

Head Linesman Mechanics

CHAIN CREW

- a. The typical line-to-gain (chain) crew consists of at least three individuals – a down-box operator and two to hold the rods. Unless otherwise possible by use of a fourth crew member, the down-box operator will attach the clip as specified.
- b. The HEAD LINESMAN will set the spot (with his heel) of all first downs. When the line-to-gain equipment is moved, the rear rod is to be set behind the down marker and then the clip shall be placed at the back edge of the 5-yard line nearest the rear rod. The chains shall be set on the sideline and then the crew may move the chains off the sidelines by one yard.
- c. The Down-Box Operator is to show the number of the down just completed and shall not indicate the new down until so notified by the HEAD LINESMAN.
- d. The Down-Box Operator should be aware of any penalty markers. The marker must not be moved nor the down changed until so notified by the HEAD LINESMAN.

END OF QUARTER

- a. Make certain the clip is located appropriately on the nearest yard line.
- b. 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.
- c. Place your heel at the front of the ball for the down box.

MEASUREMENTS

- a. Ensure the clip is on the proper five-yard line and securely fastened to the chain.
- b. Holding the clip, jog onto the field with the chain crew and place the clip on the spot on the field indicated by the LINEJUDGE.
- c. If first down, drop clip, move to sideline and mark spot. If not a first down, return clip to the correct spot on sideline.

FREE KICK MECHANICS

- a. 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.
- b. Hold bean bag in hand. Anticipate first touching.
- c. Provide ready signal when receiving team is in position, sideline is clear, and you are ready.
- d. Watch the receiver's restraining line for encroachment by receiving team.
- e. 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. On a kick out of bounds, throw flag to the out of bounds spot. If the team on your sideline is the offended team, gets the enforcement choice from the coach and advise the REFEREE.
- f. Returns to the opposite side and center of the field watch blocking and look for illegal acts.

RUN MECHANICS

- a. Observe the snap then momentarily read run/pass by observing the block by the near tackle (block toward, pass block, pull, etc.).
- b. Locate the ball and the point of attack but do not focus on it.
- c. 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.
- d. 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.
- e. 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.
- f. If the play is away or between the inbounds marks, maintain a wide view of the action while paralleling the progress spot, observing player conduct away from the play.
- g. If the play is toward your side, 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, then trail the play. If the runner crosses the sideline, hustle to the spot and mark progress.

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PASS MECHANICS

- a. Remain near LOS until pass is thrown unless all receivers are deep, stay underneath the shortest receiver
- b. Maintain Outside-in coverage, move parallel to sideline, responsible for sideline from end line to end line.
- c. On catch attempts near sideline, focus on feet then hands. Near end line, focus on hands, then feet.
- d. On catch attempts near sideline and end line, make eye contact with BACK JUDGE before signaling.
- e. The BACK JUDGE always keys on the inside eligible receiver(s) outside the tackles on the strong side of the formation.
- f. If the formation is balanced and there is only one eligible receiver to each side, the BACK JUDGE takes the first back on a pass route out of the backfield.
- d. The FLANK officials key on the widest player of the offensive formation on their side of the field.
- e. If there are three eligible receivers on one side, the FLANK official takes the outside receiver. The two inside receivers are the responsibility of the BACK JUDGE.
- f. Your keys are established at the snap, regardless of changes in formation prior to the snap.
- g. Goal line coverage - responsible for goal line on snaps inside 10 yard line.

SCRIMMAGE KICK MECHANICS

- a. Look to see that the ball has been kicked and quickly look to see where the ball is headed (i.e. short, long, right, left).
- b. Normal Kick – View the blocking and action around the kicking team's receiver.
- c. Fair Catch - View the action around the receiver and make certain the receiver catches the ball cleanly and it does not go through his hands.
- d. First Touch Violation – Use your beanbag if there is a first touching violation by the kicking team.
- e. Kick Out of Bounds – On kicks out of bounds, you are responsible for your sideline. Go deeper than where the ball went out of bounds on the sideline. Put your outside arm straight above your head. Make eye contact with REFEREE and begin to walk toward the original line of scrimmage. The REFEREE will hack when you have reached the out of bounds spot.

FIELD GOAL & PAT MECHANICS

- 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.
- 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 in to the hash to dead ball officiate.