

5 Man Crew

PRE-GAME CHECKLIST – Referee



POINTS OF EMPHASIS		
SLOW DOWN!	Officiate the “Next Play”	Make it BIG
Control the pace	Know clock status – Every play	Check your attitude; communicate
If you “think”, it’s NOT	Be sure, then flag	Be the calming influence with coaches
Be the best communicator on the crew. Be approachable, composed, and decisive.		
Only give answers you know; involve the crew when needed.		
PRE-GAME		
Meet Head Coach about 1 hour before kickoff; provide game card and sign Gold Card.	Confirm haltime duration and coin-toss timing.	
Meet quarterback; learn name and establish communication.	Oversee crew readiness; route administrative questions through you.	
Visit game management if weather is a concern; identify medical personnel.	Meet Head Coaches with entire crew; delegate pregame duties and involve the crew.	
Know game-management personnel and use them professionally when needed.	Confirm all crew members know mechanics and pregame responsibilities.	
PRE-SNAP ROUTINE		
Clean up last play; be aware of offensive substitutions.	Count Team A on scrimmage plays.	
Confirm at least five players numbered 50-79 on LOS.	Know down/distance and Game Clock status.	
Control ready-for-play; do not rush administrative procedures.	After an administrative stoppage, be aware of the 40/25 play-clock status.	
FREE KICKS		
Align on Team R goal line between hashes.	Count Team B; ensure four Team K players are on each side of kicker.	
Rule on touchback and legality of returner’s catch.	After kick, observe blocks around runner and dead-ball action.	
Be ready for onside-kick mechanics when score/time indicates.	When in question, move into onside-kick mechanics; discuss after the Try.	
SCRIMMAGE PRE-SNAP		
Initial position: wide side; approximately 15 yards deep and 8 yards wide of QB.	Know down/distance and Game Clock status.	
Count Team A; confirm with U and hold the signal.	Know offensive substitution patterns and formation.	
Know which players can legally block below the waist immediately after the snap.	Be ready to assist with clock and ready-for-play administration.	
RUNNING PLAY		
Keys: snap/QB/handoff/line play at POA/action around RB.	Inside runs: move to POA; wide runs: stay ahead with cushion.	
Follow QB if he rolls out; maintain about a 10-yard cushion.	Protect QB once he is no longer a passer.	
Watch action around the runner and at the dead-ball spot.	Move in on dead-ball action; keep players separated.	
HOLDING CATEGORIES: Grab & Restrict • Hook & Turn • Takedown • Reverse Takedown • Tackle		

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PASSING PLAY	
Stay with blockers until passer is threatened; prioritize passer safety.	Rule on pass/fumble; R is the only official to make that call.
Know yard line where passer releases the ball; memorize spot when close to NZ.	Maintain awareness of passer behind/beyond LOS and intentional grounding.
Maintain 5-yard cushion; if passer rolls, maintain about 10-yard cushion.	Yell "Ball's Away" to help protect passer when appropriate.
Intentional Grounding is an R-only flag; get crew information to R ASAP.	Stay with passer after release when needed; keep eyes on late action.
GOAL LINE MECHANICS	
GOAL LINE – GOING IN (Ball on B's 7 or in)	
Announce goal-line mechanics to crew.	Assume LOS responsibilities for passing plays.
Wings will not be available for some LOS decisions after snap.	Communicate GL status with wings; the GL is the most important line.
GOAL LINE – GOING OUT (Ball on A's 5 or in)	
Work from end line.	Secondary responsibility for LOS-related pass rulings.
Communicate safety rulings with wings.	Be alert for reverse mechanics and end-line action.
SCRIMMAGE KICK – PUNT	
Position 3–4 yards behind punter on right side; stay stationary as long as possible.	Prioritize kicker/punter protection.
Keys: snap, punter catch, eligible backs, blocking by backs, punter.	Inform Team B players to "stay off center" and "stay off punter" when appropriate.
Yell "Ball's Away" when punted; determine roughing/running into.	After kick, go to LOS, stop and watch blocks during the return.
If runback, backpedal and get to goal line.	Stay with punter until there is no threat of a foul.
TRY / FIELD GOAL	
Do not rush ready-for-play; only R calls roughing/running kicker/holder.	Field Goal: plant-leg side, about 5 yards deeper and 10 yards wide of holder.
Keys: holder, snap, holder's catch/knees, fake, rushers, kicker/holder contact.	Know eligible receivers and be ready for a fake/broken play.
On fakes/broken plays, react to normal scrimmage mechanics.	Cover your goal-line responsibility as required.
DEAD BALL / CLOCK / GAME MANAGEMENT	
Ensure covering official gives proper signal; maintain awareness of late action.	Work with Umpire to manage ball placement.
In hurry-up, monitor action behind the play while Umpire moves early.	Delay snap only when necessary; communicate with QB and Umpire.
Microphone: concise, accurate, controlled by R only.	Use extra communication when it clarifies an unusual ruling or no-call.
Only one R flag for intentional grounding; involve crew in information gathering.	Maintain professional communication with coaches and game management.