

5 Man Crew



PRE-GAME CHECKLIST – Back Judge

POINTS OF EMPHASIS		
SLOW DOWN!	Officiate the “Next Play”	Make it BIG
If you “think”, it’s NOT	Be sure, then flag	Prelim Signals (If 1 Flag)
Process The Play	Dead Ball Officiate	Know and communicate clock status – Every play
Be the best communicator on the crew.		
Be the calming influence when a coach is upset and wants an answer. Only give answers you know.		
PRE-GAME		
Enter field with entire crew	Evaluate each team's kicking game	
Locate game and play clocks	Meet with game clock and play clock operators	
Communicate with ball boys	Make sure field is safe and clearly marked	
PRE-SNAP ROUTINE		
Clear the previous play (Dead Ball)		
Be aware of offensive team substitution patterns		
Count Team B – 11 players; hold signal		
Recognize offensive formation and coverage keys		
Watch Play Clock; communicate clock status to R		
FREE KICKS		
Normal kickoff: A-40, opposite Press Box; bean bag in hand	Only kicker may be more than 5 yards behind free-kick line	
Keys: kicker, Team A offside, onside-kick awareness, first touching by Team A, initial contact	BJ is responsible for the 5-yard requirement; communicate with U on 4 players on each side of kicker	
After Try: start 60-second timer; jog out to kicker at 30 seconds	Start 1Q/3Q: do not hand ball to kicker until clock reads 12:00	
K can recover after 10 yards and touching; K can advance a FUMBLE but not a MUFF	Be ready for fair-catch, illegal/invalid signals and onside mechanics EVERY kick	
SCRIMMAGE PRE-SNAP		
Align ~20 yards deep between the uprights; adjust for formation	Count Team B; assist Referee with clock status	
Know receiver keys; check defensive backs for press vs. zone coverage	If no visible play clock, be prepared to communicate 10 seconds, then 5-4-3-2-1	
RUNNING PLAY		
Stay stationary initially; read run/pass. Keys: TE, receivers, line play beyond POA, RB	Watch second-level blocks, crackbacks and blocks ahead of the runner	
Do not back completely out; move back as runner breaks LOS	Do not move past the hash until the ball is dead; stay back and watch dead-ball action	
Cover B’s goal line on long runs; move to goal line as required	Assist with forward progress on gains downfield; communicate and relay ball when needed	
HOLDING CATEGORIES: Grab & Restrict * Hook & Turn * Takedown * Reverse Takedown * Tackle		

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PASSING PLAY			
Monitor inside eligible receivers	Keep receivers in front; maintain depth	Protect defenseless receivers	Assist with deep catch/no-catch
Double: BJ has #2 receiver on LJ side	Trips: BJ has #2 & #3 receivers	Go to zone coverage once receivers clear defenders	Always position behind deepest Team B players
Watch initial pass trajectory, then players—not the ball	FEET FIRST, then catch; STOP-N-WATCH at judgment	Use Angle / Distance / Timing to get into position	Assist R on clock status when the clock is stopped
CATCH = Establish possession of a live ball in flight, first contacting the ground inbounds while maintaining possession.			
DPI CATEGORIES (6): PCHANG * Playing through the back * Cut Off * Hook and Turn * Arm Bar * Not Playing the Ball * Grab and Restrict			
OPI CATEGORIES (4): BPPD * Blocking downfield * Push off (w/ separation) * Pick * Driving through			
GOAL LINE MECHANICS			
GOAL LINE – GOING IN (Ball on B's 7 or in)			
Cover end line	Rule on end-line feet / players stepping out and returning		Rule on passes that threaten the end line
GOAL LINE – GOING OUT (Ball on A's 5 or in)			
Officiate normally but anticipate late wing arrival		Assist with downfield progress	
SCRIMMAGE KICK (Punt Mechanics)			
Position 8 yards wide & 8 yards deeper than returner; favor wide side with 1 receiver; split 2 receivers		When receiver heels are on/inside B-10, move to the goal line	
Keys: snap, outside receiver(s) on LJ side, signals, first touching, Team B catch		Protect returner; maintain minimum 8-yard cushion; watch blocks and blindside action	
Bean bag: mark end of kick for PSK (except touchback) and Team A first touching		If receiver crosses your vision, let him go—do not get straight-lined	
KCI: R has right to complete catch after a fair-catch signal, even if muffed		R in chase mode? Be alert for HOLD / IBB	
K can recover a MUFF – NO ADVANCE		K can advance a FUMBLE	
TRY / FIELD GOAL			
Align on end line covering the Press Box upright		Count Team B; know eligible numbers on your side	
Responsible for upright & crossbar; sound whistle on successful FG		Good = signal FG good with U; No Good = signal no score as required	
Fake/blocked: stay on end line; if short, both BJ/U go to goal line		Only words on FG: “YES” for good / “NO” for unsuccessful	
Field Goal: If ball hits crossbar or goal post and bounces back into field of play, ball is dead		Dead-ball action: keep head up and officiate players after the kick	
DEAD BALL / CLOCK / GAME MANAGEMENT			
Be a strong dead-ball official; watch players, especially the 2nd wave moving toward a sideline		Assist with ball spotting on gains downfield; long incomplete passes—relay ball to sideline	
Carry TWO bean bags; mark fumbles, backward passes beyond NZ, momentum spots, Team A first touching, punt end of kick		Do NOT bean-bag: fair catch, touchback, Team B touching, most interceptions	
BJ communicates with R whether Game Clock starts on ready or snap after an administrative stoppage		BJ is NOT responsible for operating a visible stadium play clock	
Inside 2 minutes & all timeouts: someone must visibly confirm Game Clock stopped		Identify extension of a period with R; communicate clock status every play	