the block(s) by the guard(s) or center (block down, cross block, pass block, pulling, reach block, etc.)
4. Allow your reads to help you identify the point of attack

RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE SNAP

1. Know when you have responsibility for the runner and progress and when you have responsibility for action away from the ball
2. Maintain separation from the players and other officials and keep a wide view, even when you have responsibility for the runner and progress
3. After determining that the initial blocks of the center and guards are legal and determining the point of attack, shift your focus to the appropriate Run Zone. Know where the runner is, but he should not be your focus

- a. If the point of attack is away from you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks in Zone 3
- b. If the point of attack is toward you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks in Zone 2
- c. If the point of attack is up the middle, you and the referee both have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks in Zone 2
4. If the ball is dead outside the hash marks, hustle to the dead-ball spot while maintaining a wide view of the dead ball action. The umpire must go outside the hash marks to assist in retrieving the ball and spotting it
5. If the ball is dead between the hash marks, hustle to that spot while keeping your head up to observe the action around the pile
6. You are responsible for maintaining control around the pile. Talk to players as they un-pile, encouraging them to do so in a sportsmanlike manner
7. Communicate to the flank officials with "I'VE GOT BALL" on a goal-line play if the flank officials look for assistance and you are certain the ball is across the goal line and in possession

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- False starts
- Illegal snaps
- Illegal use of hands and other illegal blocks
- Free blocking zone

PASS MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. Following the spotting of the ball, be prepared to prevent the center from prematurely snapping the ball when the offense is in a hurry-up and the *REFEREE* has not signaled you off the ball.
2. Start at your usual position and rule on the legality of the snap.
3. Observe your initial keys (G-C-G) as you read the pass and move forward toward the LOS.
4. You might stop your forward movement and set up 3-yards from the LOS to avoid crossing routes and be in a position to rule on ineligible downfield beyond the expanded neutral zone (2 yards).
5. Transition to "read/soft vision" and identify any defensive linemen who are successfully penetrating through the offensive blockers (especially to the referee's side of the center as the referee's view is more generally to his opposite side of the center). Move vision away from double-team blocks to one-on-one conflicts.
6. Rule on pass blocking technique of offensive linemen
7. On roll-outs & scrambles toward LOS, assist *REFEREE* in determining if the ball is released beyond LOS
8. Know uncovered offensive lineman on your side, determine pass vs. run
9. Move toward the spot of snap (on LOS)
10. Rule on any ineligible downfield
11. Use "tip ball" signal if the pass is touched in or behind the neutral zone. Know if the pass crosses the neutral zone
12. Pivot on all passes to assist with catch/no catch, illegal personal contact, illegal helmet contact, and illegal blocks
13. Dead ball officiate

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Holding, Clipping, and Illegal blocks
- Ineligible downfield
- Assist in illegal pass determination
- Touching of a pass in or behind the neutral zone
- Illegal personal contact, illegal helmet contact

SCRIMMAGE KICK MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Observe substitutions as you hustle to your scrimmage kick positions
2. Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios by reviewing the Points of Emphasis for your position
3. Position ten to 15 yards from the line of scrimmage and favor the *LINE JUDGE* side of the field. The initial position should allow for clear visibility to rule on snap, typically shading the outside shoulder of the widest down lineman.
4. Count the receiving team and confirm with the *LINE JUDGE*
5. View the lineman and know numbering exceptions
6. Tell the receiving team lineman, **“DO NOT HIT THE SNAPPER.”**

SCRIMMAGE KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios based on your position.

1. Watch the action on the snapper
2. Normal Kick – Initially view line play action and the release of the kicking team players as they move downfield to cover the kick. Pivot and release down the field, watching the action of the players and blocking. Maintain wide inside-out vision.
3. Bad Snap – When there is a bad snap on a scrimmage kick, and the play goes deep into the backfield, you will move up to the line of scrimmage and rule on whether the ball crossed the line of scrimmage
4. Glance at the kick to determine direction and distance. Do not continue to watch the ball at the end of the play, dead ball officiate

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Snapper
- Blocking; legal or illegal, illegal use of hands
- Numbering exceptions
- Check first touches, forced touching, muffs, fumbles, blocked punts

FIELD GOAL & PAT MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

Prior to all field goal attempts, all officials should remind themselves of live ball by using the illegal procedure signal (#S19)

1. Line up six feet or less behind the goal post closest to the opposite side of the official that is under the goal post with you
2. Count receiving team and confirm *HEAD LINESMAN* or *LINE JUDGE* of your count
3. You always have sole responsibility for the protection of the snapper
4. Check for the use of numbering exception by team A

SWINGING GATE

1. All officials will be in their normal positions for a scrimmage down. However, if team A shifts to a formation normally used for a PAT or attempted a field goal, all officials will move to their appropriate positions.
2. If the play is a fake kick, attempt to get to your normal scrimmage position while maintaining your usual scrimmage play responsibilities.

FIELD GOAL & PAT KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. You always have sole responsibility for the protection of the snapper and holding by interior linemen by both offensive and defensive players (pull & shoot)
2. As the ball arrives at the goal post, step up and look straight-up to determine if the ball was kicked between the uprights and not directly over the goal post
3. Orally communicate with *LINE JUDGE* or *HEAD LINESMAN* as to the success or failure of the kick

4. Both should withhold any signal but immediately step to the end line where you both simultaneously give the signal ruling on the kick.
5. Give incomplete signal if the kick fails
6. Give touchdown signal if the kick is good
7. Hold your signal until the referee turns to repeat your signal to the press box.
8. On a fake or broken play, move to your normal position and be alert for any ineligible downfield
9. Dead ball officiate after the play ends

MECHANICS – 4-Official - Head Linesman

PRE-SNAP ROUTINES

Great officials understand the importance of and have developed their ability to concentrate and focus on every play... one play at a time. They let the last play go and prepare themselves mentally and physically for the next play. Your Pre-snap routine is a tool that will help you move past the last play and get you into the flow of the game and improve your ability to officiate the next play correctly. Here are examples of effective Pre-snap routines:

1. Confirm the status of the clock
2. Accordion in and confirm next down with referee and signal the box to move and change down
3. Assist in relaying the game ball if necessary
4. If 1st down, go to the sideline and, using your foot's heel, indicate the exact spot for the rear stake and down box. Use an appropriate signal to the *REFEREE* to wind the clock or hack
5. Make a note of the down and distance
6. Know the line to gain
7. Change down indicator on hand appropriate to the status of the clock (back-stopped; front-live)
8. Observe substitutions and player equipment
9. Confirm GL responsibility with *BACK JUDGE*
10. Use your up-field foot to indicate the back of the ball to the receiver.
11. Confirm eligible receivers, including backs, to your side of the formation
12. Note the location of better player(s)
13. Signal back to the opposite flank if the widest receiver is off the line of scrimmage (various signals will be used depending on the formation and confirmation of opposite flanks signals)
14. Release up-field foot indicating the back of the ball, and now straddle the LOS with the best view of the ball, near tackle, and receiver(s)
15. Anticipate the type of play, based upon down and distance, formation, and location of key players
16. Anticipate screen and know where the ball was caught relative to the LOS
17. Anticipate ineligible downfield on a pass to the other side
18. Feet then ball
19. Observe the legal snap with no false start, encroachment, or illegal shift or motion (man going away from you)
20. Use read vision while observing near tackle to determining run (and direction of run) or pass
21. Other pre-snap possibilities based upon the situation and location of the ball include:
 - a. Goal-line mechanics – Stay wide at the pylon
 - b. Anticipate pick play
 - c. Punt – *LINE JUDGE* off, you have the entire LOS for FST or encroachment
 - d. Punt – Does kick cross the line of scrimmage?
 - e. Know the location of eligible receivers and the ball for intentional grounding calls
 - f. Field Goal – live ball

When the dead ball period ends, do it again. Do it every play!

COIN TOSS PROCEDURES

1. *LINE JUDGE* escorts captains from the press box side to the top of the numbers /nine-yard marks.
HEAD LINESMAN escorts captains from chains side to the top of the numbers /nine-yard marks. The

captains will continue to the middle of the field, and the *HEAD LINESMAN* and *LINE JUDGE* will remain at the top of the numbers / nine-yard marks. The *LINE JUDGE* and *HEAD LINESMAN* will have a legal ball for their respective team

2. *LINE JUDGE* and *HEAD LINESMAN*, make certain your team is either in their respective team box or in their end zone during the coin toss
3. After the toss, all officials will meet in the middle of the field, record results, then jog to their specific kickoff positions

QUARTER

1. *Record the down, distance, clip location, and relative field location*
2. *Prepare the chains to move to the new location on the REFEREE's signal. Make certain the clip is located appropriately on the nearest yard line, and take note*
3. *Grab the clip and chain at the same time, reverse the chain crew, jog to the new position and place the chain on the new spot*
4. *Place your heel at the front of the ball for the down box*

HALFTIME

1. Meet and review the first-half. See Halftime, Post-Game, and Crew Self-Evaluation – the Use of Game Video.
2. *As soon as teams leave the field, look at the timer and wind to start the half-time clock*
3. *All officials will meet away from teams and coaches to review the first half*
4. Extend a 5-minute courtesy call to each team
5. Confer with the coach who has the second-half decision on which way they would like to kick the ball. Do this when you provide the 5-minute courtesy call
6. Provide the information to fellow officials during the mandatory three-minute warm-up period

FREE KICK MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

HUSTLE TO POSITION!

1. Go to your position on the receiving team's restraining line at the sideline. Have your team on the field within one minute following a score
2. Count the receiving team (use eyes, not fingers). Signal accordingly for less than/greater than/or equal to 11 players. Confirm with *REFEREE*
3. Hold bean bag in hand. Anticipate first touching
4. Provide ready signal only when the count is correct, receiving team is in position, sideline is clear, you are ready, and the *UMPIRE* signals he is ready. Be ready before the whistle

FREE KICK FOLLOWING A FAIR CATCH

HEAD LINESMAN – Position on the kicking team's restraining line.

FREE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Identify your keys, the nearest four players of the kicking team
2. Watch the receiver's restraining line for encroachment by receiving team
3. Quickly check the direction of the ball (short, long, left, or right). If it is a short kick, look for first touching by kicking team and use your bean bag as needed. Also, be aware of subsequent first touching spots
4. On short free kicks (during onside kick), when the ball is kicked to your side of the field, you have primary responsibility for the ball. Be prepared to rule on whether the ball has advanced beyond R's restraining line or possible first touching and possession at the end of the play
5. On short free kicks, when the ball is kicked away, take a wide view and assist with blocks around the ball and blocks by K before the ball advances beyond R's restraining line
6. On short free kicks, when the ball is kicked forward in the center of the field, you will have joint responsibility, with the opposite flank, for the ball and the legality of blocks and contact on receivers.

7. On a kick out of bounds, throw the flag to the out-of-bounds spot. If the team on your sideline is the offended team, get the enforcement choice from the coach and advise the *REFEREE*
8. Drift down the field to assume coverage of the runner and take all the way to the goal line. You have progress
9. On plays to the opposite side, mirror *LINE JUDGE* movement downfield. With wide vision, watch blocking and look for illegal acts. Use cross-field mechanics where appropriate
10. When the runner is downed in your coverage zone, stop the clock. Place the ball at your feet until the incoming ball is spotted. Duplicate other official's signals if the play does not end in your coverage zone
11. On anticipated short free kicks (during onside kick), you have primary responsibility for the ball when the ball is kicked to your side of the field. Be prepared to rule on whether the ball has advanced beyond R's restraining line and possession at the end of the play
12. On anticipated short free kicks, when the ball is kicked away, take a wide view and assist with backside blocks

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Short free-kick
- First touching (subsequent first touches) – USE BEAN BAG
- Starting-stopping the clock
- Blocking below the waist and clipping
- Legal substitutions
- Kick catch interference and fair catch interference
- Knee on the ground on catch
- Forward handing, illegal forward pass
- Batting
- Interlocked interference and illegal blocking
- Continuing action out of bounds
- Players going out of bounds during the kick
- Rule on the legality of the kick (no "pop-up" kicks)

FREE-KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Keep play and runner boxed in and sidelines covered at all times.

RETURNS DOWN THE CENTER OF THE FIELD

1. Keep the runner boxed in between you. View the action immediately around the runner

RETURNS INTO HEAD LINESMAN SIDE ZONE

2. Responsible for the runner and action immediately surrounding the runner
3. Cover the action in front of the runner, viewing blocking and other illegal activity

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- The closest official to the runner has the responsibility to declare the ball dead if and when the runner is tackled or downed
- There should always be two officials covering the secondary areas away from the ball carrier.
- All officials should dead ball officiate after the play
- All officials will hustle and efficiently prepare for the start of the next series

SCRIMMAGE PLAY MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

1. HUSTLE and assist in obtaining the ball/a new ball for spotting
2. Note the status of the clock (running/stopped)
3. Note down, distance, and game situation
4. Back into position, keeping a wide view of all players and dead ball action.
5. Signal up coming down and confirm with *REFEREE* and *LINE JUDGE*. Drop the signal after the *REFEREE* drops their signal.

6. Once the REFEREE confirms the next down, move the box/chains as necessary for the correct down and distance.
7. Identify the formation and count no more than four players in the backfield.
8. Signal status of eligible receivers on your side of snapper (crew decides if signals will be used)
9. Assume a position straddling the neutral zone, outside the sideline opposite the *LINE JUDGE*.
10. Be prepared to indicate team A restraining line to team A wide receiver with your up-field foot.
11. Identify the formation and signal status of eligible receivers on your side of the snapper.
12. Know eligible receivers on your side of the snapper and identify your initial keys
13. Motion – if a motion man is going away from you, have primary responsibility for knowing if the motion is legal or illegal. If motion man is coming to your side and motion is forward, call it if you see it

RUN MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP

1. Concentrate on your area of responsibility. “Fish in your own pond”
2. Verify no false starts, encroachment, and legal snap
3. Observe the snap, then momentarily read run/pass by observing the block by the near tackle (block toward, pass block, pull, etc.)
4. Locate the ball and the point of attack but do not focus on it
5. On plays beginning at or within the five-yard line, going into the end zone, move to the goal line, and officiate back to the line of scrimmage
6. On plays beginning at or within the three-yard line, going out of the end zone, move back to the goal line and officiate forward to the line of scrimmage

RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE SNAP

1. Know when you have responsibility for the runner and progress and when you have responsibility for action away from the ball
2. Maintain separation from the players and other officials and keep a wide view, even when you have responsibility for the runner and progress
3. After reading the block of the near tackle, momentarily locate the point of attack, and the runner
4. You always have the progress spot all the way until the runner crosses the goal line. This includes an accurate spot when the runner goes out of bounds
5. On plays within the 10-yard line, if a play threatens the goal line, be prepared to be at the goal line to make the appropriate call
6. If the point of attack is away from you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks and action in Zone 4, maintain a wide view of the action while paralleling the progress spot, observing player conduct away from the play
7. If the point of attack is toward you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks in Zone 1; observe blocks in front of the runner until you take over responsibility for the runner at the line of scrimmage. If the runner is headed toward your sideline, allow the play to go past you (move into the offensive backfield, if necessary), then trail the play. If the runner crosses the sideline, hustle to the spot and mark progress. Signal timeout while observing the out-of-bounds dead ball action. Do not look at the ground. If the runner crosses the goal line and continues out of bounds, signal touchdown while observing all dead ball action
8. After the ball is dead, close to the dead-ball spot, if the ball is declared dead inbounds, short of the line-to-gain, raise your arm to signal the start of the 40-second play clock to the *REFEREE*. You must move into the field on every play (unless safety prohibits) to show presence until the colors separate. Do not pass players and do not close beyond the near hash mark unless:
 - a. The line to gain is threatened
 - b. The goal line is threatened
 - c. The ball is loose then recovered
 - d. In these three cases, hustle to the dead-ball spot.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Encroachment
- False Starts
- Illegal motion, shifts, formations
- Illegal acts in front of the runner
- Clipping, blocks in the back, and use of hands

PASS MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. During pre-snap, identify the down and distance (goal line mechanics?), the line to gain (pick play on short yardage), formation, tendencies, and location of best player(s), and your initial key.
2. Read through the key receiver to the nearest offensive lineman to read the play
3. If an initial key is threatened/pressed, observe his release and observe for holding, OPI, DPI.
4. Remain near LOS until a pass is thrown unless all receivers are deep, stay underneath the shortest receiver
5. If a pass is thrown away from you, you have primary responsibility for knowing if the pass's initial direction was forward or backward. You will signal to the opposite flank by punching forward or backward accordingly
6. If the pass is to your side, you will relay the signal provided by the opposite flank
7. If the pass is to your side and you do not receive help from the opposite flank, you will rule forward or backward and signal accordingly
8. It is preferred that the flank official quickly identify that the QB is throwing a quick pass to the opposite away flank take one or two slide steps into the offensive backfield, giving a better view for the ruling on forward or backward and more visibility to your opposite flank.
9. If initial key is free of foul, transition to zone coverage and maintain underneath coverage and focus on short receiver.
10. On catch attempts near the sideline, focus on feet then hands. Near end line, focus on hands, then feet
11. Keep your focus on the receivers and defenders downfield while only quickly glancing back at QB to read the play. Do not watch the QB throughout the play, thereby disregarding the actions in the secondary. Do not focus on the flight of the ball.
12. Maintain Outside-in coverage, move parallel to sideline, responsible for sideline from end line to end line
13. If a pass is caught in bounds and then the player goes out of bounds, blow the whistle, stop the clock, mark the spot, continue to officiate
14. On catch attempts near the intersection of the sideline and end line, make eye contact with *BACK JUDGE* before signaling
15. If a pass is caught in bounds and then the player goes out of bounds, blow the whistle, stop the clock, mark the spot, continue to officiate
16. If the receiver catches the ball out of bounds and the covering official wants to “sell the call,” he/she may signal incomplete and then, using both hands, make a sweeping motion toward the sideline.
17. If the pass is completed and there is a need to “sell the call” and communicate that the ball was caught, the official shall raise both arms and then lower them in unison to mimic the actual catching of the ball. This signal must be performed in an exaggerated manner and is usually reserved for catches at the sideline.
18. Do not mark the spot of passes caught out of bounds
19. You are responsible for progress to the goal line. If you declare progress is stopped inbounds, short of the line-to-gain, raise your arm to signal the start of the 40-second play clock to the *BACK JUDGE*
20. Off-ball officiate on plays away. Come into the numbers on plays into the opposite side zone. Be prepared to offer cross-field spot if necessary on push-backs or when the opposite flank uses the “wind the clock” signal to request your assistance with a cross-field spot.
21. Be prepared to communicate with the referee when a pass is incomplete and intentional grounding may be in question. If a receiver is in the area, move to an open area as you signal by pointing demonstratively toward the eligible receiver. If there is no receiver in the area and it appears the QB is

outside the lateral boundaries of the free blocking zone, signal if the thrown ball crosses the LOS by moving your arm forward and backward along the LOS. If no receiver is in the pass area, and the ball does not cross reach the neutral zone, run to the referee and verbally communicate that information. The referee is responsible for the final decision and will throw his flag if necessary.

22. Dead ball officiate

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Holding
- Pass interference
- Catch/No-catch
- Unnecessary contact / Personal fouls
- Forward/backward pass
- Illegal participation

SCRIMMAGE KICK MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Observe substitutions as you hustle to your scrimmage kick positions
2. Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios by reviewing the Points of Emphasis for your position
3. Position on the line of scrimmage in front of the down marker
4. Count the kicking team and look for confirmation from *REFEREE* for eleven players
5. View the formation to see that there are no more than 4 kicking team players in the backfield
6. View the position of the outside kicking team players. Know who is eligible to catch a pass or go downfield prior to the kick

SCRIMMAGE KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios based on your position.

1. Glance at the kick to determine direction and distance. Do not continue to watch the ball
2. Determine if the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage.
3. Normal Kick – View the blocking and action around the kicking team's eligible players (the widest players on your side) and view line action until the ball clears. After the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage, quickly release down the field and parallel the play from the outside with wide vision. Continue to watch the action as the players and ball move toward the receiver. Observe blocking down the field and in front of the runner. Mark first touching with a bean bag.
4. Bad Snap – When there is a bad snap on a scrimmage kick, and the play goes deep into the backfield, you will follow the ball back and bracket with *REFEREE* (the *UMPIRE* will then have kick crossing or not crossing the LOS)
5. If you are the covering officials, at the end of the play, spot progress and square up with the *LINE JUDGE*, stop the clock and signal the direction of the team in possession
6. Kick Out of Bounds – You are responsible for obtaining the proper spot on extremely short kicks that bounce out of bounds near you or land within two yards of the sideline out of bounds near you. On punts that are shanked out of bounds near you, you should be prepared to line up deeper than where the ball went out of bounds on the sideline with your outside arm straight above your head. Make eye contact with the *REFEREE* and begin to walk toward the original line of scrimmage. The *REFEREE* will hack when you have reached the out-of-bounds spot. Signal the direction of the team in possession.
7. If you are holding the spot, cover the ball until you are relieved by another official.
8. Look to the *REFEREE* for confirmation to move the chains
9. Dead ball officiate

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Blocking
- Touching of the ball; beyond the line of scrimmage
- Illegal Kicking

- Interference
- Muff and First Touching Violations
- Ineligible players downfield

FIELD GOAL & PAT MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

Prior to all field goal attempts, all officials should remind themselves of live ball by using the illegal procedure signal (#S19)

1. Take a position on the sideline (on PAT, move into numbers) and observe the neutral zone
2. OR (if facing the back of the *REFEREE*)
3. Line up six feet or less behind the goal post on your side of the field. Count defense and orally communicate with UMPIRE of your count.
4. Callout the numbers of the eligible receivers on your side of the offensive formation

SWINGING GATE

1. All officials will be in their normal positions for a scrimmage down. However, if team A shifts to a formation normally used for a PAT or attempted a field goal, all officials will move to their appropriate positions.
2. If the play is a fake kick, attempt to get to your normal scrimmage position while maintaining your usual scrimmage play responsibilities.

FIELD GOAL & PAT KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. IF UNDER THE GOAL POST
 - a. As the ball arrives at the goal post, step up and look straight-up to determine if the ball is kicked between the uprights and not directly over the goal post
 - b. Orally communicate with *UMPIRE* as to the success or failure of the kick
 - c. Both should withhold any signal but immediately move to the end line where you both simultaneously give the signal ruling on the kick
 - d. Give incomplete signal if the kick fails
 - e. Give touchdown signal if the kick is good
 - f. On fake plays, be ready to cover passes or runs as usual. You are responsible for the goal line and sideline
 - g. Watch line play after kick ends
2. IF ON THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE
 - a. After the snap, observe the legality of the blocks of the backs protecting the kick
 - b. You are responsible for the goal line plane
 - c. If it is a pass, observe any illegal lineman downfield. This is your responsibility, along with the umpire
 - d. If a field goal is blocked, you are responsible in determining if the kick crossed the neutral zone or the goal line and where it is recovered, and by whom
 - e. After the kick, sprint into the hash to dead ball officiate

MECHANICS – 4-Official - Line Judge

PRE-SNAP ROUTINES

Great officials understand the importance of and have developed their ability to concentrate and focus on every play... one play at a time. They let the last play go and prepare themselves mentally and physically for the next play. Your Pre-snap routine is a tool that will help you move past the last play and get you into the flow of the game and improve your ability to officiate the next play correctly. Here are examples of effective Pre-snap routines:

1. Confirm the status of the clock

2. Accordion in and communicate and signal the status of the ball to the referee relative to the forward stake (1st down or next down).
3. If 1st down, use appropriate signal to *REFEREE* to wind the clock or hack.
4. Make a note of the down and distance.
5. Know the line to gain.
6. Change down indicator on hand appropriate to the status of the clock (back-stopped; front-live)
7. Observe substitutions and player equipment
8. Count defense and signal to *BACK JUDGE*
9. Confirm GL responsibility with *BACK JUDGE*
10. Use your up-field foot to indicate the back of the ball to the receiver.
11. Confirm eligible receivers, including backs, to your side of the formation
12. Note the location of better player(s)
13. Signal back to the opposite flank if the widest receiver is off the line of scrimmage (various signals will be used depending on the formation and confirmation of opposite flanks signals)
14. Release up-field foot indicating the back of the ball, and now straddle the LOS with the best view of the ball, near tackle, and receiver(s)
15. Anticipate the type of play, based upon down and distance, formation, and location of key players
16. Anticipate screen and know where the ball was caught relative to the LOS
17. Anticipate ineligible downfield on a pass to the other side
18. Feet then ball
19. Observe the legal snap with no false start, encroachment or illegal shift or motion (man going away from you)
20. Use read vision while observing near tackle to determining run (and direction of run) or pass
21. Other pre-snap possibilities based upon the situation and location of the ball include:
 - a. Goal-line mechanics – Stay wide at the pylon
 - b. Anticipate pick play
 - c. Punt – *LINE JUDGE* off, you have progress on your side of the field and sideline ruling
 - d. Punt – Fair Catch signal by other receivers
 - e. Know the location of eligible receivers and the ball for intentional grounding calls
 - f. Field Goal – live ball

When the dead ball period ends, do it again. Do it every play!

COIN TOSS PROCEDURES

1. *LINE JUDGE* escorts captains from the press box side to the top of the numbers /nine-yard marks. *HEAD LINESMAN* escorts captains from chains side to the top of the numbers /nine-yard marks. The captains will continue to the middle of the field, and the *HEAD LINESMAN* and *LINE JUDGE* will remain at the top of the numbers / nine-yard marks. The *LINE JUDGE* and *HEAD LINESMAN* will have a legal ball for their respective team
2. *LINE JUDGE* and *HEAD LINESMAN*, make certain your team is either in their respective team box or in their end zone during the coin toss
3. After the toss, all officials will meet in the middle of the field, record results, then jog to their specific kickoff positions

QUARTER

1. Record the down, distance, clip location, and relative field location
2. Verify that the ball placement is correct
3. Go to the spot where the ball should be put into play at the start of the next quarter
4. Time the one-minute intermission and notify *REFEREE* when 45 seconds have elapsed
5. Stay between the teams to show presence as you move to the new spot

HALFTIME

1. Meet and review the first-half. See Halftime, Post-Game, and Crew Self-Evaluation – the Use of Game Video.

2. As soon as teams leave the field, look at the timer and wind to start the half-time clock
3. All officials will meet away from teams and coaches to review the first half
4. Extend a 5-minute courtesy call to each team
5. Confer with the coach who has the second-half decision on which way they would like to kick the ball.
Do this when you provide the 5-minute courtesy call
6. Provide the information to fellow officials during the mandatory three-minute warm-up period
7. Keep the unofficial halftime clock for the crew

FREE KICK MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

HUSTLE TO POSITION!

1. Time the one-minute intermission following a score. Alert *UMPIRE* and *HEAD LINESMAN* after 45 seconds
2. Go to your position on the kicking team's restraining line at the sideline. Have your team on the field within one minute following a score
3. Count the kicking team (use eyes, not fingers). Signal accordingly for less than/greater than/or equal to 11 players. Confirm with *UMPIRE*
4. Provide ready signal only when the count is correct, kicking team is in position, sideline is clear, you are ready, and the *UMPIRE* signals he is ready. Be ready before the whistle
5. Hold bean bag in hand. Anticipate first touching
6. On anticipated short free kicks, move to the receiving team's restraining line

FREE KICK FOLLOWING A FAIR CATCH

LINE JUDGE – Position under the goal post on your side of the field.

FREE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Identify your keys, the nearest four players of the kicking team
2. Watch the kicker's restraining line for encroachment by the kicking team
3. Quickly check the direction of the ball (short, long, left, or right). If it is a short kick, look for first touching by kicking team and use your bean bag as needed. Also, be aware of subsequent first touching spots
4. On short free kicks (during onside kick), when the ball is kicked to your side of the field, you have primary responsibility for the ball. Be prepared to rule on whether the ball has advanced beyond R's restraining line or possible first touching and possession at the end of the play
5. On short free kicks, when the ball is kicked away, take a wide view and assist with blocks around the ball and blocks by K before the ball advances beyond R's restraining line
6. On short free kicks, when the ball is kicked forward in the center of the field, you will have joint responsibility, with the opposite flank, for the ball and the legality of blocks and contact on receivers.
7. On a kick out of bounds, throw the flag to the out-of-bounds spot. If the team on your sideline is the offended team, get the enforcement choice from the coach and advise the *REFEREE*
8. Drift down the field to assume coverage of the runner and take all the way to the goal line. You have progress
9. On plays to the opposite side, mirror *HEAD LINESMAN* movement downfield. With wide vision, watch blocking and look for illegal acts. Use cross-field mechanics where appropriate
10. When the runner is down in your coverage zone, stop the clock. Place the ball at your feet until the incoming ball is spotted. Duplicate other official's signals if the play does not end in your coverage zone
11. On anticipated short free kicks (during an onside kick), when the ball is kicked to your side of the field, you are responsible for blocks around the ball. Be aware of blocks by K before the ball advances beyond R's restraining line
12. On anticipated short free kicks, when the ball is kicked away, take a wide view and prepare to assist on whether the ball has advanced beyond R's restraining line. Be aware of backside blocks

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Short free-kick

- First touching (subsequent first touches) – USE BEAN BAG
- Starting-stopping the clock
- Blocking below the waist and clipping
- Legal substitutions
- Kick catch interference and fair catch interference
- Knee on the ground on catch
- Forward handing, illegal forward pass
- Batting
- Interlocked interference and illegal blocking
- Continuing action out of bounds
- Players going out of bounds during the kick
- Rule on the legality of the kick (no “pop-up” kicks)

FREE-KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Keep play and runner boxed in and sidelines covered at all times.

RETURNS DOWN THE CENTER OF THE FIELD

1. Keep the runner boxed in between you. View the action immediately around the runner

RETURNS INTO HEAD LINESMAN SIDE ZONE

1. Cover the action in front of the runner, viewing blocking and other illegal activity

RETURNS INTO THE LINE JUDGE SIDE ZONE

1. Responsible for the runner and action immediately surrounding the runner
2. Cover the action in front of the runner, viewing blocking and other illegal activity

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- The closest official to the runner has the responsibility to declare the ball dead if and when the runner is tackled or downed
- There should always be two officials covering the secondary areas away from the ball carrier.
- All officials should dead ball officiate after the play
- All officials will hustle and efficiently prepare for the start of the next series

SCRIMMAGE PLAY MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

1. HUSTLE and assist in obtaining the ball/a new ball for spotting
2. Note the status of the clock (running/stopped)
3. Note down, distance, and game situation
4. Back into position, keeping a wide view of all players and dead ball action.
5. Signal upcoming down and confirm with *HEAD LINESMAN* and *REFEREE*
6. Communicate with the *REFEREE* if necessary to indicate the status of the game clock (on the ready with wind signal at the waist or, on the snap with arms crossed at the chest)
7. Identify the formation and count no more than 4 players in the backfield
8. Signal status of eligible receivers on your side of snapper (crew decides if signals will be used)
9. Assume a position straddling the neutral zone, outside the sideline opposite the *HEAD LINESMAN*
10. If directed by a signal from the *REFEREE* in a “Hail Mary” situation, the *LINE JUDGE* may establish his position at the goal line or up to 15 yards down the field in anticipation of a last-second desperation play
11. Count Team B players, confirm count with *UMPIRE* when Team A breaks the huddle
12. Be prepared to indicate team A retraining line to team A wide receiver with your up-field foot
13. Identify formation and signal status of eligible receivers on your side of the snapper
14. Know eligible receivers on your side of snapper and identify your initial keys
15. Motion – if a motion man is going away from you, have primary responsibility for knowing if the motion is legal or illegal. If motion man is coming to your side and motion is forward, call it if you see it

RUN MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP

1. Concentrate on your area of responsibility. “Fish in your own pond”
2. Verify no false starts, encroachment, and legal snap
3. Observe the snap, then momentarily read run/pass by observing the block by the near tackle (block toward, pass block, pull, etc.)
4. Locate the ball and the point of attack but do not focus on it
5. On plays beginning at or within the five-yard line, going into the end zone, move to the goal line, and officiate back to the line of scrimmage
6. On plays beginning at or within the three-yard line, going out of the end zone, move back to the goal line and officiate forward to the line of scrimmage

RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE SNAP

1. Know when you have responsibility for the runner and progress and when you have responsibility for action away from the ball
2. Maintain separation from the players and other officials and keep a wide view, even when you have responsibility for the runner and progress
3. After reading the block of the near tackle, momentarily locate the point of attack, and the runner
4. You always have the progress spot all the way until the runner crosses the goal line. This includes an accurate spot when the runner goes out of bounds
5. On plays within the 10-yard line, if a play threatens the goal line, be prepared to be at the goal line to make the appropriate call
6. If the point of attack is away from you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks and action in Zone 4, maintain a wide view of the action while paralleling the progress spot, observing player conduct away from the play
7. If the point of attack is toward you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks in Zone 1; observe blocks in front of the runner until you take over responsibility for the runner at the line of scrimmage. If the runner is headed toward your sideline, allow the play to go past you (move into the offensive backfield, if necessary), then trail the play. If the runner crosses the sideline, hustle to the spot and mark progress. Signal timeout while observing the out-of-bounds dead ball action. Do not look at the ground. If the runner crosses the goal line and continues out of bounds, signal touchdown while observing all dead ball action
8. After the ball is dead, close to the dead-ball spot, if the ball is declared dead inbounds, short of the line-to-gain, raise your arm to signal the start of the 40-second play clock to the *REFEREE*. You must move into the field on every play (unless safety prohibits) to show presence until the colors separate. Do not pass players and do not close beyond the near hash mark unless:
 - a. The line to gain is threatened
 - b. The goal line is threatened
 - c. The ball is loose then recovered
9. In these three cases, hustle to the dead-ball spot.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Encroachment
- False Starts
- Illegal motion, shifts, formations
- Illegal acts in front of the runner
- Clipping, blocks in the back, and use of hands

PASS MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. During pre-snap, identify the down and distance (goal line mechanics?), the line to gain (pick play on short yardage), formation, tendencies, and location of best player(s), and your initial key.

2. Read through the key receiver to the nearest offensive lineman to read the play
3. If an initial key is threatened/pressed, observe his release and observe for holding, OPI, DPI.
4. Remain near LOS until a pass is thrown unless all receivers are deep, stay underneath the shortest receiver
5. If a pass is thrown away from you, you have primary responsibility for knowing if the pass's initial direction was forward or backward. You will signal to the opposite flank by punching forward or backward accordingly
6. If the pass is to your side, you will relay the signal provided by the opposite flank
7. If the pass is to your side and you do not receive help from the opposite flank, you will rule forward or backward and signal accordingly
8. It is preferred that the flank official quickly identify that the QB is throwing a quick pass to the opposite away flank take one or two slide steps into the offensive backfield, giving a better view for the ruling on forward or backward and more visibility to your opposite flank.
9. If initial key is free of foul, transition to zone coverage and maintain underneath coverage and focus on short receiver.
10. On catch attempts near the sideline, focus on feet then hands. Near end line, focus on hands, then feet
11. Keep your focus on the receivers and defenders downfield while only quickly glancing back at QB to read the play. Do not watch the QB throughout the play, thereby disregarding the actions in the secondary. Do not focus on the flight of the ball.
12. Maintain Outside-in coverage, move parallel to sideline, responsible for sideline from end line to end line
13. If a pass is caught in bounds and then the player goes out of bounds, blow the whistle, stop the clock, mark the spot, continue to officiate
14. On catch attempts near the intersection of the sideline and end line, make eye contact with *BACK JUDGE* before signaling
15. If a pass is caught in bounds and then the player goes out of bounds, blow the whistle, stop the clock, mark the spot, continue to officiate
16. If the receiver catches the ball out of bounds and the covering official wants to “sell the call,” he/she may signal incomplete and then, using both hands, make a sweeping motion toward the sideline.
17. If the pass is completed and there is a need to “sell the call” and communicate that the ball was caught, the official shall raise both arms and then lower them in unison to mimic the actual catching of the ball. This signal must be performed in an exaggerated manner and is usually reserved for catches at the sideline.
18. Do not mark the spot of passes caught out of bounds
19. You are responsible for progress to the goal line. If you declare progress is stopped inbounds, short of the line-to-gain, raise your arm to signal the start of the 40-second play clock to the *BACK JUDGE*
20. Off-ball officiate on plays away. Come into the numbers on plays into the opposite side zone. Be prepared to offer cross-field spot if necessary on push-backs or when the opposite flank uses the “wind the clock” signal to request your assistance with a cross-field spot.
21. Be prepared to communicate with the referee when a pass is incomplete and intentional grounding may be in question. If a receiver is in the area, move to an open area as you signal by pointing demonstratively toward the eligible receiver. If there is no receiver in the area and it appears the QB is outside the lateral boundaries of the free blocking zone, signal if the thrown ball crosses the LOS by moving your arm forward and backward along the LOS. If no receiver is in the pass area, and the ball does not cross reach the neutral zone, run to the referee and verbally communicate that information. The referee is responsible for the final decision and will throw his flag if necessary.
22. Dead ball officiate

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Holding
- Pass interference
- Catch/No-catch

- Unnecessary contact / Personal fouls
- Forward/backward pass
- Illegal participation

SCRIMMAGE KICK MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Observe substitutions as you hustle to your scrimmage kick positions
2. Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios by reviewing the Points of Emphasis for your position
3. Position slightly behind and to the side of the deepest receiver on your side of the field (no further than halfway between the near sideline and the receiver) and 3-5 yards behind the receiver. If two receivers, your starting field position is between the receivers, 3-5 yards behind the receivers. On kicks from inside the receiving team's 40-yard line, take a position on the goal line.
4. Count the receiving team and confirm with *UMPIRE*.
5. View the position of the outside kicking team players. Know who is eligible to catch a pass or go downfield prior to the kick.
6. Provide fair catch instructions to the receiver(s) if possible, and ask the receiver(s) to show you their signal. Remind the receiver that if they are going to make a fair catch, make sure it's a good signal.
7. Hold a beanbag in your hand.

SCRIMMAGE KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios based on your position.

1. Glance quickly at the kick to determine direction and distance. Do not continue to watch the ball.
2. Normal Kick – View the receiver and run up to be even with the receiver as he prepares to catch the ball. Your only view is the receiver, and stay to the side of him by 7-12 yards. Look to see that the receiver catches the ball cleanly and that there was no kick catch interference or to rule on a fair catch.
3. Drop your beanbag where the kick ends. Remember that the kick ends when any player gains possession or when the ball becomes dead. If the kick crosses the goal line, blow your whistle and signal touchback.
4. During the return, attempt to fade toward your sideline as you must rule on progress on your side of the field and your sideline. You can accomplish this even if you end up trailing the returner down your sideline. If the return is toward the head linesman's side of the field, release him to the head linesman and fade to your sideline.
5. Fair Catch - View the receiver and run up to be even with the receiver as he prepares to catch the ball. View the fair catch signal (valid or invalid?). Make certain the receiver catches the ball cleanly, and it does not go through his hands. With a confirmed catch, determine the spot of the fair catch and toss your bean bag to identify that spot. Signal to stop the clock and use your whistle to signal the end of the kick. Signal the direction of the team in possession.
6. First Touch Violation – Use a beanbag if there is a first touching violation by the kicking team. Note: there may be more than one spot of the first touching violation
7. If you are the covering official, stop the clock at the end of the play and signal the team's direction in possession.
8. Kick Out of Bounds – Determine the out-of-bounds spot on medium or long kicks out of bounds that bounce out of bounds or land within two yards of the sideline. On medium or long kicks that are kicked well out of bounds, you should be prepared to line up deeper than where the ball went out of bounds on the sideline with an outside arm straight above your head. Make eye contact with the *REFEREE* and begin to walk toward the original line of scrimmage. The *REFEREE* will hack when you have reached the out-of-bounds spot. Signal the direction of the team in possession.
9. Dead ball officiate
10. Communicate possession and direction to the *REFEREE*

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Fair Catch Signals
- Blocking

- Goal Line
- Illegal Batting or Forward Handing
- Muff and First Touching Violations
- Fair Catch or Kick Catch Interference
- Ball Out of Bounds in Flight

FIELD GOAL & PAT MECHANICS – 4-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

Prior to all field goal attempts, all officials should remind themselves of live ball by using the illegal procedure signal (#S19)

1. Take a position on the sideline (on PAT, move into numbers) and observe the neutral zone

OR (if facing the back of the *REFEREE*)

2. Line up six feet or less behind the goal post on your side of the field. Count defense and orally communicate with UMPIRE of your count.
3. Callout the numbers of the eligible receivers on your side of the offensive formation

SWINGING GATE

1. All officials will be in their normal positions for a scrimmage down. However, if team A shifts to a formation normally used for a PAT or attempted a field goal, all officials will move to their appropriate positions.
2. If the play is a fake kick, attempt to get to your normal scrimmage position while maintaining your usual scrimmage play responsibilities.

FIELD GOAL & PAT KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. IF UNDER THE GOAL POST
 - a. As the ball arrives at the goal post, step up and look straight-up to determine if the ball was kicked between the uprights and not directly over the goal post
 - b. Orally communicate with UMPIRE as to the success or failure of the kick
 - c. Both should withhold any signal but immediately move to the end line where you both simultaneously give the signal ruling on the kick if the kick is good, or clearly failed. If the kick is close and fails, only the ruling official gives the incomplete signal.
 - d. Give incomplete signal if the kick fails
 - e. Give touchdown signal if the kick is good
 - f. On fake plays, be ready to cover passes or runs as usual. You are responsible for the goal line and sideline.
 - g. Watch line play after kick ends
2. IF ON THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE
 - a. After the snap, observe the legality of the blocks of the backs protecting the kick
 - b. You are responsible for the goal line plane
 - c. If it is a pass, observe any illegal lineman downfield. This is your responsibility, along with the umpire
 - d. If a field goal is blocked, you are responsible for determining if the kick crossed the neutral zone or the goal line and where it is recovered, and by whom
 - e. After the kick, sprint into the hash to dead ball officiate

MECHANICS – 5-Official - Referee

PRE-SNAP ROUTINES

Great officials understand the importance of and have developed their ability to concentrate and focus on every play... one play at a time. They let the last play go and prepare themselves mentally and physically for the next play. Your Pre-snap routine is a tool that will help you move past the last play and get you into the flow of the game and improve your ability to officiate the next play correctly. Here are examples of effective Pre-snap routines:

1. Accordion in and determine next down by looking at *LINE JUDGE*, who will indicate the status of the ball relative to the line to gain (forward stake).
2. Confirm the status of the clock
3. Confirm next down with *HEAD LINESMAN* and signal *HEAD LINESMAN* to move the box
4. If 1st down, wind or hack as soon as the box is near new spot and ball is in the process of being placed – push the pace.
5. Confirm the status of the clock
6. Change down indicator on hand
7. Make a note of the down and distance
8. Move to a new position while observing: chains, ball relay, and ball spotting by *UMPIRE*
9. Confirm the status of the clock with *BACK JUDGE* and other officials to determine wind or no wind
10. Observe substitutions and player equipment
11. Count offense & signal umpire
12. Observe readiness of the crew
13. Hold *UMPIRE* (*UMPIRE* prevents the center from snapping) if the offense wants to snap and the crew not ready
14. Signal *UMPIRE* to move to the pre-snap position (if he's holding the offense)
15. Signal ready for play (hack or wind) if a 25-second play clock is required by rule & change down indicator on hand – unless you've already done this due to 1st down
16. Re-count offense (if possible), identifying formation and key players
17. Anticipate the type of play-based upon down and distance, formation, and location of key players
18. Observe the cadence of the QB looking for hard counts that simulate the snap
19. Use read vision while determining run (and direction of run) or pass
20. Other pre-snap possibilities based upon the situation and location of the ball include:
 - a. Punt – *LINE JUDGE* off, kicker receiving the ball with knee down, roughing/running into
 - b. Punt – observe signaler's cadence (may be the protector)
 - c. End line going out of the end zone or punter in the end zone
 - d. Intentional grounding, incomplete pass/fumble, roughing the passer
 - e. Field Goal – live ball – observe holder's cadence

When the dead ball period ends, do it again. Do it every play!

COIN TOSS PROCEDURES

1. Meet with the captains at the center of the field for the coin toss.
2. Instructs captains. Visiting captains will call the coin toss. The visiting captain is required to indicate heads or tails prior to the toss of the coin.
3. Once both teams have made the choices, move the captains, so their backs are to the goal they're defending, indicate winning captains and choice or option deferred. If the captain's choice is to defer, give the proper signal (signal #10) then move to the other captains and give the signal for the appropriate choice.
4. After the toss, all officials will meet in the middle of the field, record results, then jog to their specific kickoff positions.

QUARTER

1. Be aware of the last-minute of play. If the ball is not in play when the clock runs out, step in to prevent the snap
2. Announce the end of the quarter by holding the ball over your head, record the down and distance, and release the *HEAD LINESMAN*
3. Jog to the new spot on the opposite side of the field and spot the ball
4. Check to make certain the down, distance, and yard line is correct
5. When officials are ready, and the *BACK JUDGE* indicates the intermission is over, declare the ball ready for play

HALFTIME

1. Will meet away from teams, coaches, and fans to review the first-half. See Halftime, Post-Game, and Crew Self-Evaluation – the Use of Game Video
2. As soon as teams leave the field, look at the timer and wind to start the half-time clock

FREE KICK MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Ensure each team has 11 players on the field before the kick.
2. Hustle to positions and get teams on the field promptly after a score.
3. Covering official(s) signal game clock to start when the kick is touched, other than first touching by K.
4. Kick out of bounds between goal lines:
 - a. Sound whistle.
 - b. Give the time-out signal twice and mark the spot.
 - c. Determine if R had touched.
 - d. Toss the penalty marker if R did not touch the ball.
5. Maintain position on the sideline at all times.
6. Sound a whistle when the ball becomes dead in your area and give a time-out signal
7. Free kick following safety:
 - a. Each game official assumes the same relative position and has the same duties as on kickoff.
 - b. The ball may be put in play by a drop kick, place kick, or punt.
8. Position: R's goal yard line on the *HEAD LINESMAN'S* side between the center of the field and hash marks
9. Count R players and confirm with *UMPIRE* and *HEAD LINESMAN*
10. Check positions of other game officials
11. After ready signs have been received from other game officials, declare the ball ready for play, sound whistle, and verify at least four K players are on each side of the kicker when the ball is kicked
12. If a short free-kick is anticipated:
 - a. Take position near R's 10-yard line if there is no R player deep
 - b. Be alert to assist other game officials and be aware of the game clock

FREE KICK FOLLOWING A FAIR CATCH

Position with the kicker.

FREE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Covering official(s) signal game clock to start (S #2) when kick is touched, other than first touching by K
2. Kick out of bounds between goal lines:
 - a. Sound whistle
 - b. Give a time-out signal (S #3) twice and mark spot
 - c. Determine if R had touched
 - d. Toss penalty marker if R did not touch the ball
3. Maintain position on the sideline at all times except for referee and back judge.
4. Sound a whistle when the ball becomes dead in your area and give a time-out signal

5. Carry bean bag in hand
6. Free kick following safety:
 - a. Each game official assumes the same relative position and has the same duties as on kickoff
 - b. Ball put in play by a dropkick, place kick, or punt.
7. Signal game clock to start when a kick is legally touched in your area in the field of play
8. Kick down the middle:
 - a. Pick up the runner and follow until releasing to the covering official
 - b. Observe action with an inside-out view of blocks in front of the runner
 - c. Serve as clean-up behind, to the side of, and around the runner
9. Deep kick:
 - a. While standing on the goal line, rule on a touchback
 - b. If the kick is caught inside the 5-yard line and the player is downed in the end zone, rule on whether the momentum rule applies. If momentum applies, mark the spot of catch with a bean bag
10. Kick outside opposite hash mark:
 - a. Move cautiously with play
 - b. Observe the action of other players in the vicinity of the runner
 - c. Serve as clean-up behind, to the side of, and around the runner
11. Mark the out-of-bounds spot if the kick goes out-of-bounds in your area. Be sure to communicate with *UMPIRE* or *HEAD LINESMAN* before making a ruling.
 - a. Drop penalty marker if untouched inbounds by *REFEREE*
 - b. Be prepared to rule at the goal line pylon

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Touchback and kick out of bounds
- Fair catch, including illegal signal
- Knee on the ground on catch
- Forward handing during return
- Batting
- Blocking below the waist and clipping
- Interlocked interference
- Action on the wedge when coming toward you
- Continuing action dead ball action out of bounds
- Momentum exception
- Short free-kick support

SCRIMMAGE PLAY MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

1. HUSTLE and assist in obtaining the ball/a new ball for spotting
2. Note the status of the clock (running/stopped)
3. Note down, distance, and game situation
4. Back into position, keeping a wide view of all players and dead ball action
5. Signal up coming down to *HEAD LINESMAN* and then to the rest of the crew
6. Make visual contact with all officials to determine if they are ready, verify the *BACK JUDGE* is ready to start the 25-second play clock
7. Indicate “Ready for Play” with a short whistle and hack or a long whistle and wind (two times). Be sure to stay in view of the press box when giving the signal
8. Assume a position about 12-15 yards behind the neutral zone and outside the tackle. *REFEREE* will be allowed to stay on the QB’s right side, even if the QB is left-handed. This must be discussed and confirmed with the entire crew during the crew’s pre-game conference
9. Count Team A players (in the huddle, if possible) and signal to *UMPIRE*
10. Identify formation and observe initial keys: QB hard count and head bob, and false starts

RUN MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP

1. Concentrate on your area of responsibility. “Fish in your own pond.”
2. Verify no false starts or encroachment, legal snap (except *BACK JUDGE*)
3. Observe the snap, then read the action of the Quarterback, Backs, and Lineman to determine the type of play
4. Allow your reads to help you identify the point of attack while maintaining primary responsibility for action on and by the quarterback

RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE SNAP

1. Know when you have responsibility for the runner and progress and when you have responsibility for action away from the ball
2. Maintain separation from the players and other officials and keep a wide view, even when you have responsibility for the runner and progress
3. After determining the point of attack, shift your focus to the appropriate run zone. Know where the runner is, but he should not be your focus once he is beyond the line of scrimmage
 - a. If the point of attack is toward you, you have responsibility for the legality of blocks in Zone 2
 - b. If the point of attack is away from you, you have responsibility for the legality of blocks in Zone 3
 - c. If the point of attack is up the middle, you and the umpire both have responsibility for the legality of blocks in Zone 2
 - d. If the point of attack is outside the hash marks, move to that side while maintaining your view of the action behind and around the runner
 - e. If the point of attack is between the hash marks, box in from the rear, again focusing on blocks behind at the point of attack and around the runner
4. If the down requires the use of a 25-second play clock (see new 40-25 Second Play Clock Mechanics Insert), make visual contact with all officials to determine if they are ready and verify the *BACK JUDGE* is ready to start the 25-second play clock. Indicate “Ready for Play” with a short whistle and hack or a long whistle and wind (two times). Be sure to stay in view of the press box when giving the signal
5. If the game clock was running and a first down was achieved inbounds, re-start the game clock with the use of a silent wind
6. After the runner is down, maintain a wide view of the dead ball action. If the play ends out of bounds, hustle to the sideline and ensure players separate and return inbounds. Assist with getting the ball to the *UMPIRE*
7. If the ball is dead between the hash marks, hustle to that spot while keeping your head up to observe the action around the pile. If you declare the ball dead, inbounds well into the backfield, raise your arm to signal the start of the 40-second play clock to the *BACK JUDGE*. Assist the *UMPIRE* if necessary

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- False starts
- Illegal shifts
- Motion
- Blocking around the runner and by team A backs
- Illegal acts around the runner
- Reverses and trick plays
- Free blocking zone

PASS MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. Assist in relay/spotting the ball only if necessary. Maintain wide vision, including a view of the clock, substitutions, movement of the box and chains, and the readiness of the crew to officiate the next play.
2. Accordion back out to your regular position

3. View the legal cadence and movement of the QB
4. Observe initial blocking of off-side tackle while determining the type and direction of the play
5. Be alert for blocks by backs as you transition to “read/soft vision” and identify any threats (“bad color”)
6. On QB scrambles toward LOS, determine the forward point where the ball is released
7. Announce “ball is away” and protect QB until immediate action is complete or QB moves to participate.
You have all calls on QB behind the line of scrimmage
8. Use tip ball signal if pass is touched in or behind the neutral zone.
9. ANTICIPATE:
 - i. Forward or backward pass
 - ii. Pass attempt vs. fumble
 - iii. Roughing passer
 - iv. Illegal pass (beyond LOS or intentional grounding)
10. Continue to provide wide-vision of play until the ball is declared dead.
11. If you declare the ball dead, inbounds well into the backfield, raise your arm to signal to the *BACK JUDGE* to start the 40-second play clock.
12. Dead ball officiate.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Forward or backward pass
- Pass attempt vs. fumble
- Roughing the passer
- Illegal pass (beyond LOS or intentional grounding)

SCRIMMAGE KICK MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Observe substitutions as you hustle to your scrimmage kick positions (Diagram)
2. Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios by reviewing the Points of Emphasis for your position
3. Position to the *LINE JUDGE* side of the field and slightly behind the kicker (approximately 7 yards to the side and 5 yards deeper than the kicker)
4. Count the kicking team and confirm with the *UMPIRE* and the *HEAD LINESMAN*
5. View the lineman and know numbering exceptions

SCRIMMAGE KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios based on your position. See points of emphasis at the end of this section.

1. Normal Kick – Watch blocking by Team A backs and protect the kicker. Stay with the kicker until all is clear. Be the last official down the field and box in all players from behind with wide vision. If the return breaks through the defense, be prepared to take the runner all the way to the goal line
2. Bad Snap – When there is a bad snap on a scrimmage kick, and the play goes deep into the backfield, you will follow the ball back and bracket with *HEAD LINESMAN*
3. Kick Out of Bounds – If the kick goes out of bounds in flight, move to the spot of the kick and then proceed to line up the out-of-bounds spot with the covering official by signaling with a hack
4. After the Play – Indicate to *HEAD LINESMAN* when to move chains, hustle to the new spot, and indicate the first down and direction of the ball

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Fake kicks
- Bad Snaps
- Blocked Punt
- Roughing or Running Into the Kicker; Incidental Contact
- Illegal Blocks
- Illegal Use of Hands

- Clock Status before and after the play

FIELD GOAL & PAT MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

Prior to all field goal attempts, all officials should remind themselves of live ball by using the illegal procedure signal (S19)

1. Take a wide position, 10–15 yards (or more) wider than the potential kicker and 2–3 yards deeper, on the open side of the holder. Help direct the appropriate official to be under the goal post with the *BACK JUDGE*
2. Count the kicking team and confirm with the *UMPIRE*
3. Beware of a fake field goal or PAT. On a kick from beyond the 10-yard line, be ready to assist in covering the open sideline/pylon
4. Before the snap, observe any linebackers that may be attempting to shoot the gap to block the kick
5. Before the snap, check for any illegal locking of legs by offensive linemen

SWINGING GATE

1. All officials will be in their regular positions for a scrimmage down. Suppose team A shifts to a formation normally used for a PAT or attempted field goal. In that case, the *HEAD LINESMAN* and *LINE JUDGE* will stay in their regular scrimmage down positions, and the *UMPIRE* will move to the unoccupied goal post to rule on the kick success or failure. *UMPIRE* will still maintain responsibility for protecting the snapper
2. The *BACK JUDGE* will retain primary responsibility for the whistle
3. Prior to the snap, the *UMPIRE* and *BACK JUDGE* will establish eligible receivers on their respective sides of the offensive formation
4. If the play is a fake kick, the *UMPIRE* will attempt to get to his normal scrimmage position while the remaining officials maintain their usual scrimmage play responsibilities

FIELD GOAL & PAT KICK COVERAGE

1. At the snap, observe the cadence of the holder with a wide vision of all kicking team members looking for any false starts
2. Immediately following a successful snap, mentally rule if the holder's knee was down upon receiving the snap
3. You are solely responsible if the kicker or holder is roughed or has been run into
4. Do not blow any blocked field goal dead as the ball is still live. If it is obvious that a PAT kick has been blocked and grounded, blow the play dead immediately.
5. After the kick, the kicker and the holder are free of any foul, shift your observation to the offensive line to dead ball officiate. Do not hurry to see if the kick was judged successful by the officials under the goal post. Continue to dead ball officiate until the players cease their action and begin to move to their benches
6. After you have observed the signals from the officials under the goal post, turn to the press box and repeat their signal
7. If a field goal is blocked, or a PAT or field goal is faked, or a bad snap causes the kicking team to abort the attempt, move so that all players are bracketed in and cover as you would any run or pass. You have primary responsibility for ruling on plays ending at the pylon if no flank official is present. The *UMPIRE* and flank officials will hustle and provide support if possible

MEASUREMENTS

1. Have the *HEAD LINESMAN* and chain crew bring in the chains
2. Indicate the spot for the *HEAD LINESMAN* to place the clip, so that the measurement will be on the press box side of the ball, prior to extending the forward stake to the line to gain Move to the forward stake to rule on the line to gain
3. If first down, signal. If not first down, signal down and distance. If the ball is in a side zone, the *REFEREE* shall use the chains to place the ball at the inbound spot

4. When the chains are in place, mark the ball ready for play, wind clock or no wind depending on the clock before the official's time out

MECHANICS – 5-Official - Umpire

PRE-SNAP ROUTINES

Great officials understand the importance of and have developed their ability to concentrate and focus on every play... one play at a time. They let the last play go and prepare themselves mentally and physically for the next play. Your Pre-snap routine is a tool that will help you move past the last play and get you into the flow of the game and improve your ability to officiate the next play correctly. Here are examples of effective Pre-snap routines:

1. Confirm the status of the clock
2. Place ball at the proper spot and lateral location (positions 1-5)
3. If 1st down or after penalty enforcement, signal or verbalize the status of the clock to the referee so he can properly wind or hack
4. Confirm the status of the clock
5. Confirm new down and change down indicator and position indicators on hands
6. If 1st down, anticipate quick wind and leave the ball and move to a new position
7. Make a note of the down and distance
8. Observe substitutions and player equipment
9. Count offense, identify 5 players wearing #s 50-79, & signal referee
10. Hold the center to prevent the snap if the offense is in a hurry-up and wants to snap and the *REFEREE* has not released you, or in any situation where the the crew is not ready to officiate or play has been held up.
11. Move to pre-snap position when the *REFEREE* releases you when the offense is in a hurry-up
12. Identifying formation looking for the strength of the formation, unbalanced, and key players
13. Anticipate the type of play, based upon down and distance, formation, and location of key players
14. Feet then ball
15. Observe the legal snap and your initial keys (guard-center-guard)
16. Use read vision while determining run (and direction of run) or pass
17. Other pre-snap possibilities based upon the situation and location of the ball include:
 - a. Punt – *LINE JUDGE* off, numbering exceptions, legal long snap, roughing the snapper
 - b. Punt – loosen position wider and deeper
 - c. Goal-line – stay off the goal line
 - d. Goal-line – locate the ball relative to the goal line after the play and communicate “I have the ball” to flanks if the final resting spot of the ball is in the end zone.
 - e. Passing/screening/Run-Pass-Option teams – ineligible down field
 - f. Field Goal – live ball – numbering exceptions and roughing the snapper

When the dead ball period ends, do it again. Do it every play!

COIN TOSS PROCEDURES

1. Meet with the captains at the center of the field for the coin toss.
2. After the toss, all officials will meet in the middle of the field, record results, then jog to their specific kickoff positions.

QUARTER

1. Be aware of the last-minute of play. If the ball is not in play when the clock runs out, step in to prevent the snap
2. Announce the end of the quarter by holding the ball over your head, record the down and distance, and release the *HEAD LINESMAN*
3. Jog to the new spot on the opposite side of the field and spot the ball
4. Check to make certain the down, distance, and yard line is correct

5. When officials are ready, and the *BACK JUDGE* indicates the intermission is over, declare the ball ready for play

HALFTIME

1. Will meet away from teams, coaches, and fans to review the first-half. See Halftime, Post-Game, and Crew Self-Evaluation – the Use of Game Video

FREE KICK MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Ensure each team has 11 players on the field before the kick.
2. Hustle to positions and get teams on the field promptly after a score.
3. Covering official(s) signal game clock to start when the kick is touched, other than first touching by K.
4. Kick out of bounds between goal lines:
 - a. Sound whistle.
 - b. Give the time-out signal twice and mark the spot.
 - c. Determine if R had touched.
 - d. Toss the penalty marker if R did not touch the ball.
5. Maintain position on the sideline at all times except for referee.
6. Sound a whistle when the ball becomes dead in your area and give a time-out signal
7. Free kick following safety:
 - a. Each game official assumes the same relative position and has the same duties as on kickoff.
8. The ball may be put in play by a drop kick, place kick, or punt.
9. Be certain coaches, players, substitutions, and other individuals are in proper locations
10. Position: On R's 20-yard line outside sideline opposite *HEAD LINESMAN*. If K's free-kick line is relocated due to penalty or the situation dictates, take a position anywhere from the R-10 to the R-30, preferably 10 yards downfield of *HEAD LINESMAN*
11. Count R players and confirm with *REFEREE*
12. Hold arm above head to indicate you are ready
13. If a short kick is anticipated, position on R's free-kick line
 - a. Be alert for first touching by K or kick which does not cross R's free-kick line
 - b. Watch for any infractions involving R's free-kick line
 - c. Hold bean bag to mark first touching by K
14. Observe legality of blocks and action away from the ball and contact on receivers.

OPTIONAL FREE KICK MECHANIC – SWITCHING THE LINE JUDGE AND THE UMPIRE POSITIONING, MECHANICS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At the *REFEREE*'s discretion and after discussion with the crew, modifying the free-kick position and mechanics for the Umpire and the Line Judge is an option. This should only be done on crews with experienced Line Judges and Umpires.

FREE KICK FOLLOWING A FAIR CATCH

- Position on the receiving team's restraining line.

FREE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Covering official(s) signal game clock to start (S #2) when kick is touched, other than first touching by K
2. Kick out of bounds between goal lines:
 - a. Sound whistle
 - b. Give a time-out signal (S #3) twice and mark spot
 - c. Determine if R had touched
 - d. Toss penalty marker if R did not touch the ball
3. Maintain position on the sideline at all times except for referee and back judge.
4. Sound a whistle when the ball becomes dead in your area and give a time-out signal
5. Carry bean bag in hand

6. Free kick following safety:
 - a. Each game official assumes the same relative position and has the same duties as on kickoff
 - b. Ball put in play by a dropkick, place kick, or punt.
7. Kick to your side:
 - a. Signal game clock to start when a kick is legally touched in your area
 - b. Remain stationary for optimal viewing of blocks between the R-20 and R-30
 - c. Pick up the runner and follow along the sideline. Allow the action to pass before moving upfield and trail the play by approximately 10 yards
 - d. Responsibility for the progress of the runner from the R goal line to the R-35-yard line
 - e. When the ball becomes dead, sound a whistle and give a time-out signal, obtain the offense's game ball from the sideline if applicable
 - f. If the ball is kicked outside the numbers beyond your starting position, turn and officiate the ball, returner, and sideline
8. Kick to the opposite side of the field:
 - a. Move cautiously with play along the sideline
 - b. Observe the action of other players in the vicinity of the runner
 - c. Serve as clean-up behind, to the side of, and around the runner
 - d. Use cross-field mechanics when appropriate to assist the *HEAD LINESMAN* with progress spot
9. Maintain position, enabling coverage of your sideline at all times.
10. Observe the legality of blocks and action away from the ball when you are not covering the runner
11. Mark out-of-bounds spot if the kick goes out of bounds in your area:
 - a. Drop penalty marker if untouched inbounds by R
12. If the goal line pylon is threatened, communicate with Referee before making a ruling

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Touchback and kick out of bounds
- Fair catch, including illegal signal
- Knee on the ground on catch
- Forward handing during return
- Batting
- Blocking below the waist and clipping
- Interlocked interference
- Action on the wedge when coming toward you
- Continuing action dead ball action out of bounds
- Momentum exception
- Short free-kick support

SCRIMMAGE PLAY MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

1. HUSTLE and assist in obtaining the ball/a new ball for spotting
2. Note the status of the clock (running/stopped)
3. Note down, distance, and game situation
4. Back into position, keeping a wide view of all players and dead ball action
5. Retrieve the ball from the runner or obtain a new ball from another official or ball boy. Hustle outside the hash marks as needed to assist in retrieving the ball and spotting it
6. After *REFEREE* signals next down, signal next down. Drop the signal after the *REFEREE* drops their signal
7. If team A is in a hurry-up offense, stay at the ball until signaled off by the *REFEREE*. Otherwise, after the “ready-for-play” whistle, back away from the ball to your pre-snap position while keeping the ball in sight
8. Count Team A players and confirm with *REFEREE* when team A breaks the huddle
9. Count Team A players numbered 50-79. Know ineligible

10. Assume a ready position 7-10 yards beyond the neutral zone, typically between the inside shade of the guard and outside shade of the tackle, opposite side of the Referee. The U starting position may vary throughout the game depending on game/play needs
11. Identify and observe your initial keys, (a) snap, (b) center, and (c) guard(s).

RUN MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP

1. Concentrate on your area of responsibility. “Fish in your own pond.”
2. Verify no false starts or encroachment, legal snap (except *BACK JUDGE*)
3. Observe the snap, then read run/pass by observing the block(s) by the guard(s) or center (block down, cross block, pass block, pulling, reach block, etc.)
4. Allow your reads to help you identify the point of attack

RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE SNAP

1. Know when you have responsibility for the runner and progress and when you have responsibility for action away from the ball
2. Maintain separation from the players and other officials and keep a wide view, even when you have responsibility for the runner and progress
3. After determining that the initial blocks of the center and guards are legal and determining the point of attack, shift your focus to the appropriate Run Zone. Know where the runner is, but he should not be your focus
 - a. If the point of attack is away from you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks in Zone 3
 - b. If the point of attack is toward you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks in Zone 2
 - c. If the point of attack is up the middle, you and the referee both have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks in Zone 2.
4. If the ball is dead outside the hash marks, hustle to the dead-ball spot while maintaining a wide view of the dead ball action. The umpire must go outside the hash marks to assist in retrieving the ball and spotting it
5. If the ball is dead between the hash marks, hustle to that spot while keeping your head up to observe the action around the pile
6. You are responsible for maintaining control around the pile. Talk to players as they un-pile, encouraging them to do so in a sportsmanlike manner
7. Communicate to the flank officials with “I’VE GOT BALL” on a goal-line play if the flank officials look for assistance and you are certain the ball is across the goal line and in possession

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. False starts
2. Illegal snaps
3. Illegal use of hands and other illegal blocks
4. Free blocking zone

PASS MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. Following the spotting of the ball, be prepared to prevent the center from prematurely snapping the ball when the offense is in a hurry-up and the REFEREE has not signaled you off the ball
2. Start at your usual position and rule on the legality of the snap
3. Observe your initial keys (G-C-G) as you read the pass and move forward toward the LOS
4. You might stop your forward movement and set up 3-yards from the LOS so as to avoid crossing routes and be in a position to rule on ineligible downfield beyond the expanded neutral zone (2 yards)
5. Transition to” read/soft vision” and identify any defensive linemen who are successfully penetrating through the offensive blockers (especially to the referee’s side of the center as the referee’s view is more

generally to his opposite side of the center). Move vision away from double-team blocks to one-on-one conflicts

6. Rule on pass blocking technique of offensive linemen
7. On roll-outs & scrambles toward LOS, assist REFEREE in determining if the ball is released beyond LOS
8. Know uncovered offensive lineman on your side, determine pass vs. run
9. Move toward the spot of snap (on LOS)
10. Rule on any ineligible downfield
11. Use tip ball signal if pass is touched in or behind the neutral zone. Know if the pass crosses the neutral zone
12. Pivot on all passes to assist with catch/no catch, illegal personal contact, illegal helmet contact, and illegal blocks
13. Dead ball officiate

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Holding, clipping, illegal blocks
- Ineligibles downfield
- Assist in illegal pass determination
- Touching of a pass in or behind the neutral zone
- Illegal personal contact, illegal helmet contact

SCRIMMAGE KICK MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Observe substitutions as you hustle to your scrimmage kick positions (Diagram)
2. Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios by reviewing the Points of Emphasis for your position
3. Position approximately seven (7-10) yards from the line of scrimmage and favor the *LINE JUDGE* side of the field
4. Count the kicking team and confirm with the *REFEREE*
5. View the lineman and know numbering exceptions
6. Tell the receiving team lineman, “**DO NOT HIT THE SNAPPER**”

SCRIMMAGE KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios based on your position. See points of emphasis at the end of this section.

1. Watch the action on the SNAPPER
2. Normal Kick – Initially, view line play action and action on the ground in front of the ball. Pivot and release down the field, watching the action of the players and blocking. Do not “ball watch”. On returns up middle and to the other side, maintain a wide inside-out vision
3. Bad Snap – When there is a bad snap on a scrimmage kick, and the play goes deep into the backfield, you will move up to the line of scrimmage and rule on whether the ball crossed the line of scrimmage
4. At the end of the play, dead ball officiate. Spot the incoming ball to be ready for play

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Snapper
- Blocking; legal or illegal, illegal use of hands
- Numbering exceptions
- Check first touches, forced touching, muffs, fumbles, blocked punts

FIELD GOAL & PAT MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

Prior to all field goal attempts, all officials should remind themselves of live ball by using the illegal procedure signal (S19)

1. Stay over the ball until the Referee waves you off. This is especially true on a field goal with the clock running
2. Count the kicking team and confirm with *REFEREE*
3. On a kick when the LOS is at the 10-yard line and in, take a position under the goal post on the *LINE JUDGE* side of the field
4. On a kick from beyond the 10-yard line, shade to the same side of the field as the *REFEREE*, 5–8 yards on the defensive side of the neutral zone
5. You always have sole responsibility for the protection of the snapper
6. Check for the use of numbering exception by team A

SWINGING GATE

1. All officials will be in their regular positions for a scrimmage down. Suppose team A shifts to a formation normally used for a PAT or attempted field goal. In that case, the *HEAD LINESMAN* and *LINE JUDGE* will stay in their regular scrimmage down positions, and the *UMPIRE* will move to the unoccupied goal post to rule on the kick success or failure. *UMPIRE* will still maintain responsibility for protecting the snapper
2. The *BACK JUDGE* will retain primary responsibility for the whistle
3. Prior to the snap, the *UMPIRE* and *BACK JUDGE* will establish eligible receivers on their respective sides of the offensive formation
4. If the play is a fake kick, they get normal scrimmage position while the remaining officials maintain their usual scrimmage play responsibilities

FIELD GOAL & PAT KICK COVERAGE

1. You always have sole responsibility for protecting the snapper and holding by interior linemen by both offensive and defensive players (pull & shoot)
2. If underneath the goalpost when the LOS is at the 10-yard line and in, or after the kicking team shifts out of a Swinging Gate Formation into a scrimmage kick formation;
3. As the ball arrives at the goal post, step-up and look straight-up to determine if the ball was kicked between the uprights and not directly over the goal post
4. Orally communicate with *BACK JUDGE* as to the success or failure of the kick
5. Both should withhold any signal but immediately step to the end line, where you both simultaneously give the signal ruling on the kick.
6. Give an incomplete signal if the kick fails
7. Give a touchdown signal if the kick is good
8. Hold your signal until the referee turns to repeat your signal to the press box
9. On a fake or broken play, move to your normal position and be alert for any ineligible downfield
10. If you are not underneath the goalpost, watch line play until well after the kick ends, and all players cease their action and move to their benches

MEASUREMENTS

1. Alert covering officials if it is close
2. Hold the ball steady for the measurement. Your back is toward Team B's goal line
3. Spot the ball at the inbounds spot if a first down

MECHANICS – 5-Official - Head Linesman

PRE-SNAP ROUTINES

Great officials understand the importance of and have developed their ability to concentrate and focus on every play... one play at a time. They let the last play go and prepare themselves mentally and physically for the next play. Your Pre-snap routine is a tool that will help you move past the last play and get you into the flow of the game and improve your ability to officiate the next play correctly. Here are examples of effective Pre-snap routines:

1. Confirm the status of the clock

2. Accordion in and confirm next down with referee and signal the box to move and change down
3. Assist in relaying the game ball if necessary
4. If 1st down, go to the sideline and, using your foot's heel, indicate the exact spot for the rear stake and down box. Use an appropriate signal to the *REFEREE* to wind the clock or hack
5. Make a note of the down and distance
6. Know the line to gain
7. Change down indicator on hand appropriate to the status of the clock (back-stopped; front-live)
8. Observe substitutions and player equipment
9. Confirm GL responsibility with *BACK JUDGE*
10. Use your up-field foot to indicate the back of the ball to the receiver.
11. Confirm eligible receivers, including backs, to your side of the formation
12. Note the location of better player(s)
13. Signal back to the opposite flank if the widest receiver is off the line of scrimmage (various signals will be used depending on the formation and confirmation of opposite flanks signals)
14. Release up-field foot indicating the back of the ball, and now straddle the LOS with the best view of the ball, near tackle, and receiver(s)
15. Anticipate the type of play, based upon down and distance, formation, and location of key players
16. Anticipate screen and know where the ball was caught relative to the LOS
17. Anticipate ineligible downfield on a pass to the other side
18. Feet then ball
19. Observe the legal snap with no false start, encroachment, or illegal shift or motion (man going away from you)
20. Use read vision while observing near tackle to determining run (and direction of run) or pass
21. Other pre-snap possibilities based upon the situation and location of the ball include:
 - a. Goal-line mechanics – Stay wide at the pylon
 - b. Anticipate pick play
 - c. Punt – *LINE JUDGE* off, you have the entire LOS for FST or encroachment
 - d. Punt – Does kick cross the line of scrimmage?
 - e. Know the location of eligible receivers and the ball for intentional grounding calls
 - f. Field Goal – live ball

When the dead ball period ends, do it again. Do it every play!

COIN TOSS PROCEDURES

1. Escort captains from chains side to the top of the numbers /nine-yard marks. The captains will continue to the middle of the field.
2. Remain at the top of the numbers / nine-yard marks.
3. and the *BACK JUDGE*, *HEAD LINESMAN*, and *LINE JUDGE* will remain at the top of the numbers / nine-yard marks. The *LINE JUDGE* and *BACK JUDGE* will have a legal ball for their respective team
4. Have a legal ball for their respective team
5. Make certain your team is either in their respective team box or in their end zone during the coin toss.
6. After the toss, all officials will meet in the middle of the field, record results, then jog to their specific kickoff positions.

QUARTER

1. Prepare the chains to move to the new location on the *REFEREE'S* signal. Make certain the clip is located appropriately on the nearest yard line, and take note
2. Grab the clip and chain at the same time, reverse the chain crew, jog to the new position and place the chain on the new spot
3. Place your heel at the front of the ball for the down box.

HALFTIME

1. Will meet away from teams, coaches, and fans to review the first-half. See Halftime, Post-Game, and Crew Self-Evaluation – the Use of Game Video

2. Extend a 5-minute courtesy call to each team
3. Confer with the coach who has the second-half decision on which way they would like to kick the ball. Do this as they either leave the field or when you provide the 5-minute courtesy call
4. Provide the information to fellow officials during the mandatory three-minute warm-up period or before the crew leaves for the appropriate kick-off positions

FREE KICK MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Ensure each team has 11 players on the field before the kick.
2. Hustle to positions and get teams on the field promptly after a score.
3. Covering official(s) signal game clock to start when the kick is touched, other than first touching by K.
4. Kick out of bounds between goal lines:
 - a. Sound whistle.
 - b. Give the time-out signal twice and mark the spot.
 - c. Determine if R had touched.
 - d. Toss the penalty marker if R did not touch the ball.
5. Maintain position on the sideline at all times except for referee.
6. Sound a whistle when the ball becomes dead in your area and give a time-out signal
7. Free kick following safety:
8. Each game official assumes the same relative position and has the same duties as on kickoff.
9. The ball may be put in play by a drop kick, place kick, or punt.
10. Take charge of getting your team on the field promptly.
11. Be certain coaches, players, substitutes, and other individuals are in a proper location
12. Position: R's 30-yard line outside the same sideline as the line-to gain indicator. If K's free-kick line is relocated due to penalty or the situation dictates, H may take a position anywhere from the R-20 to R-40, preferably 10 yards up the field of U
13. Count R players and confirm with REFEREE
14. Hold arm above head to indicate you are ready
15. If a short free-kick is anticipated, position on R's free-kick line:
 - a. Be alert for first touching by K or kick which does not cross R's free-kick line
 - b. Watch for any infractions involving R's free-kick line
 - c. Hold bean bag to mark first touching by K
16. Observe legality of blocks and action away from the ball and contact on receivers.

FREE KICK FOLLOWING A FAIR CATCH

- Position on the kicking team's restraining line.

FREE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Covering official(s) signal game clock to start (S #2) when kick is touched, other than first touching by K
2. Kick out of bounds between goal lines:
 - a. Sound whistle
 - b. Give a time-out signal (S #3) twice and mark spot
 - c. Determine if R had touched
 - d. Toss penalty marker if R did not touch the ball
3. Maintain position on the sideline at all times except for referee and back judge.
4. Sound a whistle when the ball becomes dead in your area and give a time-out signal
5. Carry bean bag in hand
6. Free kick following safety:
 - a. Each game official assumes the same relative position and has the same duties as on kickoff
 - b. Ball put in play by a dropkick, place kick, or punt.
7. Kick to your side:
 - a. Signal game clock to start when the kick is legally touched in your area

- b. Remain stationary for optimal viewing of blocks between the R-20 and R-30
 - c. Pick up the runner and follow along the sideline
 - d. Responsibility for the progress of the runner from the goal line to the goal line
 - e. When the ball becomes dead, sound a whistle and give a time-out signal
 - f. If the ball is kicked outside the numbers behind your starting position, turn and officiate the ball, returner, and sideline
8. Kick to the opposite side of the field:
 - a. Move cautiously with play along the sideline
 - b. Observe the action of other players in the vicinity of the runner
 - c. Serve as clean-up behind, to the side of, and around the runner
 - d. Use cross-field mechanics when appropriate to assist the *UMPIRE* or *LINE JUDGE* with progress spot
9. Maintain position, enabling coverage of your sideline at all times.
10. Observe the legality of blocks and action away from the ball when you are not covering the runner
11. Mark the spot where the kick goes out-of-bounds on your side of the field:
 - a. Drop penalty marker if untouched inbounds by R
 - b. If applicable, obtain the foul decision from the head coach and communicate to the *REFEREE*
 - c. If the goal line pylon is threatened, communicate with Referee before making a ruling

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Short free-kick
- First touching (subsequent first touches) – USE BEAN BAG
- Starting-stopping the clock
- Blocking below the waist and clipping
- Legal substitutions
- Kick catch interference and fair catch interference
- Knee on the ground on catch
- Forward-handing, illegal forward pass
- Batting
- Interlocked interference and illegal blocking
- Continuing action out of bounds
- Players going out of bounds during the kick

SCRIMMAGE PLAY MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

1. HUSTLE and assist in obtaining the ball/a new ball for spotting
2. Note the status of the clock (running/stopped)
3. Note down, distance, and game situation
4. Back into position, keeping a wide view of all players and dead ball action
5. Signal up coming down and confirm with *BACK JUDGE* and *LINE JUDGE*. Drop the signal after the referee drops his signal.
6. Once the *REFEREE* confirms the next down, move box/chains as necessary for the correct down and distance
7. Assume a position straddling the neutral zone, outside the sideline opposite the *LINE JUDGE*
8. During pre-snap, identify the down and distance (goal line mechanics?), the line to gain (pick play on short yardage), formation, tendencies, and location of best player(s), and your initial key.
9. Identify the formation and count no more than 4 players in the backfield
10. Signal status of eligible receivers on your side of snapper (crew decides if signals will be used)
11. Be prepared to indicate LOS to team A wide receiver with your downfield foot
12. Signal status of eligible receivers on your side of snapper (crew decides if signals will be used)
13. Identify your initial keys.

14. Motion – if a motion man is going away from you, have primary responsibility for knowing if the motion is legal or illegal. If motion man is coming to your side and motion is forward, call it if you see it

RUN MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP

1. Concentrate on your area of responsibility. “Fish in your own pond.”
2. Verify no false starts or encroachment, legal snap (except *BACK JUDGE*)
3. Observe the snap, then momentarily read run/pass by observing the block by the near tackle (block toward, pass block, pull, etc.)
4. Locate the ball and the point of attack but do not focus on it
5. On plays beginning at or within the five-yard line, going into the end zone, move to the goal line, and officiate back to the line of scrimmage
6. On plays beginning at or within the three-yard line, going out of the end zone, move back to the goal line and officiating forward to the line of scrimmage

RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE SNAP

1. Know when you have responsibility for the runner and progress and when you have responsibility for action away from the ball

Maintain separation from the players and other officials and keep a wide view, even when you have responsibility for the runner and progress

1. After reading the block of the near tackle, momentarily locate the point of attack, and the runner
2. You always have the progress spot all the way until the runner crosses the goal line. This includes an accurate spot when the runner goes out of bounds
3. On plays within the 10-yard line, if a play threatens the goal line, be prepared to be at the goal line to make the appropriate call
4. If the point of attack is away from you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks and action in Zone 4, maintain a wide view of the action while paralleling the progress spot, observing player conduct away from the play
5. If the point of attack is toward you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks in Zone 1; observe blocks in front of the runner until you take over responsibility for the runner at the line of scrimmage. If the runner is headed toward your sideline, allow the play to go past you (move into the offensive backfield, if necessary), then trail the play. If the runner crosses the sideline, hustle to the spot and mark progress. Signal timeout while observing the out-of-bounds dead ball action. Do not look at the ground. If the runner crosses the goal line and continues out of bounds, signal touchdown while observing all dead ball action
6. After the ball is dead, close to the dead-ball spot, after the ball is dead, you must move into the field on every play (unless safety prohibits) to show presence until the colors separate. Do not pass players and do not close beyond the near hash mark unless:
 7. The line to gain is threatened
 8. The goal line is threatened
 9. The ball is loose then recovered
10. In these three cases, hustle to the dead-ball spot

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Encroachment
- False Starts
- Illegal motion, shifts, formations
- Clipping, blocks in the back, and use of hands

PASS MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. During pre-snap, identify the down and distance (goal line mechanics?), the line to gain (pick play on short yardage), formation, tendencies, and location of best player(s), and your initial key

2. Read through the key receiver to the nearest offensive lineman to read the play
3. If the initial key is threatened/pressed, observe his release and observe for holding, OPI, DPI
4. Remain near LOS until a pass is thrown unless all receivers are deep, stay underneath the shortest receiver (*EXCEPTION: Goal-line coverage when signaled by BACK JUDGE- responsible for the goal-line on snaps inside 15-yard line, snap from inside 5-yard line, move immediately to the goal-line*)
5. If a pass is thrown away from you, you have primary responsibility for knowing if the pass's initial direction was forward or backward. You will signal to the opposite flank by punching forward or backward accordingly
6. If the pass is to your side, you will relay the signal provided by the opposite flank
7. If the pass is to your side and you do not receive help from the opposite flank, you will rule forward or backward and signal accordingly
8. It is preferred that the flank official quickly identify that the QB is throwing a quick pass to the opposite away flank take one or two slide steps into the offensive backfield, giving a better view for the ruling on forward or backward and more visibility to your opposite flank.
9. If initial key is free of foul, transition to zone coverage and maintain underneath coverage and focus on short receiver.
10. On catch attempts near the sideline, focus on feet then hands. Near end line, focus on hands, then feet
11. Keep your focus on the receivers and defenders downfield while only quickly glancing back at QB to read the play. Do not watch the QB throughout the play, thereby disregarding the actions in the secondary. Do not focus on the flight of the ball
12. Maintain Outside-in coverage, move parallel to sideline, responsible for sideline from end line to end line
13. If a pass is caught in bounds and then the player goes out of bounds, blow the whistle, stop the clock, mark the spot, continue to officiate
14. On catch attempts near the intersection of the sideline and end line, make eye contact with *BACK JUDGE* before signaling
15. If a pass is caught in bounds and then the player goes out of bounds, blow the whistle, stop the clock, mark the spot, continue to officiate
16. If the receiver catches the ball out of bounds and the covering official wants to “sell the call,” he/she may signal incomplete and then, using both hands, make a sweeping motion toward the sideline
17. If the pass is completed and there is a need to “sell the call” and communicate that the ball was caught, the official shall raise both arms and then lower them in unison in a manner that mimics the actual catching of the ball. This signal must be performed in an exaggerated manner and is usually reserved for catches at the sideline
18. Do not mark the spot of passes caught out of bounds
19. You are responsible for progress to the goal line. If you declare progress is stopped inbounds, short of the line-to-gain, raise your arm to signal the start of the 40-second play clock to the *BACK JUDGE*
20. Off-ball officiate on plays away. Come into the numbers on plays into the opposite side zone. Be prepared to offer cross-field spot if necessary on push-backs or when the opposite flank uses the “wind the clock” signal to request your assistance with a cross-field spot
21. Be prepared to communicate with the *REFEREE* when a pass is incomplete and intentional grounding may be in question. If there is a receiver in the area, move to an open area as you signal by pointing demonstratively toward the eligible receiver. If there is no receiver in the area and it appears the QB is outside the lateral boundaries of the free blocking zone, signal if the thrown ball crosses the LOS by moving your arm forward and backward along the LOS. If no receiver is in the pass area, and the ball does not cross reach the neutral zone, run to the referee and verbally communicate that information. The referee is responsible for the final decision and will throw his flag if necessary
22. Dead ball officiate

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Forward/backward pass
- Holding

- Catch/no-catch
- Pass interference
- Unnecessary contact / personal foul
- Illegal participation

SCRIMMAGE KICK MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Observe substitutions as you hustle to your scrimmage kick positions (Diagram)
2. Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios by reviewing the Points of Emphasis for your position
3. Position on the line of scrimmage in front of the down marker
4. Count the kicking team and look for confirmation from *REFEREE* that he has eleven players
5. View the formation to see that there are no more than 4 kicking team players in the backfield
6. View the position of the outside kicking team players. Know who is eligible to catch a pass

SCRIMMAGE KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios based on your position. See points of emphasis at the end of this section.

1. Glance quickly at the kick to determine direction and distance. Do not continue to watch the ball
2. Determine if the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage.
3. Normal Kick – View the blocking and action around the kicking team’s eligible players (the widest players on your side) and view line action until the ball clears. After the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage, quickly release down the field and parallel the play from the outside with wide vision. Continue to watch the action as the players and ball move toward the receiver. Observe blocking down the field and in front of the runner. Mark first touching with a bean bag
4. Bad Snap – When there is a bad snap on a scrimmage kick, and the play goes deep into the backfield, you will follow the ball back and bracket with *REFEREE* (the *UMPIRE* will then have kick crossing or not crossing the line)
5. If you are the covering officials, at the end of the play, spot progress and square-up with the *LINE JUDGE*, stop the clock and signal the direction of the team in possession
6. Kick Out of Bounds – You are responsible for obtaining the proper spot on extremely short kicks that bounce out of bounds near you or land within two yards of the sideline near you. On punts that are shanked out of bounds near you, you should be prepared to line up deeper than where the ball went out of bounds on the sideline with your outside arm straight above your head. Make eye contact with the *REFEREE* and begin to walk toward the original line of scrimmage. The *REFEREE* will hack when you have reached the out-of-bounds spot. Signal the direction of the team in possession.
7. If you are holding the spot, cover the ball until you are relieved by another official
8. Look to the *REFEREE* for confirmation to move the chains
9. Dead ball officiate

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Blocking
- Touching of ball; beyond line of scrimmage
- Illegal Kicking
- Interference
- Muff and First Touching Violations
- Ineligible players downfield

FIELD GOAL & PAT MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

Prior to all field goal attempts, all officials should remind themselves of live ball by using the illegal procedure signal (S19)

1. Take a position on the sideline when the LOS is at the 10-yard line and in (on PAT, move in to numbers) and observe the neutral zone
 2. OR (if facing the back of the *REFEREE* on a kick from beyond the 10-yard line)
3. Line up six feet or less behind the goal post on your side of the field. Count defense and orally communicate with the *BACK JUDGE* of your count. Callout the numbers of the eligible receivers on your side of the offensive formation

SWINGING GATE

1. All officials will be in their regular positions for a scrimmage down. Suppose team A shifts to a formation normally used for a PAT or attempted field goal. In that case, the *HEAD LINESMAN* and *LINE JUDGE* will stay in their regular scrimmage down positions, and the *UMPIRE* will move to the unoccupied goal post to rule on the kick success or failure. *UMPIRE* will still maintain responsibility for protecting the snapper
2. The *BACK JUDGE* will retain primary responsibility for the whistle
3. Prior to the snap, the *UMPIRE* and *BACK JUDGE* will establish eligible receivers on their respective sides of the offensive formation
4. If the play is a fake kick, the *UMPIRE* will attempt to get to his normal scrimmage position while the remaining officials maintain their usual scrimmage play responsibilities

FIELD GOAL & PAT KICK COVERAGE

1. IF UNDER THE GOAL POST
 - a. As the ball arrives at the goal post, step-up and look straight-up to determine if the ball was kicked between the uprights and not directly over the goal post
 - b. Orally communicate with *BACK JUDGE* as to the success or failure of the kick.
 - c. Both should withhold any signal but immediately step to the end line where you both simultaneously give the signal ruling on the kick if the kick is good, or clearly failed. If the kick is close and fails, only the ruling official gives the incomplete signal.
 - d. Give an incomplete signal if the kick fails.
 - e. Give a touchdown signal if the kick is good
 - f. Hold your signal until the referee turns to repeat your signal to the press box
 - g. On fake plays or broken plays, be ready to cover passes or runs as usual. You are responsible for the goal line and sideline
 - h. Dead ball officiate after the play ends
2. IF ON THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE
 - a. After the snap, observe the legality of the blocks of the backs
 - b. After the kick, sprint inside the hash to dead ball officiate
 - c. If a field goal is blocked, you are responsible for determining if the kick crossed the neutral zone and where it is recovered, and by whom
 - d. On fake plays or broken plays, observe any ineligible lineman downfield. This is your responsibility, along with the *UMPIRE*. You are responsible for the goal line and sideline
 - e. Dead ball officiate after the play ends

MEASUREMENTS

1. To measure, instruct box person to place box at the forward stake
2. Ensure the clip is on the proper five-yard line and securely fastened to the chain
3. Holding the clip, jog onto the field with the chain crew and place the clip at the spot on the field indicated by the *REFEREE*
4. If first down, drop clip, move to the sideline, and mark the spot. If not a first down, return clip to the correct spot on the sideline
5. If there is a possibility that the down may be replayed due to an inadvertent whistle or when penalty

MECHANICS – 5-Official - Line Judge

PRE-SNAP ROUTINES

Great officials understand the importance of and have developed their ability to concentrate and focus on every play... one play at a time. They let the last play go and prepare themselves mentally and physically for the next play. Your Pre-snap routine is a tool that will help you move past the last play and get you into the flow of the game and improve your ability to officiate the next play correctly. Here are examples of effective Pre-snap routines:

1. Confirm the status of the clock
2. Accordion in and communicate and signal the status of the ball to the referee relative to the forward stake (1st down or next down).
3. If 1st down, use appropriate signal to *REFEREE* to wind the clock or hack.
4. Make a note of the down and distance.
5. Know the line to gain.
6. Change down indicator on hand appropriate to the status of the clock (back-stopped; front-live)
7. Observe substitutions and player equipment
8. Count defense and signal to *BACK JUDGE*
9. Confirm GL responsibility with *BACK JUDGE*
10. Use your up-field foot to indicate the back of the ball to the receiver.
11. Confirm eligible receivers, including backs, to your side of the formation
12. Note the location of better player(s)
13. Signal back to the opposite flank if the widest receiver is off the line of scrimmage (various signals will be used depending on the formation and confirmation of opposite flanks signals)
14. Release up-field foot indicating the back of the ball, and now straddle the LOS with the best view of the ball, near tackle, and receiver(s)
15. Anticipate the type of play, based upon down and distance, formation, and location of key players
16. Anticipate screen and know where the ball was caught relative to the LOS
17. Anticipate ineligible downfield on a pass to the other side
18. Feet then ball
19. Observe the legal snap with no false start, encroachment or illegal shift or motion (man going away from you)
20. Use read vision while observing near tackle to determining run (and direction of run) or pass
21. Other pre-snap possibilities based upon the situation and location of the ball include:
 - a. Goal-line mechanics – Stay wide at the pylon
 - b. Anticipate pick play
 - c. Punt – *LINE JUDGE* off, you have progress on your side of the field and sideline ruling
 - d. Punt – Fair Catch signal by other receivers
 - e. Know the location of eligible receivers and the ball for intentional grounding calls
 - f. Field Goal – live ball

When the dead ball period ends, do it again. Do it every play!

COIN TOSS PROCEDURES

1. Escorts captains from the press box side to the top of the numbers /nine-yard marks.
2. Make certain your team is either in their respective team box or in their end zone during the coin toss,
3. After the toss, all officials will meet in the middle of the field, record results, then jog to their specific kickoff positions.

QUARTER

1. Verify that the ball placement is correct
2. Prepare to go to the spot where the ball should be put into play at the start of the next quarter

HALFTIME

1. Will meet away from teams, coaches, and fans to review the first-half. See Halftime, Post-Game, and Crew Self-Evaluation – the Use of Game Video
2. Extend a 5-minute courtesy call to each team
3. Confer with the coach who has the second-half decision on which way they would like to kick the ball. Do this as they either leave the field or when you provide the 5-minute courtesy call
4. Provide the information to fellow officials during the mandatory three-minute warm-up period or before the crew leaves for the appropriate kick-off positions

FREE KICK MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Ensure each team has 11 players on the field before the kick.
2. Hustle to positions and get teams on the field promptly after a score.
3. Covering official(s) signal game clock to start when the kick is touched, other than first touching by K.
4. Kick out of bounds between goal lines:
 - a. Sound whistle.
 - b. Give the time-out signal twice and mark the spot.
 - c. Determine if R had touched.
 - d. Toss the penalty marker if R did not touch the ball.
5. Maintain position on the sideline at all times except for referee.
6. Sound a whistle when the ball becomes dead in your area and give a time-out signal
7. Free kick following safety:
 - a. Each game official assumes the same relative position and has the same duties as on kickoff.
8. The ball may be put in play by a drop kick, place kick, or punt.
9. Take charge of getting your team on the field promptly.
10. Be certain coaches, players, substitutes, and other individuals are in proper locations
11. Position: R's free-kick line, outside sideline opposite head linesman
12. Temporarily move to 9-yard marks, then count K players and confirm with Back Judge; identify the R free-kick line.
13. Hold arm above head to indicate you are ready
14. Hold bean bag to mark first touching by K.
15. Watch for any infractions involving R's free-kick line
16. If a short free-kick is anticipated:
 - a. Position on K's free-kick line
 - b. Be alert for first touching by K or kick which does not cross R's free-kick line
 - c. Watch for any infractions involving K's free-kick line
 - d. Hold bean bag to mark first touching by K
 - e. Observe the legality of K's blocks within the neutral zone and contact on receivers.
17. Rule on illegal pop-up kicks

OPTIONAL FREE KICK MECHANIC – SWITCHING THE LINE JUDGE AND THE UMPIRE POSITIONING, MECHANICS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At the *REFEREE's* discretion and after discussion with the crew, modifying the free-kick position and mechanics for the Umpire and the Line Judge is an option. This should only be done on crews with experienced Line Judges and Umpires.

FREE KICK FOLLOWING A FAIR CATCH

- Position under the goal post on your side of the field.

FREE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Covering official(s) signal game clock to start (S #2) when kick is touched, other than first touching by K
2. Kick out of bounds between goal lines:
 - a. Sound whistle

- b. Give a time-out signal (S #3) twice and mark spot
 - c. Determine if R had touched
 - d. Toss penalty marker if R did not touch the ball
3. Maintain position on the sideline at all times except for referee and back judge.
4. Sound a whistle when the ball becomes dead in your area and give a time-out signal
5. Carry bean bag in hand
6. Free kick following safety:
 - a. Each game official assumes the same relative position and has the same duties as on kickoff
 - b. Ball put in play by a dropkick, place kick, or punt.
7. Be alert for first touching by K - mark spot with bean bag
8. Move downfield approximately 5-10 yards after the ball is kicked while staying on the sideline to maintain a 20-25 yard cushion between the Umpire
9. As the return starts, use a reverse or "fade" mechanic, allowing for a front side, outside-in view of blocks in front of the runner
10. Watch initial blocks in your area
 - a. If the ball is kicked outside the numbers on your side of the field behind the *UMPIRE's* starting position, pick up first-line blocks in front of the *UMPIRE*
11. Signal game clock to start when the kick is touched in your area other than first touching by K
12. If the ball becomes dead in your area, sound a whistle and give a time-out signal
 - a. Mark the spot where the kick goes out of bounds on your side of the field with a penalty marker if untouched inbounds by R
 - b. If applicable, obtain the foul decision from the head coach and communicate it to the *REFEREE*
13. Responsible for the progress of the runner beyond the R-35-yard line to the K goal line. Note: It is acceptable to officiate progress from in front of the runner while maintaining a cushion with the *UMPIRE* and keeping goal-line responsibility.
14. Be in a position to take over coverage of runners in your area on long return.
15. Kick to the opposite side of the field:
 - a. Move cautiously with play along the sidelines.
 - b. Observe the action of other players in the vicinity of the runner
 - c. Serve as clean-up behind the action
 - d. Takeover spot from *HEAD LINESMAN* so *HEAD LINESMAN* can setup chains/box

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Short free-kick
- First touching (subsequent first touches) – USE BEAN BAG
- Starting-stopping the clock
- Blocking below the waist and clipping
- Legal substitutions
- Kick catch interference and fair catch interference
- Knee on the ground on catch
- Forward-handing, illegal forward pass
- Batting
- Interlocked interference and illegal blocking
- Continuing action out of bounds
- Players going out of bounds during the kick

SCRIMMAGE PLAY MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

1. HUSTLE and assist in obtaining the ball/a new ball for spotting
2. Note the status of the clock (running/stopped)
3. Note down, distance, and game situation
4. Back into position, keeping a wide view of all players and dead ball action

5. Signal up coming down and confirm with *HEAD LINESMAN* and *BACK JUDGE*. Drop the signal after the *REFEREE* drops his signal
6. Communicate with the *REFEREE* if necessary to indicate the status of the game clock (on the ready with wind signal at the waist or, on the snap with arms crossed at the chest)
7. Identify the formation and count no more than 4 players in the backfield
8. Signal status of eligible receivers on your side of snapper (crew decides if signals will be used)
9. Assume a position straddling the neutral zone outside the sideline opposite the *HEAD LINESMAN*. If directed by a signal from the *REFEREE* in a “Hail Mary” situation, the *LINE JUDGE* may establish his position at the goal line or up to 15 yards down the field in anticipation of a last-second desperation play
10. Count Team B players, confirm count with *BACK JUDGE* when Team A breaks the huddle
11. Be prepared to indicate LOS to team A wide receiver with your downfield foot
12. Identify the formation and signal status of eligible receivers on your side of the snapper
13. Know eligible receivers on your side of snapper and identify your initial keys
14. Motion – if a motion man is going away from you, have primary responsibility for knowing if the motion is legal or illegal. If motion man is coming to your side and motion is forward, call it if you see it

RUN MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP

1. Concentrate on your area of responsibility. “Fish in your own pond.”
2. Verify no false starts or encroachment, legal snap (except *BACK JUDGE*)
3. Observe the snap, then momentarily read run/pass by observing the block by the near tackle (block toward, pass block, pull, etc.)
4. Locate the ball and the point of attack but do not focus on it
5. On plays beginning at or within the five-yard line, going into the end zone, move to the goal line, and officiate back to the line of scrimmage
6. On plays beginning at or within the three-yard line, going out of the end zone, move back to the goal line and officiate forward to the line of scrimmage

RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE SNAP

1. Know when you have responsibility for the runner and progress and when you have responsibility for action away from the ball
2. Maintain separation from the players and other officials and keep a wide view, even when you have responsibility for the runner and progress
3. After reading the block of the near tackle, momentarily locate the point of attack, and the runner
4. You always have the progress spot all the way until the runner crosses the goal line. This includes an accurate spot when the runner goes out of bounds
5. On plays within the 10-yard line, if a play threatens the goal line, be prepared to be at the goal line to make the appropriate call
6. If the point of attack is away from you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks and action in Zone 4, maintain a wide view of the action while paralleling the progress spot, observing player conduct away from the play
7. If the point of attack is toward you, you have responsibility for judging the legality of blocks in Zone 1; observe blocks in front of the runner until you take over responsibility for the runner at the line of scrimmage. If the runner is headed toward your sideline, allow the play to go past you (move into the offensive backfield, if necessary), then trail the play. If the runner crosses the sideline, hustle to the spot and mark progress. Signal timeout while observing the out-of-bounds dead ball action. Do not look at the ground. If the runner crosses the goal line and continues out of bounds, signal touchdown while observing all dead ball action
8. After the ball is dead, close to the dead-ball spot, after the ball is dead, you must move into the field on every play (unless safety prohibits) to show presence until the colors separate. Do not pass players and do not close beyond the near hash mark unless:
 - a. The line to gain is threatened

- b. The goal line is threatened
 - c. The ball is loose then recovered
9. In these three cases, hustle to the dead-ball spot

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Encroachment
- False Starts
- Illegal motion, shifts, formations
- Clipping, blocks in the back, and use of hands

PASS MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. During pre-snap, identify the down and distance (goal line mechanics?), the line to gain (pick play on short yardage), formation, tendencies, and location of best player(s), and your initial key
2. Read through the key receiver to the nearest offensive lineman to read the play
3. If the initial key is threatened/pressed, observe his release and observe for holding, OPI, DPI
4. Remain near LOS until a pass is thrown unless all receivers are deep, stay underneath the shortest receiver (*EXCEPTION: Goal-line coverage when signaled by BACK JUDGE- responsible for the goal-line on snaps inside 15-yard line, snap from inside 5-yard line, move immediately to the goal-line*)
5. If a pass is thrown away from you, you have primary responsibility for knowing if the pass's initial direction was forward or backward. You will signal to the opposite flank by punching forward or backward accordingly
6. If the pass is to your side, you will relay the signal provided by the opposite flank
7. If the pass is to your side and you do not receive help from the opposite flank, you will rule forward or backward and signal accordingly
8. It is preferred that the flank official quickly identify that the QB is throwing a quick pass to the opposite away flank take one or two slide steps into the offensive backfield, giving a better view for the ruling on forward or backward and more visibility to your opposite flank.
9. If initial key is free of foul, transition to zone coverage and maintain underneath coverage and focus on short receiver.
10. On catch attempts near the sideline, focus on feet then hands. Near end line, focus on hands, then feet
11. Keep your focus on the receivers and defenders downfield while only quickly glancing back at QB to read the play. Do not watch the QB throughout the play, thereby disregarding the actions in the secondary. Do not focus on the flight of the ball
12. Maintain Outside-in coverage, move parallel to sideline, responsible for sideline from end line to end line
13. If a pass is caught in bounds and then the player goes out of bounds, blow the whistle, stop the clock, mark the spot, continue to officiate
14. On catch attempts near the intersection of the sideline and end line, make eye contact with *BACK JUDGE* before signaling
15. If a pass is caught in bounds and then the player goes out of bounds, blow the whistle, stop the clock, mark the spot, continue to officiate
16. If the receiver catches the ball out of bounds and the covering official wants to “sell the call,” he/she may signal incomplete and then, using both hands, make a sweeping motion toward the sideline
17. If the pass is completed and there is a need to “sell the call” and communicate that the ball was caught, the official shall raise both arms and then lower them in unison in a manner that mimics the actual catching of the ball. This signal must be performed in an exaggerated manner and is usually reserved for catches at the sideline
18. Do not mark the spot of passes caught out of bounds
19. You are responsible for progress to the goal line. If you declare progress is stopped inbounds, short of the line-to-gain, raise your arm to signal the start of the 40-second play clock to the *BACK JUDGE*

20. Off-ball officiate on plays away. Come into the numbers on plays into the opposite side zone. Be prepared to offer cross-field spot if necessary on push-backs or when the opposite flank uses the “wind the clock” signal to request your assistance with a cross-field spot
21. Be prepared to communicate with the *REFEREE* when a pass is incomplete and intentional grounding may be in question. If there is a receiver in the area, move to an open area as you signal by pointing demonstratively toward the eligible receiver. If there is no receiver in the area and it appears the QB is outside the lateral boundaries of the free blocking zone, signal if the thrown ball crosses the LOS by moving your arm forward and backward along the LOS. If no receiver is in the pass area, and the ball does not cross reach the neutral zone, run to the referee and verbally communicate that information. The referee is responsible for the final decision and will throw his flag if necessary
22. Dead ball officiate

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Forward/backward pass
- Holding
- Catch/no-catch
- Pass interference
- Unnecessary contact / personal foul
- Illegal participation

SCRIMMAGE KICK MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Observe substitutions as you hustle to your scrimmage kick positions (Diagram)
2. Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios by reviewing the Points of Emphasis for your position
3. Position even with the deepest receiver and on your sideline. On kicks from inside the receiving team’s 40-yard line, take a position on the goal line at the sideline
4. Count the receiving team and confirm with the *BACK JUDGE*
5. View the position of the outside kicking team players. Know who is eligible to catch a pass

SCRIMMAGE KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios based on your position. See points of emphasis at the end of this section.

1. Glance quickly at the kick to determine direction and distance. Do not continue to watch the ball
2. Normal Kick – View the blocking and action around the kicking team’s eligible players (the widest players on your side). Continue to watch the action as the players and ball move toward the receiver
3. Keep the runner between you and the *BACK JUDGE*. You are responsible for your sideline coverage and progress. Watch the action immediately around the runner
4. Fair Catch - Be alert for fair catch signals by teammates of the main receiver. View action and blocks in front of, and around the receiver. Be alert for blocks that force the kicking team member into the receiver. Assist with the spot of a completed fair catch and stop the clock. Do not rush - make certain that the receiver completes the catch and does not muff it.
5. First Touch Violation – Use your beanbag if there is a first touching violation by the kicking team. Note: there may be more than one spot of the first touching violation
6. If you are one of the covering officials, at the end of the play, spot progress and square-up with the *HEAD LINESMAN*, stop the clock, and signal the direction of the team in possession. Dead ball officiate
7. Kick Out of Bounds – You are responsible for obtaining the proper spot for your sideline. Determine the out-of-bounds spot on kicks that bounce out of bounds or land within two yards of the sideline. On punts that are kicked well out of bounds, you should be prepared to line up deeper than where the ball went out of bounds on the sideline with an outside arm straight above your head. Make eye contact with the *REFEREE* and begin to walk toward the original line of scrimmage. The *REFEREE* will hack when you have reached the out-of-bounds spot. Signal the direction of the team in possession.
8. Dead ball officiate

FIELD GOAL & PAT MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

Prior to all field goal attempts, all officials should remind themselves of live ball by using the illegal procedure signal (S19)

1. Take a position on the sideline when the LOS is at the 10-yard line and in (on PAT, move in to numbers) and observe the neutral zone
2. OR (if facing the back of the REFEREE on a kick from beyond the 10-yard line)
3. Line up six feet or less behind the goal post on your side of the field. Count defense and orally communicate with the BACK JUDGE of your count. Callout the numbers of the eligible receivers on your side of the offensive formation
4. Count the receiving team and confirm with the *BACK JUDGE*

SWINGING GATE

1. All officials will be in their regular positions for a scrimmage down. Suppose team A shifts to a formation normally used for a PAT or attempted field goal. In that case, the *HEAD LINESMAN* and *LINE JUDGE* will stay in their regular scrimmage down positions, and the *UMPIRE* will move to the unoccupied goal post to rule on the kick success or failure. *UMPIRE* will still maintain responsibility for protecting the snapper
2. The *BACK JUDGE* will retain primary responsibility for the whistle
3. Prior to the snap, the *UMPIRE* and *BACK JUDGE* will establish eligible receivers on their respective sides of the offensive formation
4. If the play is a fake kick, the *UMPIRE* will attempt to get to his normal scrimmage position while the remaining officials maintain their usual scrimmage play responsibilities

FIELD GOAL & PAT KICK COVERAGE

LINE JUDGE

1. IF UNDER THE GOAL POST
 - a. As the ball arrives at the goal post, step-up and look straight-up to determine if the ball was kicked between the uprights and not directly over the goal post
 - b. Orally communicate with BACK JUDGE as to the success or failure of the kick
 - c. Both should withhold any signal, but immediately step to the end line where you both simultaneously give the signal ruling on the kick
 - d. Give incomplete signal if kick fails
 - e. Give touchdown signal if kick is good
 - f. Hold your signal until the referee turns to repeat your signal to the press box
 - g. On fake plays or broken plays, be ready to cover passes or runs as usual. You are responsible for the goal line and sideline
 - h. Dead ball officiate after the play ends
2. IF ON THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE
 - a. After the snap, observe the legality of the blocks of the backs.
 - b. After the kick, sprint inside the hash to dead ball officiate.
 - c. If a field goal is blocked, you are responsible in determining if the kick crossed the neutral zone and where it is recovered and by whom
 - d. On fake plays or broken plays, observe any ineligible lineman downfield. This is your responsibility along with the umpire. You are responsible for the goal line and sideline.
 - e. Dead ball officiate after the play ends

MEASUREMENTS

LINE JUDGE

1. Take the forward stake from the chain crew and stretch the chain, on the press box side of the ball, after the *HEAD LINESMAN* declares the chain is set and the *REFEREE* is in a position to observe.

MECHANICS – 5-Official - Back Judge

PRE-SNAP ROUTINES

Great officials understand the importance of and have developed their ability to concentrate and focus on every play... one play at a time. They let the last play go and prepare themselves mentally and physically for the next play. Your Pre-snap routine is a tool that will help you move past the last play and get you into the flow of the game and improve your ability to officiate the next play correctly. Here are examples of effective Pre-snap routines:

BACK JUDGE

1. Confirm the status of the game clock and start the 40-second play clock if required by rule.
2. Accordion in and communicate and signal the next down to the other officials.
3. Move to a location visible to the referee
4. If 1st down, be visible, use the appropriate signal to direct him to wind the clock or hack.
5. Start the 25-second play clock at hack or wind by the *REFEREE* if required by rule
6. Confirm the status of the game clock
7. Make a note of the down and distance.
8. Know the line to gain.
9. Change down indicator on hand appropriate to the status of the clock (back-stopped; front-live)
10. Observe substitutions and player equipment
11. Count defense and signal to *LINE JUDGE*
12. Confirm GL responsibility with *HEAD LINESMAN* and *LINE JUDGE*
13. Confirm eligible receivers, including backs, to your side of the formation
14. Identify initial key
15. Note the location of better player(s)
16. Anticipate the type of play, based upon down and distance, formation, and location of key players
17. Anticipate pick play
18. Anticipate screen and observe blocking receiver(s)
19. Feet then ball
20. Help with the vision of the ball on catches at the sideline
21. Use read vision while observing initial key and determine run (and direction of run) or pass
22. Other pre-snap possibilities based upon the situation and location of the ball include:
 - a. Goal-line mechanics – end line
 - b. Know the location of eligible receivers and the ball for intentional grounding calls
 - c. Punt – between hash marks
 - d. Punt – Legal signal
 - e. Punt – KCI
 - f. Punt – Uniform colors of receiving team
 - g. Punt – Catch, muff, fumble (assume receiver will muff every time)
 - h. Punt – Kickers may not advance muff
 - i. Field Goal – Live ball

When the dead ball period ends, do it again. Do it every play!

COIN TOSS PROCEDURES

1. Escort captains from chains side to the top of the numbers /nine-yard marks. The captains will continue to the middle of the field.
2. Remain at the top of the numbers / nine-yard marks.
3. Have a legal ball for their respective team
4. Make certain your team is either in their respective team box or in their end zone during the coin toss.
5. After the toss, all officials will meet in the middle of the field, record results, then jog to their specific kickoff positions.

QUARTER

1. Time the one-minute intermission and notify *REFEREE* when 45 seconds have elapsed.
2. Stay between the teams to show presence as you move to the new spot
3. Verify that the ball placement is correct

HALFTIME

1. Will meet away from teams, coaches, and fans to review the first-half. See Halftime, Post-Game, and Crew Self-Evaluation – the Use of Game Video
2. Keep the unofficial halftime clock for the crew

FREE KICK MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Ensure each team has 11 players on the field before the kick.
2. Hustle to positions and get teams on the field promptly after a score.
3. Covering official(s) signal game clock to start when the kick is touched, other than first touching by K.
4. Kick out of bounds between goal lines:
 - a. Sound whistle.
 - b. Give the time-out signal twice and mark the spot.
 - c. Determine if R had touched.
 - d. Toss the penalty marker if R did not touch the ball.
5. Maintain position on the sideline at all times except for referee.
6. Sound a whistle when the ball becomes dead in your area and give a time-out signal
7. Free kick following safety:
 - a. Each game official assumes the same relative position and has the same duties as on kickoff.
 - b. The ball may be put in play by a drop kick, place kick, or punt.
8. Take charge of the ball
9. Position: K's free-kick line outside sideline to monitor bench area and assist kicking team in getting into position
10. Check the legality of kicking tee and ball, hand kicker ball, point out the *REFEREE* and instruct the kicker to wait for the *REFEREE's* signal before kicking. If the kicker is not ready, place the ball on the ground and proceed to the sideline
11. Count K players and confirm with Line Judge
12. Use preventative officiating by initially having all K players within 5 yards of K's free-kick line and at least 4 on each side of the kicker
13. Move to a position just outside the sideline on K's free-kick line on the line-to-gain indicator side
14. Be certain coaches, players, substitutes, and other individuals are in proper locations, and no K players, with the exception of the kicker, may be more than 5 yards behind the kicking team's free-kick line
15. Hold arm above head to indicate you are ready
16. If the ball falls or blows off the tee, sound whistle to prevent action. Move to the kicker to give instructions
17. Watch for any infractions involving K's free-kick line
18. Time play clock
19. If a short free-kick is anticipated:
 - a. Position on K's free-kick line.
 - b. Be alert for first touching by K or kick, which does not cross R's free-kick line.
 - c. Hold bean bag to mark first touching by K.
 - d. Watch for any infractions involving K's free-kick and 5-yd restraining lines
 - e. Observe the legality of K's blocks within the neutral zone and contact on receivers.
 - f. Rule on illegal pop-up kicks

FREE KICK FOLLOWING A FAIR CATCH

- Position under the goal post opposite the *LINE JUDGE*.

FREE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Covering official(s) signal game clock to start (S #2) when kick is touched, other than first touching by K
2. Kick out of bounds between goal lines:
 - a. Sound whistle
 - b. Give a time-out signal (S #3) twice and mark spot
 - c. Determine if R had touched
 - d. Toss penalty marker if R did not touch the ball
3. Maintain position on the sideline at all times except for referee and back judge.
4. Sound a whistle when the ball becomes dead in your area and give a time-out signal
5. Carry bean bag in hand
6. Free kick following safety:
 - a. Each game official assumes the same relative position and has the same duties as on kickoff
 - b. Ball put in play by a dropkick, place kick, or punt.
7. Be alert for first touching by K and mark spot with bean bag
8. Be alert for a kick that does not cross R's free-kick line
9. If there is a penalty for a foul requiring a re-kick, administer the penalty and place the ball ready
10. Mark the spot where the kick goes out of bounds in your area with a penalty marker if untouched inbounds by R
11. Watch initial blocks by players near R's free-kick line and action against the kicker and holder (if used). Cover to the opposite 45-yard line
12. After the ball has gone downfield, move quickly to the center of the field on or near R's restraining line
 - a. Maintain a cushion of approximately 25 yards from the runner
 - b. Maintain an inside-out view of action during the return
 - c. As the play dictates, shading to one side of the field is acceptable to ensure adequate coverage of the return
 - d. If the ball is kicked outside the numbers behind the H's starting position, pick up first-line blocks in front of the H
13. Responsible for K's goal line
14. Be in a position to take over coverage of runners in your area on long return.
15. Observe the legality of blocks and action away from the ball
16. Ensure kicking tee is removed and kicking the ball is returned to the sideline

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Short free-kick
- First touching (subsequent first touches) – USE BEAN BAG
- Starting-stopping the clock
- Blocking below the waist and clipping
- Legal substitutions
- Kick catch interference and fair catch interference
- Knee on the ground on catch
- Forward-handing, illegal forward pass
- Batting
- Interlocked interference and illegal blocking
- Continuing action out of bounds
- Players going out of bounds during the kick

SCRIMMAGE PLAY MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

1. HUSTLE and assist in obtaining the ball/a new ball for spotting
2. Note the status of the clock (running/stopped)
3. Note down, distance, and game situation

4. Back into position, keeping a wide view of all players and dead ball action
5. Signal up coming down and confirm with *HEAD LINESMAN* and *LINE JUDGE*. Drop the signal after the *REFEREE* drops his signal
6. Communicate with the *REFEREE* if necessary to indicate the status of the game clock (on the ready with wind signal at the waist or, on the snap with arms crossed at the chest)
7. Time the 40-second or 25-second play clock and provide a raised arm when five (5) seconds remain. Provide a visible countdown of each remaining second by moving your arm from your chest to an extended position to the side or slightly above your shoulder each second
8. Assume a ready position 20-25 yards beyond the neutral zone, between the hash marks and shading the wide side of the field
9. Count Team B players, confirm count with *LINE JUDGE* when Team A breaks the huddle
10. Identify all eligible receivers and formation, know your keys and strong side of the formation

RUN MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP

1. Concentrate on your area of responsibility. “Fish in your own pond.”
2. Observe action on your intimal key if threatened by an opponent defensive position

RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE SNAP

1. Know when you have responsibility for the runner and progress and when you have responsibility for action away from the ball

Maintain separation from the players and other officials and keep a wide view, even when you have responsibility for the runner and progress

1. Read the play before moving, then slowly backpedal while identifying the point of attack
2. Observe blocks and other actions in front of the runner at the second level. Look for holding, blocks below the waist, and clips
3. Maintain a large cushion as the runner moves downfield all the way to the goal line
4. Maintain your “inside out” view of the action
5. After the runner is down, maintain a wide view of the dead ball action. If necessary, look for the appropriate signal from fellow officials indicating that the ball is dead and notifying you to start the 40-second play clock. Start the 40-second or 25-second play clock as dictated by rule. If the play ends out of bounds, more than three yards downfield, hustle to the sideline and ensure players separate and return inbounds. Escort players back in bounds if in the opponent’s team area
6. Assist in getting the ball / a new ball to the umpire so it can be spotted

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Illegal use of hands and other illegal blocks
- Blocking in front of the runner by team A receivers and pulling linemen
- Reverses and trick plays
- Blindsides blocks

PASS MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

COVERAGE MECHANICS

1. During pre-snap, identify the down and distance, line to gain, formation, tendencies, and location of best player(s), and your initial key
2. Communicate with flanks, as necessary, your position on the end line? Goal-line mechanics? Possible pick play on short yardage? etc
3. If the initial key is threatened/pressed, observe his release and observe for holding, OPI, DPI
4. If the initial key is free of foul, transition to zone coverage and maintain inside-out coverage always deeper than the deepest receiver
5. Keep your focus on the receivers and defenders downfield while only quickly glancing back at QB to read the play. Do not watch the QB throughout the play, thereby disregarding the actions in the secondary. Do not focus on the flight of the ball

6. Go towards the ball when a ball is in the air
7. Be at goal-line if receiver crosses (EXCEPTION: if play starts inside 15-yard line, you are responsible for the end-line. Prior to play, signal to FLANKS by positioning on the end-line and pointing to corner pylons)
8. On catch attempts near the sideline, focus on the hands. On catch attempts near the end-line, focus on feet then hands
9. If a pass is caught in bounds and then the player goes out of bounds, blow the whistle, stop the clock, mark the spot, continue to officiate
10. If the receiver catches the ball out of bounds and the covering official wants to “sell the call” he/she may signal incomplete and then, using both hands, make a sweeping motion toward the sideline
11. If the pass is completed and there is a need to “sell the call” and communicate that the ball was caught, the official shall raise both arms and then lower them in unison in a manner that mimics the actual catching of the ball. This signal must be performed in an exaggerated manner and is usually reserved for catches at the sideline
12. Do not signal a trapped ball by slapping the ground, rather “sell” the incomplete pass with two or three strong incomplete signals
13. We do not use the “juggling” signal on a ball that is not controlled as the receiver goes out of bounds.
14. On catch attempts near the intersection of the sideline and end line, make eye contact with FLANK official before signaling, unless you know it is incomplete
15. You are responsible for progress to the goal line
16. May assist with progress on a long run or pass
17. Be prepared to communicate with, and assist flank officials when a pass is incomplete and intentional grounding may be in question. In most cases, the flank official will have the best information, and your information will not be required. But, if the flank official is not signaling and there appears to be a serious question of intentional grounding, assert yourself and offer information about eligible receivers in the area of the pass to the flank official and referee if there is consensus with the flank official. The referee is responsible for the final decision and will throw his flag if necessary
18. Assist with relay/spot ball on long completions
19. Dead ball officiate

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Delay of game
- Holding
- Catch/no-catch
- Pass interference
- Unnecessary contact / personal foul
- Illegal participation

SCRIMMAGE KICK MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-KICK MECHANICS

1. Observe substitutions as you hustle to your scrimmage kick positions (Diagram)
2. Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios by reviewing the Points of Emphasis for your position
3. Position slightly behind and to the side of the deepest receiver on the same side of the field as the *HEAD LINESMAN* (approximately 7-12 yards to the side and 3-5 yards behind the receiver but always within the hash marks). If the position of the ball at the snap, and the position of the returner, places you outside the hash marks on the *HEAD LINESMAN’S* side of the field, adjust your starting position to the *LINE JUDGE’S* side of the field (approximately 7-12 yards to the side and 3-5 yards behind the receiver but always within the hash marks. If two receivers, field position may require you to take a position between the receivers. On kicks from inside the receiving team’s 40-yard line, take a position on the goal line at the sideline. When the ball is possessed, move to a position in the middle of the field, keeping the runner

between you and the sideline. You are responsible for coverage of runner from an inside-out view favoring the chain's side of the field, if possible

4. Count the receiving team and confirm with the *LINE JUDGE*
5. Provide fair catch instructions to the receiver(s) if possible and ask the receiver(s) to show you their signal. Remind the receiver that if they are going to make a fair catch, make sure it's a good signal.
6. Hold a beanbag in your hand

SCRIMMAGE KICK COVERAGE MECHANICS

Strange things happen on kicks. Be mentally prepared for various scenarios based on your position. See points of emphasis at the end of this section.

1. Glance quickly at the kick to determine direction and distance. Do not continue to watch the ball
2. Normal Kick – View the receiver and run up to be even with the receiver as he prepares to catch the ball. Your only view is the receiver, and stay to the side of him by 7-12 yards. Look to see that the receiver catches the ball cleanly and that there was no kick catch interference or to rule on a fair catch
3. Drop your beanbag where the kick ends. Remember that the kick ends when any player gains possession or the ball dies. If the kick crosses the goal line, blow your whistle and signal touchback
4. Keep the runner between you and the flank official. You are responsible for coverage of the runner from an inside-out view.
5. Fair Catch - View the receiver and run up to be even with the receiver as he prepares to catch the ball. View the fair catch signal (valid or invalid?). Ensure the receiver catches the ball cleanly and does not go through his hands. With a confirmed catch, determine the spot of the fair catch and toss your beanbag to identify that spot. Signal to stop the clock, and you're your whistle. Signal the direction of the team in possession.
6. First Touch Violation – Use a beanbag if there is a first touching violation by the kicking team. Note: there may be more than one spot of the first touching violation
7. If you are the covering official, stop the clock at the end of the play and signal the team's direction in possession.
8. Kick Out of Bounds – Determine the out-of-bounds spot on medium or long kicks out of bounds that bounce out of bounds or land within two yards of the sideline. On medium or long kicks that are kicked well out of bounds, you should be prepared to line up deeper than where the ball went out of bounds on the sideline with an outside arm straight above your head. Make eye contact with the REFEREE and begin to walk toward the original line of scrimmage. The REFEREE will hack when you have reached the out-of-bounds spot. Signal the direction of the team in possession.
9. Dead ball officiate
10. Communicate possession and direction to the *REFEREE*

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Fair Catch Signals
- Blocking
- Goal Line
- Illegal Batting or Forward Handing
- Muff and First Touching Violations
- Fair Catch or Kick Catch Interference
- Ball Out of Bounds in Flight

FIELD GOAL & PAT MECHANICS – 5-OFFICIAL

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

Prior to all field goal attempts, all officials should remind themselves of live ball by using the illegal procedure signal (S19)

1. Line up six feet or less behind the goal post closest to the opposite side of the official that is under the goal post with you
2. Count receiving team and confirm with *UMPIRE / LINE JUDGE / HEAD LINESMAN* of your count
3. Callout the numbers of the eligible receivers on your side of the offensive formation

4. Remind *UMPIRE / LINE JUDGE / HEAD LINESMAN* that you solely have the crossbar and the whistle

SWINGING GATE

1. All officials will be in their regular positions for a scrimmage down. Suppose team A shifts to a formation normally used for a PAT or attempted field goal. In that case, the *HEAD LINESMAN* and *LINE JUDGE* will stay in their regular scrimmage down positions, and the *UMPIRE* will move to the unoccupied goal post to rule on the kick success or failure. *UMPIRE* will still maintain responsibility for protecting the snapper
2. The *BACK JUDGE* will retain primary responsibility for the whistle
3. Prior to the snap, the *UMPIRE* and *BACK JUDGE* will establish eligible receivers on their respective sides of the offensive formation
4. If the play is a fake kick, the *UMPIRE* will attempt to get to his normal scrimmage position while the remaining officials maintain their usual scrimmage play responsibilities

FIELD GOAL & PAT KICK COVERAGE

1. You have responsibility for blowing your whistle once the ball has crossed the goal line and the kick has ended
2. As the ball arrives at the goal post, step-up and look straight-up to determine if the ball was kicked between the uprights and not directly over the goal post
3. Orally communicate with your fellow official, underneath the opposite upright, as to the success or failure of the kick
4. Both should withhold any signal, but immediately step to the end line where you both simultaneously give the signal ruling on the kick if the kick is good, or clearly failed. If the kick is close and fails, only the ruling official gives the incomplete signal..
5. Give incomplete signal if the kick fails
6. Give touchdown signal if the kick is good
7. Hold your signal until the referee turns to repeat your signal to the press box
8. If a field goal is short of the goal line, you must hustle to the goal line and determine if the scrimmage kick has broken the plane of the goal line and is a touchback, just as you would do on a punt
9. On fake plays or broken plays, be ready to cover passes or runs as usual. You have sole responsibility for the end line
10. Dead ball officiate after the play ends

MEASUREMENTS

BACK JUDGE (5-official)

1. Stand with the box during the measurement.
2. Correctly reset the box when the measurement is completed.