

# Field Mechanics

5-man crew

2017

Bay State, Hockomock and Tri-Valley League

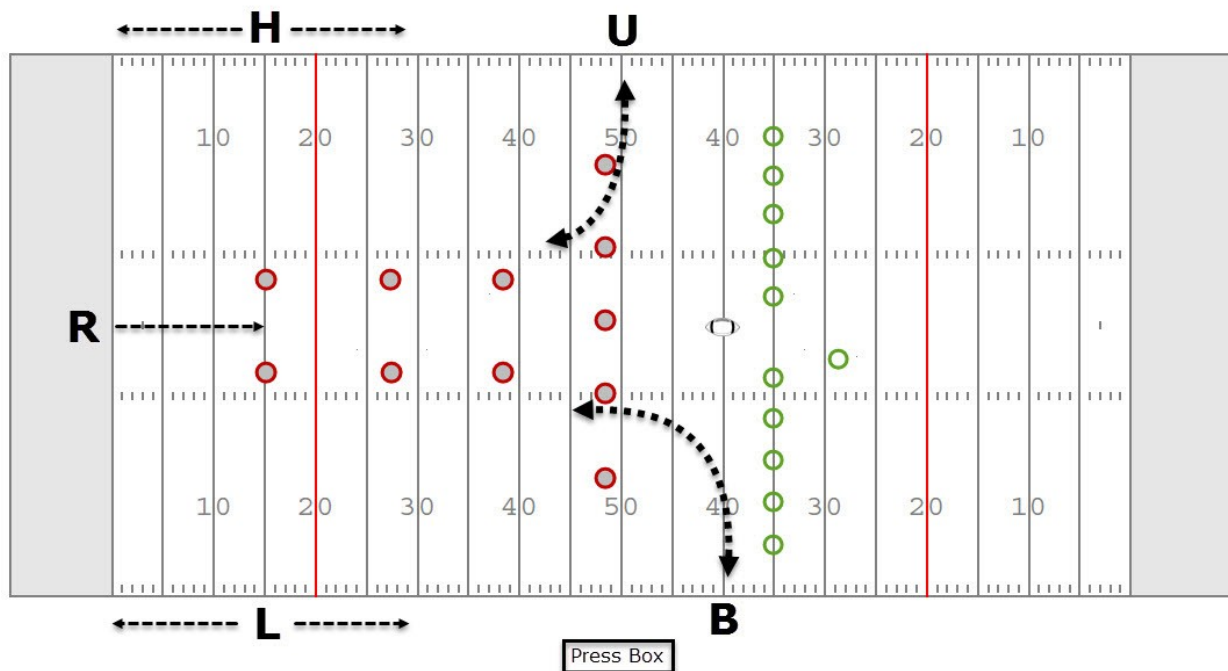
## Pregame Responsibilities

- Meet with coaches
- Chains (Linesman)
- Clock Operator Coordination

## Responsibilities at the Coin Toss

- **Referee** and **Umpire** at midfield to meet and introduce captains and perform coin toss.
- **Linesman** and **Back Judge** on visitors sideline at the numbers for coin toss, **Line Judge** on home side at the numbers. **All** must record results.

## Kickoff



When all officials are in position, they should raise and keep one arm in the air until the Referee sounds his whistle.

**Referee** is in the middle of the field at Team B's goal line. Once the Back Judge has reached the sideline, after handing the ball to the kicker, sound the whistle to give the ready signal.

- Count Team B players. Give signal to H and L.
- Rule on legality of team A's kick formation.
- Responsible for the ball carrier between the hash marks. Remain with the ball carrier until you release him to another official.
- If the ball is caught outside your zone or the ball carrier moves outside your zone, your key is the lead blocker and action in front of runner.

- On long returns, clean up behind the runner.
- Watch for Team B players touching the kick.
- Watch for Fair catch signal.
- Watch for Kick Catch Interference.
- Watch for the Wedge.
- Watch for Blocking below the waist and other illegal blocks.
- If touchback occurs, move into field of play to stop any late or illegal actions.

**Umpire** is on the sideline opposite the press box on Team B's restraining line.

- Count Team A players. Give signal to the Back Judge.
- Always have bean bag in hand.
- Watch for kicks out of bounds.
- Watch for Team B offside.
- Key on the three, Team A players on your side.
- Watch for an Onside kick.
- Watch for short kicks.
- On Short kicks and surprise Onside Kicks, Rule on:
- Illegal touching
- Illegal blocks
- Kick Catch Interference
- Fair catch signals
- Watch for Blocking below the waist and other illegal blocks.
- When the ball is clearly kicked deep, move into the field (between the numbers and the hash mark) and work inside out.
- On long returns, watch for blocking in front of the runner as he approaches, then clean up behind the runner, if necessary.

**Line Judge** is on the sideline on the press box side as deep as the deepest receiver or at the goal line. Adjust your initial position based on the strength of the kickers.

- Count Team B players. Give signal to R and H.
- Responsible for the runner in your side zone, be prepared to cover goal line. Remain with the ball carrier until you release him to another official.
- If the ball is caught outside your zone or the ball carrier moves outside your zone, your key is the lead blocker and action in front of runner.
- If the kick is deep and threatens the pylon, get to the pylon and rule whether the ball goes out of bounds in the field of play or end zone.
- Rule on forward progress of the ball carrier.
- Watch for short kicks.
- Watch for kicks out of bounds.
- Watch for Fair catch signal.
- Watch for Kick Catch Interference.
- Watch for the Wedge.
- Watch for Blocking below the waist and other illegal blocks.
- If touchback occurs, move into field of play to stop any late or illegal actions.

**Head Linesman** is on the sideline opposite press box side as deep as the deepest receiver or at the goal line. Adjust your initial position based on the strength of the kickers.

- Count Team B players. Give signal to R and H.
- Responsible for the runner in your side zone, be prepared to cover goal line. Remain with the ball carrier until you release him to another official.
- If the ball is caught outside your zone or the ball carrier moves outside your zone, your key is the lead blocker and action in front of runner.
- If the kick is deep and threatens the pylon, get to the pylon and rule whether the ball goes out of bounds in the field of play or end zone.
- Rule on forward progress of the ball carrier.
- Watch for short kicks.
- Watch for kicks out of bounds.
- Watch for Fair catch signal.
- Watch for Kick Catch Interference.
- Watch for the Wedge.
- Watch for Blocking below the waist and other illegal blocks.
- If touchback occurs, move into field of play to stop any late or illegal actions.

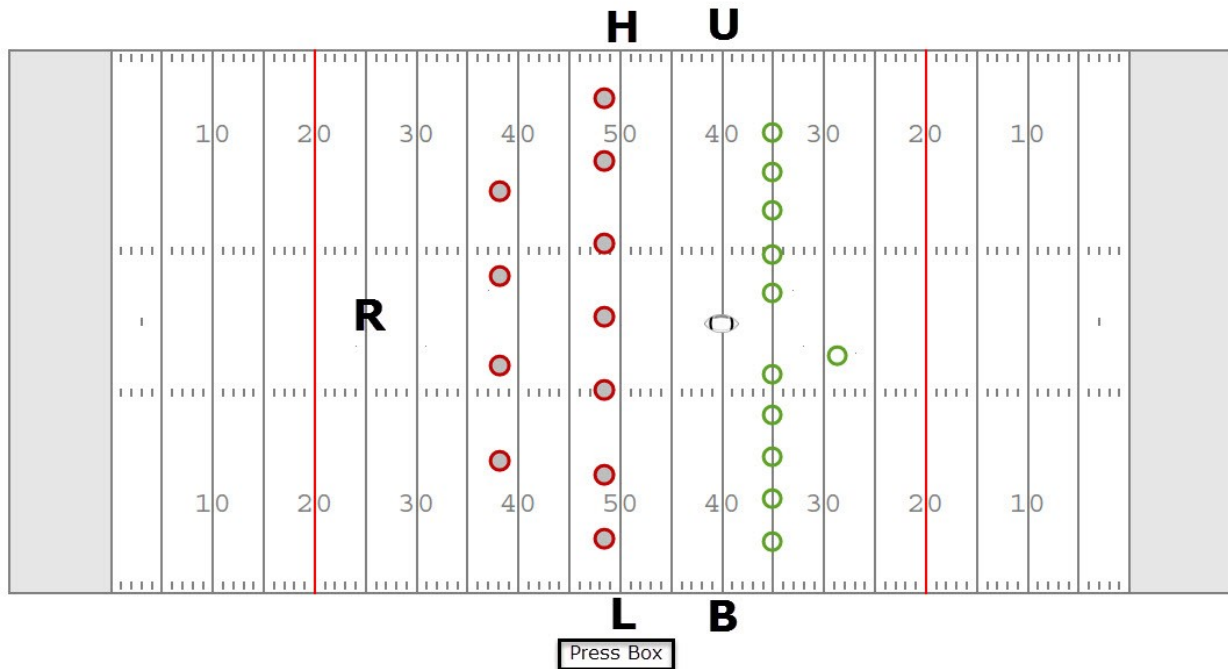
**Back Judge** is on the sideline on the press box side on Team A's restraining line.

- Inform the kicker to wait for the Referee's whistle. Hand him the ball and move along Team A's restraining line to the sideline.
- Count Team A players. Give signal to the Umpire
- Always have bean bag in hand.
- Watch for kicks out of bounds.
- Watch for Team A offside. (Philosophy: Rule Team A's restraining line as a line for deep kicks, rule it as a plane for short and onside kicks.)
- Key on the three, Team A players on your side.
- When the ball is clearly kicked deep, move into the field (between the numbers and the hash mark) and work inside out.
- On long returns, watch for blocking in front of the runner as he approaches.
- Watch for an Onside kick.
- Watch for short kicks.
- On Short kicks and surprise Onside Kicks, Rule on:
  - Illegal touching
  - Illegal blocks
  - Kick Catch Interference
  - Fair catch signals
  - Watch for Blocking below the waist and other illegal blocks.
- You are responsible for the Team A's goal line.

## **Free Kick after a Safety**

Restraining lines will be the A-20 for Team A and A-30 for Team B. All officials should assume relative positions and duties for kickoff. The ball will be put in play by a place kick, drop kick or punt.

## Short (onside) Free Kicks – Be Aware of Fair Catch Signals



**Referee** will determine when to move into short free kick formations and will move to the center of the field near the 25 yard line.

- Be alert for deep kick and be prepared to retreat to rule on the goal line.

**Umpire** to Team A's restraining line on the sideline opposite the press box.

- Rule on Team A offside, treat Team A's restraining line as a plane.
- If the ball is kicked toward your side, rule on touching by either team.
- If the ball is kicked to opposite side, rule on blocking.
- Be prepared to cover a run back by a Team B player.

**Head Linesman** to Team B's restraining line opposite press box. **Line Judge** to Team B's restraining line, press box side

- If kick is long, retreat toward Team B's goal line and assume normal responsibilities.
- Rule on the kick breaking the plane of Team B's restraining line.
- Rule on touching by either team.
- Be prepared to cover a run back by a Team B player.

**Back Judge** informs the kicker to wait for the Referee's whistle. Hand him the ball and move along Team A's restraining line to the press box sideline.

- Rule on Team A offside, treat Team A's restraining line as a plane.
- If the ball is kicked toward your side, rule on touching by either team.
- If the ball is kicked to opposite side, rule on blocking.
- Be prepared to cover a run back by a Team B player.
- Identify if you have an unbalanced (more or less than three) line, signal the F.
- Rule on the eligibility of the lineman on your side of the football.

**Line Judge**

- Ensure the correct down is on the down indicator and know the status of the clock.

- Count the defense and signal B using closed fist for 11 or less players.
- Watch for illegal substitutions by the offense on your sideline.
- Identify the eligible receivers and keys on your side of the football by number.
- Mark offensive scrimmage line with foot for flankers
- Identify if you have an unbalanced (more or less than three) line, signal the H.
- Rule on the eligibility of the lineman on your side of the football.

### Back Judge

- Count the defensive team and signal the H or F as appropriate.
- Identify the receivers and strength of the formation based on your keys.
- Before the ball is put in play, adjust position as necessary to ensure you can clearly see your key and area of responsibility.

## Pre-snap Responsibilities

### 25 Second clock

- **Back Judge** Assumes all responsibility for the 25 second clock once referee makes the ball ready for play. With 10 seconds left, **Back Judge** will raise his arm above his head. **Back Judge** will throw the flag if necessary. Coordination between the Referee and Back Judge is highly recommended to **AVOID** the need for a flag, unless an obvious delay situation exists.

## Substitutions and counts

- All responsible
- **Referee** and **Umpire** have primary responsibility of the offense. For teams that huddle the **Referee** should count the offensive team in the huddle and signal based on count. Fist in front of body for 11 Team A players, two open hands on chest for ten or less. **Umpire** should mirror **Referee's** signal after Team A breaks huddle. **Referee** should keep fist extended until first sound by offense. **Umpire** does not need to hold signal.
- **Line Judge** and **Back Judge** have primary responsibility for the defense. They should signal each other based on their count.
- **Umpire** has 5 players 50 – 79 on the offense. On scrimmage kick plays **Umpire** is responsible for identifying numbering exceptions.
- **Line Judge** and **Linesman** responsible for incoming substitutions being inside the 9-yard mark between the time the ball is made ready by the Referee and it is snapped.
- **Referee** has “12 men in huddle” responsibility. Also must allow defense to respond to late offensive substitutions. Team A substitution rule is not confined to late substitutions especially for teams that do not huddle. The process is after the play is over the **Referee** is responsible for identifying Team A substitutions with no huddle teams. If Team A subs the **Umpire** then moves up over the ball. The **Referee** then looks at the Team B sideline to see if they are going to substitute. If Team B does not substitute within 3 seconds then the **Referee** signals the **Umpire** to move off the ball. If team B subs then the **Umpire** remains over the ball until Team B completes the substitution process.

## Running Plays

- **Referee** positioned to the throwing arm side of the quarterback. Pre-snap the **Referee** is responsible for false starts by the backs within the tackle box. The **Referee** is responsible for identifying backs within the tackle box for possible illegal block below the waist fouls during the play. Initially responsible for all action in the backfield (handoff, option plays etc.). **Referee** should be responsible for initial block by the opposite tackle. **Referee** is responsible for watching blocking at the point of attack. The **Referee** must protect the quarterback from fouls away from the point of attack. The **Referee** has the quarterback to the line of scrimmage on option plays. Once the quarterback carries the ball beyond the line of scrimmage the **Referee**

is responsible for any backs in position to receive a backward pass. Peripheral vision should include blockers as play develops before runner responsibilities transfer to the wing men.

- **Umpire** positioned 5-7 yards behind the defense and opposite side of the **Referee**. Pre-snap the umpire is responsible for illegal snaps and false starts by the center, guards, and tackles. Post-snap the umpire is responsible for initial blocks by the center and two guards. After initial blocking the umpire is responsible for blocks at the point of attack. The umpire should be aware of potential chop block situations. Must read the blockers and move with the flow. Must do so in an attempt not to obstruct the defense. Once play has ended, will spot ball for progress from the wings.
- **Linesman** and **Line Judge** initially align wide receivers and observing only 4 in the backfield. Pre-snap each wing official is responsible for false starts by split Team A players and the tackle on their side of the formation. Each wing is responsible for illegal motion by a Team A player in motion away from them. Once ball cleanly snapped, they should look at the initial blocks by the split Team A players and tackle on their side of the formation. They are also responsible for illegal blocking below the waist by Team A and B players. Once the play develops they are responsible for watching blocking at the point of attack if the play is to their side. If the play is away from their position they are responsible for watching action behind the play. Forward progress spot on you unless long run involves the back judge.
- **Back Judge** positioned favoring the strength of the formation, generally to the tight end. Back judge should watch the initial block by their key. The back judge must be aware of possible crack-back (below waist) blocks and low blocks by Team B more than 5 yards beyond the line of scrimmage. The back judge must never get beat to the goal line. Maintain enough depth to maintain goal line responsibilities. If ball carrier moves toward the sideline, **Back Judge** must assist the wing man in the area, in particular if he goes out of bounds.

## Pass Plays

- **Referee** Has complete responsibilities for the quarterback. The **Referee** is responsible for initially watching the block by the tackle away from his position and then the near side tackle. On plays when the quarterback is contacted the referee must follow the action on the quarterback until the end of the play. The referee is responsible for low hits on the passer, roughing, and targeting. *Intentional grounding is now a two official call.* The referee is responsible for determining if the quarterback gets outside the tackle box on pass plays and he must look at the wing men for assistance with the ball crossing the neutral zone when the quarterback potentially grounds the ball after being outside the tackle box. If flag is thrown by the Referee for grounding, and wing man determines an eligible receiver was in the area, he must inform the Referee and allow him to wave off the flag.
- **Umpire** will move up toward the line of scrimmage when he reads pass in order to rule on ineligibles downfield. The umpire is responsible for the initial blocks by the center and two guards, The umpire is responsible for ruling on the pass being made beyond the line of scrimmage and if the pass is first touched behind or beyond the neutral zone,. He can also turn once pass is made to assist wings and back judge on pass reception or incomplete.
- **Line Judge** and **Linesman** Initially responsible for receiver(s) nearest you. Know your eligibles. If multiple receivers in your area, splitting the difference will give best coverage as play develops. If quick pass made, wings must be prepared to rule if forward or backward. Sideline responsibilities at all times. The wingmen are responsible for ruling on receivers going out of bounds prior to passes being thrown. The wingmen should have a hat down for receivers who go out of bounds on their own prior to a pass being thrown. The wingmen should be aware of potential pick plays. On pass plays along the sideline the wingmen must coordinate with the back judge on responsibilities for catch/no catch rulings along the sideline. On pass plays where the receiver has his back to the official the official should look at other officials who may have had a better viewing angle before ruling on catch/no catch. Eye contact between officials is imperative.

- **Back Judge** Initially responsibility for inside receiver(s). Goal line as well. The **Back Judge** should be aware of potential pick plays. Pass coverage converts to zones as play develops, with **Back Judge** taking the deepest receivers. Inside the 10 yard line going in, at the instruction of the **Back Judge**, coverages change to the **Back Judge** having end line responsibilities and the wings taking the goal line.

#### **Plays with the line of scrimmage between the 5 yard line and goal line**

- Once inside the 5 yd line, **Linesman** and **Line Judge** should move to the goal line after each snap and officiate from there, moving in to the field or out of bounds depending on the play. Same coverage for 2-pt conversion try. Inside the 5 yard line going out, the wingman on the side of the field where the point of attack is should move back to the goal line and officiate from the goal line out. The opposite wingman should officiate the play using their normal coverage. The umpire has responsibility for the passer crossing the line of scrimmage and for passes touched behind or beyond the line of scrimmage.

## **PAT/Field Goal Kicks**

- **Referee** has holder and kicker responsibilities. The referee is responsible for blocking infractions by the tackles, guards, and the center. Primary responsibility for counting offense.
- **Line Judge** and **Linesman** remain on their respective wings with sideline responsibilities. The linesman and line judge are responsible for illegal snaps and false starts by Team A players on their side of the field. After the snap the wingmen are responsible for blocking infractions by Team A players on the end of the line and in the backfield. **Linesman** has responsibility of the ball crossing the line of scrimmage. If kick play breaks down or is a fake, Line Judge and Linesman have goal line responsibilities.
- **Back Judge** positioned under the goal post has responsibility of his goal post and crossbar. The **Back Judge** should identify numbering exceptions on his side of the center and has primary responsibility for counting defense. He has the whistle once kick is over. He coordinates with the umpire for signaling if kick good/no good. If kick play breaks down or is a fake, **Back Judge** has end line responsibilities
- **Umpire** has snapper responsibilities and will be under the goal post opposite the **Back Judge**. The **Umpire** has responsibility for numbering exceptions by the center and on his side of the center. He will have kick responsibilities for his goal post. If kick play breaks down or is a fake, **Umpire** assumes his normal responsibilities for all interior lineman and should move forward toward the goal line and the line of scrimmage and be prepared to rule if quarterback passes beyond the line of scrimmage. **Referee** will need to be prepared to assist here.
- **Note:** This formation is a complete deviation from the manual

## **Punts**

- **Referee** Positioned to on the kicking foot side of the punter two yards behind and at least 15 wide of the punter's initial position. The **Referee** must rule on the formation meeting the scrimmage kick formation requirement. The **Referee** must also identify the tackle box location pre-snap for potential rugby style punts. The **Referee** is responsible for blocking infractions by Team A post snap. The **Referee** is responsible for actions of the kicker and Team B leaping over Team A shield blockers. The **Referee** should assist the sideline officials with spots on kicks that go out of bounds in the air.
- **Umpire** Normal position with snapper responsibilities. The **Umpire** should identify numbering exceptions pre-snap. Responsible for snap infractions and false starts by the center, guards, and tackles.
- **Line Judge** Normal position. Responsible for Team A and B scrimmage line infractions his side of the center. Releases downfield at a clean snap to assist Back Judge.
- **Linesman** Normal position. Responsible for Team A and B scrimmage line infractions on his side of the center. Responsible for the kicked ball crossing the neutral zone

- **Back Judge** Positioned on Linesman side of field with the deepest receiver giving fair catch instructions to all receivers and then protecting the receiver as best he can. Immediate whistle following completed fair catch and any catches following any illegal or invalid signals. Back Judge responsible for kicks going out of bounds and will work with **Referee** when needed for final out of bounds spot. Must be prepared to rule on illegal/invalid signals and killing the play once a fair catch is made.

## Measurements

- **Referee** has discretion on all measurements
- **Umpire** will stay with and handle the ball (this deviates from the manual)
- **Line Judge** will locate the spot to place the chain
- **Linesman** will bring out the chains to **Line Judge** spot
- **Back Judge** will take the forward stake (this deviates from the manual)
  - When in doubt, measure!!

## Situations

### End of 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> periods

- All responsible for recording down and distance **Linesman** with assistance from the **Back Judge** has responsibility for moving the chains **Umpire** takes the ball and moves to the spot where the ball will be. Once chains properly in place, **Umpire** will spot the ball. Referee must confirm down and distance are correct before making the ball ready. Referee must confirm the game clock has been reset prior to making the ball ready.

### End of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter

- All should observe the teams leaving the playing field and confirm the time of teams to return to the field Wing official of the team with the second half option should attempt to secure that choice as the team leaves the field. Unless there was something unusual in the first half, no need to bring the captains out to midfield prior to second half kickoff.

### Overtime

- If league rules dictate or agreement is obtained prior to game, overtime will be played. After conclusion of the fourth quarter the teams will return to their sidelines. The officials should meet at the center of the field to review the overtime procedures. The wing officials will go their respective teams and review the overtime procedure with the head coach. Team captains will meet with Referee and Umpire for a coin flip. Winning team will have the option of offense, defense or end of field.
  - Teams must go for 2
  - Each team gets 1 timeout per inning.

### End of game

- Per direction of the MIAA, the officiating crew should observe the postgame handshake of the two teams. If circumstances exist where the crew is not comfortable in this situation, game management must be notified before exiting the field. Observing the handshake can be done from a distance and can be done as the crew heads to the field exit.