

Seventeenth Edition

2015 & 2016 NIRSA Flag & Touch Football Rules Book & Officials' Manual

Bruce L. Maurer, PhD, Editor



Leaders in Collegiate Recreation

www.nirsa.org



Human Kinetics

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*Any rule and play interpretation not discussed in this Rules Book will be covered by the National Federation of State High School Associations' Football Rules Book and Case Book.

NIRSA: LEADERS IN COLLEGIATE RECREATION

NIRSA is the premier association of leaders in collegiate recreation that transforms lives and facilitates the development of healthy communities worldwide. By providing opportunities for learning and growth, supporting and sharing meaningful research, and fostering networking among our member community, NIRSA is a leader in higher education and champion for the advancement of recreation, sport, and wellness. Since its founding in 1950, NIRSA membership has grown to comprise nearly 4,500 dedicated professionals, students, and associates, serving an estimated 8.1 million students. Supported by the NIRSA Headquarters team, based in Corvallis, Oregon, NIRSA is governed by volunteer leaders from across North America.

NIRSA provides access to educational resource materials as well as a professional support network. Ensuring that those involved in recreational sports remain current and up-to-date is a prime concern for NIRSA. Through professional support materials and sponsored projects, the quality of collegiate recreation is greatly enhanced. NIRSA publications, career opportunities services, the NIRSA Sports Officials' Development Program, and sponsored national and regional conferences and workshops contribute to the overall quality of collegiate recreation programs, services, and personnel.

The eleven small college intramural directors who originally met as the founding members of the association could not have imagined the rapid and extensive growth of the collegiate recreation field. As the field has evolved, so has NIRSA. Today, the challenges of meeting the recreational sports programming needs of over 2,200 colleges, universities, military installations, and local communities are met by highly trained and caring professionals supported through the efforts of NIRSA.

NIRSA Headquarters is located at 4185 SW Research Way in Corvallis, OR 97333, (541) 766-8211.



Leaders in Collegiate Recreation

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DEDICATION: MARY CALLENDER

In 1987, the NIRSA Flag & Touch Football Rules Committee began a tradition of dedicating each edition of the *NIRSA Flag & Touch Football Rules Book & Officials' Manual* to a person who has made significant contributions and played a pivotal role in the development of flag football. The committee has selected Mary Callender, CRSS, as the recipient of this honor for the seventeenth edition.

Mary is currently the Director of Special Projects for NIRSA and is the second member of the NIRSA Headquarters staff to receive this dedication (Will Holsberry in 1997).

Mary will be the first to say, "But this is my job," but it is a job she has had for nearly 20 years. During this time, Mary has been instrumental in coordinating the publication of the rules book, making updates to all clinician kits, and arranging logistics for the production of the various training videos.

While at NIRSA Headquarters, Mary's leadership is seen at every level. She has served in various roles such as Director of National Sport Programs, Director of Publications & Educational Resources, Director of Membership & Publications, and Sr. Director of Professional Development & Leadership. In these capacities, Mary has worked closely with the NIRSA Board of Directors, Member Network, and other leadership groups. She has also been heavily involved in the Professional Development programs, which include the NIRSA Annual Conference. Mary continues to work closely with Human Kinetics and the NIRSA membership to produce new publications and maintain the Sports Officials Education Program, which has played an integral role in development of resources and online courses for student sports officials throughout NIRSA. She also is the NIRSA HQ liaison to the NIRSA historian and maintains NIRSA's archives as the in-house historian.

Before joining the NIRSA Headquarters staff, Mary worked at Sam Houston State University as a lecturer for the Department of Health & Kinesiology and later as the Outdoor Recreation Director for the Department of Recreational Sports.

Mary earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Recreation from South Dakota State University and a Master of Agriculture from Texas A&M University in Recreation Resource Development with an Outdoor Education Certification.

NIRSA: Leaders in Collegiate Recreation proudly recognizes Mary Callender for her outstanding contributions to NIRSA flag and touch football by dedicating this publication in her honor.



PAST DEDICATION RECIPIENTS

- 1987 & 1988 **Dr. Rodney J. Grambeau**, University of Michigan
- 1989 & 1990 **Dr. Louis M. Marciani**, East Stroudsburg University
James L. "Jet" Smith, University of New Orleans
- 1991 & 1992 **Stephen Rey**, University of Southern Mississippi
- 1993 & 1994 **Jim Potter**, Trinity University
- 1995 & 1996 **Earl Birdy**, Carnegie-Mellon University
- 1997 & 1998 **Will M. Holsberry**, NIRSA
- 1999 & 2000 **Dr. Bruce L. Maurer**, The Ohio State University
- 2001 & 2002 **Bob Gildersleeve**, Grand Valley State University
- 2003 & 2004 **Gary E. Albright**, Arkansas State University
- 2005 & 2006 **David Gaskins**, East Carolina University
- 2007 & 2008 **The University of New Orleans**
- 2009 & 2010 **Bradley Petty**, Angelo State University
- 2011 & 2012 **Kurt Klier**, University of Maryland
- 2013 & 2014 **David Parker**, University of North Carolina Wilmington

MOVING CLOSER TOWARD A STANDARDIZED FOOTBALL CODE

The NIRSA Flag & Touch Football Rules Committee was created 36 years ago and charged with the responsibility of developing a standardized code of Rules, interpretations and officials mechanics. Unlike most other intramural team, dual and individual sports, there was no nationally recognized set of flag and touch football Rules.

Prior to developing rule proposals in 1982, the Committee reviewed all flag and touch football related literature. After examining this information, it was decided to conduct several national research¹ projects concerning injury frequencies as related to the Rules. In addition, surveys of the nation's colleges and universities were initiated to determine which Rules and interpretations were being administered. The results of these massive research projects played an integral role during those early decision-making processes.

The sixteen editions of the *NIRSA Flag & Touch Football Rules Book & Officials' Manual* have been very successful. Thousands of colleges, universities, recreation departments, high schools, correctional institutions, military installations, YMCA/YWCAs, Department of Army-Europe, and the Department of the Navy have adopted these Rules. Amazingly, after sixteen editions, over 107,000 copies have been sold.

Several major projects were undertaken by the Rules Committee. These include:

1. *NIRSA Officiating Flag Football Course*: Developed in conjunction with Human Kinetics and the NIRSA Flag Football Committee, the course is ideal for new officials. The course is delivered entirely online, complete with excerpts from the most recent edition of the *NIRSA Flag & Touch Football Rules Book and Officials' Manual*.
2. *NIRSA Flag Football Officials' Training DVD: Rules, Penalty Enforcement, and Mechanics* is an outstanding 65-minute DVD, covering the Playing Rules, Penalty Enforcement, and Officiating Mechanics.
3. Rules Committee members spent a great deal of time reviewing the Rules Book and Officials' Manual during the past 2 years. It is easier to read and understand than any previous edition.

The seventeenth edition of the *NIRSA Flag & Touch Football Rules Book and Officials' Manual* is a culmination of this effort. It is a continuing effort by the NIRSA membership to standardize the Rules and mechanics for this great game.

The NIRSA Rules Book and Officials' Manual is revised biannually. The Rules Committee will conduct an open forum at the NIRSA Annual Conference to discuss them and make recommendations for subsequent editions. We seek and need input. After all, these are *your* Rules and mechanics.

¹ Participating colleges and universities included Georgia Institute of Technology, Illinois State University, Indiana University, The Ohio State University, Trinity University, University of California at Los Angeles, University of Illinois, University of Maryland, University of New Orleans, University of Southern Mississippi, University of Tennessee, and Washington State University.

Valuable Programming Tools for the Flag and Touch Football Administrator

The NIRSA Rules Book and Officials' Manual is an excellent start for the sports administrator placed in charge of a flag or touch football program at a college, university, military installation, high school, community recreation agency, correctional institution, or YMCA/YWCA. However, it is not enough. The NIRSA Football Rules Committee, with the enthusiastic support of the NIRSA Board of Directors, has developed several significant tools to aid in the administration of an excellent flag or touch football program.

1. "First and Twenty": A VHS tape covering flag and touch football team strategy and plays. Utilizing game footage from the National Invitational Flag Football Championships in New Orleans, the tape includes offensive and defensive strategy and sets, alignments and positions, special drills, and philosophy of the game.
2. NIRSA Clinicians' Kit: The perfect tool for the administrator, the Kit includes the NIRSA Flag Football Officials' Training DVD, a copy of this Rules Book and Officials' Manual, and a CD of over 300 up-to-date test questions for specialized exams, and a prototype training agenda which includes general information, entrance competencies, exit competencies, a rules presentation outline, rule coverage, human relations, teaching stations, and 6 different prototype clinic outlines.

Copies of the Rules, tapes, film, and Clinicians' Kit may be obtained by visiting the NIRSA Education Center's website at <http://nirsa.HumanKinetics.com>.

Over the years, some groups have written and published the game Rules. However, NIRSA: Leaders in Collegiate Recreation is the first organization dedicated to developing a total programming package for the administrator. Give us a try – you will enjoy our "Pursuit of Excellence."

Acknowledgments

The following individuals are acknowledged for their outstanding contributions to making the NIRSA Rules Book and Officials' Manual possible.

Department of Army – Europe, IMCOM-E Support and Officials
Department of the Navy, Management, officials and players
Jim Potter, Trinity University, past editor of the Officials' Manual
National, Regional, and State Flag Football Championships
Florida High School Athletic Association
Players, Officials, and Contributors

OFFICIAL NIRSA RULES BOOK AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR FLAG AND TOUCH FOOTBALL

The Corec, Men's, and Women's Flag & Touch Football Interpretations are integrated into the NIRSA National Rules. Specialized flag and Corec Rules have been printed utilizing **bold type**.

If there is a conflict between the Official Rules and the Rule Interpretations, the Official Rules take precedence.



Flag rules are identified by utilizing the illustrated flag belt.

An official's signal (S) refers to the Code of Official Football Signals 1-47 located on pages 102-103.

Each change or altered segment is identified in the rules by a shaded background.

The Rule Interpretations are dedicated to the hundreds of thousands of intramural football officials who have given so unselfishly to the great game of flag and touch football over the years. Their enthusiasm, insight, rules knowledge, courage, and sense of purpose have helped make this book possible.

Please call or email the Editor for any interpretations of Rules or play situations:

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CHANGES FOR 2015 AND 2016

The NIRSA Rules Book and Officials' Manual takes priority over materials listed below.

RULES BOOK

- 1-2-11** **Field Slope.** It is recommended there be a slope of 1/4" per foot from the center of the field to each sideline on a natural grass field.
- 1-4-3** **Flag Belt.** The flags shall be a minimum of 2" wide and 14" long when measured from edge of the belt.
- 1-4-3** **Flag Belt.** The flags should be of a contrasting color to the opponent's flags.
- 1-4-3** **Flag Belt.** NOTE: If the flags are not located on each hip and the tailbone, then the player must change to an appropriate size belt that meets the Rule.
- 1-5-1** **Elastic Bandage.** Players may use an elastic bandage no more than 2 turns thick in any given area.
- 3-2-2D** **Interrupted and Shortened Games.** Games interrupted because of events beyond control of the responsible administrative authority shall be continued from the point of interruption unless the opposing captains and/or head coaches and the Referee agree...
- 3-2-3** **Extension of Periods.** A period shall be extended by an untimed down (S1) if one of the following occurred during a down in which time expires.
- 3-3-4** **Fouls and Penalties.** NOTE: The goal line shall always be the zone line-to-gain in overtime, regardless of the number of overtimes played.
- 5-1-5** **Incorrect Down.** The Referee shall have the authority to rectify an error to correct a down until the series has ended.
- 6-1-3** **Formation and Snap.** Neither K nor R may enter the neutral zone until the ball is punted.
- 7-3-2** **Minimum Line Players.** The snapper is the only A player required to be on their scrimmage line (1st ball spotter) at the snap.
- 7-7-3** **Illegal Forward Pass – Corec Rule.** The first down of each half or overtime possession shall be "open". The first down of a new series following a team change of possession shall be "open".
- 7-10-2** **Offensive Pass Interference.** After the ball is snapped, and until the pass has been touched by any player, there shall be no offensive pass interference beyond A's scrimmage line.
- 7-10-3** **Defensive Pass Interference.** After the pass is thrown, and until the pass has been touched by any player, there shall be no defensive pass interference beyond A's scrimmage line.
- 8-3-1** **2 Minute Warning.** Prior to implementing the Mercy Rule, the Referee shall apply the Extension of Period Rule.
- 8-5-1** **Touchdown Values.** If a female player throws a legal forward pass and a touchdown is scored by any A player, prior to a change of team possession, the point value is 9.
- 9-1-1** **Noncontact Acts.** NOTE: Coaches may be a maximum of 2 steps on the field while the ball is dead to coach their players.

- 10-2-4 Loose Ball Play.** Kick Catching Interference Penalty Enforcement – 10 yards from the spot of the foul and a 1st down, or 10 yards from the previous spot and replay the down.
- 10-2-5 Running Play.** Some sentences in this Rule have been moved within the Rule so it is easier to understand. There are no Rule changes.
- 10-3 Special Enforcements.** Since this Section contains 11 Rules Article Headings they have been alphabetized for ease of reference.
- 10-3-2 Dead Ball Fouls.** Dead ball fouls are enforced separately and in order of occurrence:
- Where there are 10 yard dead ball fouls (or live ball fouls treated as dead ball fouls) committed by each team prior to penalty administration, each 10 yard foul will cancel a 10 yard foul on the other team. Any remaining 10 yard fouls will be enforced.
 - 5 yard dead ball fouls will be enforced separately and in the order of occurrence and would never cancel with a 10 yard foul.
- 10-3-11 Try.** Some sentences in this Rule have been moved within the Rule so it is easier to understand. There are no Rules changes.
- 11-2-1 Minimum Number of Games.** Whenever possible, 3 or 4 team pools are highly recommended.
- 11-2-5 NIRSA Transgender Athlete Participation Policy.** NOTE: Member schools are encouraged to adopt and use the NIRSA Transgender Athlete Participation Policy for their events (see www.nirsa.org/player-eligibility). This policy is mandatory for NIRSA Championship Series events.
- 4 on 4 Minimum Line Players.** The snapper is the only A player required to be on their scrimmage line.

OFFICIALS' MANUAL

- I-10 1st Downs.** When the ball becomes dead near the zone line-to-gain, sell the call by saying loudly “short, short” or “1st down, 1st down”.
- I-12 Game Pacing and Tempo.** The R shall mark the ball ready for play then answer any questions. Editor’s Comment: This sentence has been underlined to emphasize the importance of game tempo. Too often a team will complain about a call or no call and the game tempo stops. The R should mark the ball ready for play then answer the question. If the team wants to carry on the conversation they can use Rule 3-5-1D.
- I-14 Hurry-Up Offense.** Do not announce down and distance if A has started their cadence.
- II-1-2B R Preventive Officiating Responsibilities.** Move them backward if they are in the neutral zone. The R (2 Person) and L J (3/4 Person) will no longer state “line good” and drop his/her arm. (Same for III-1-2E.)

- IV-2-2B** **L J Responsibilities – Goal to Go.** Immediately after the snap move as quickly as possible to the goal line, 2 steps behind the pylon, when the ball is snapped on or inside the 10 yard line.
- IV-3-3E** **BJ Responsibilities After the Ball is Snapped.** Observe the catch and follow the runner up the field observing action ahead.

IF IN DOUBT*

The “If in Doubts” have been developed to provide guidance on the desired course of action when an official may be unsure. Generally, these guidelines recommend not calling a foul in questionable situations, allow play to continue instead of blowing the play dead, and give the team the benefit of more favorable field position when it is difficult to determine where the ball is to be spotted. Please take some time to learn and understand how to apply each of the “If in Doubts” in game situations when it becomes necessary. Their importance is stressed by being placed in the front of the NIRSA Rules Book.

1. If in doubt, continue the game. (Rule 1)
2. If in doubt, consider the safety of all paramount to the game. (Rule 1, 3)
3. If in doubt, it is a catch. (Rule 2)
4. If in doubt, it is not a foul. (Rule 2)
5. If in doubt, apply conserving/consuming time. (Rule 3)
6. If in doubt, a snap close to the ground remains live. (Rule 4)
7. If in doubt, the flag belt has been pulled. (Rule 4)
8. If in doubt, the ball is released. (Rule 4)
9. If in doubt, the out-of-bounds punt is “short” of the zone line-to-gain. (Rule 5)
10. If in doubt, the A player receiving the snap is 2 yards back. (Rule 7)
11. If in doubt, the pass is backward. (Rule 7)
12. If in doubt, the passer is behind the A scrimmage line. (Rule 7)
13. If in doubt, the pass is legal. (Rule 7)
14. If in doubt, it is a touchback. (Rule 8)
15. If in doubt, the out-of-bounds punt near the goal line is a touchback. (Rule 8)

*The Editor wishes to thank Dave Gaskins for his help developing the “If in Doubts.”

RULE 1. THE GAME, FIELD, PLAYERS, AND EQUIPMENT

SECTION 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1. The Game – Men, Women.

The game shall be played between 2 teams of 7 players each. Five players are required to start the game and avoid a forfeit. The game may be continued with less than 5 players as long as the team has a chance to win. NOTE: If in doubt, continue the game. *Penalty:* Illegal Participation, 10 yards (S28).

Article 2. The Game – Corec

The Corec game shall be played between 2 teams of 8 players, 4 men and 4 women. Teams with 7 players shall be 4 men and 3 women or 4 women and 3 men. Six players, 3 men and 3 women, 4 men and 2 women, or 4 women and 2 men, are required to start the game and avoid a forfeit. The game may be continued with less than 6 players as long as the team has a chance to win. NOTE: If in doubt, continue the game. *Penalty:* Illegal Participation, 10 yards (S28).

Article 3. Supervision.

The game shall be played under the supervision of 2 to 4 officials. The officials are: Referee, Line Judge, Back Judge, and Field Judge. It is recommended strongly that a minimum of 3 officials be used. Positions and responsibilities are found in the Officials' Manual.

Article 4. Captains.

Each coach or player coach shall designate to the Referee the captain(s). If more than 1 player is designated, a speaking captain must be selected to make all decisions.

Article 5. Persons Subject to the Rules.

Players, nonplayers, and spectators affiliated with the team are subject to the Rules of the game and shall be governed by decisions of officials assigned to the game.

Article 6. Referee's Authority.

The Referee shall have authority to rule promptly, and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the Rules. The Referee's decisions are final in all matters pertaining to the game.

Article 7. Official's Authority.

The officials shall assume authority for the contest 30 minutes prior to the scheduled game time, or as soon as they arrive. The official's jurisdiction extends through the Referee's declaration of the end of the 4th period or overtime.

SECTION 2. THE FIELD

Article 1. Safety Margin.

No hard and unyielding rigid fixtures (e.g., trees, poles, fences) shall be located within 5 yards of the side-lines or 10 yards of the end lines, unless covered with at least 1/2" of closed cell, slow recovery rubber or other material of the same minimum thickness and having similar physical properties. NOTE: If in doubt, consider the safety of all paramount to the game.

Article 2. Adjacent Fields.

When fields are located in close proximity, there shall be a minimum of 5 yards between "side by side" fields and 10 yards between "end on end" fields.

Article 3. Field Markings.

The width of the field shall be lined at 20 yard intervals from goal line to goal line. These zone markings may be changed according to field dimensions. All yard lines inside the boundaries shall stop 4" from each sideline. There shall be 2 hash marks. They shall run parallel with each sideline, located 15 yards "in" from each sideline. The 3 and 10 yard Try lines shall be 2 yards wide and 4" thick. Both 14 yard lines shall be marked with an "X" and shall have a height of 1 yard and a line thickness of 4". White is the recommended color for all field markings.

Article 4. Facility Limitations.

In case of facility limitations, distances of field length and width can be modified. However, end zone length must always be 10 yards. If the field length is modified, shorten all 4 zones equally so they are the same length. NOTE: When zones are shortened, the 3 and 10 yard Try lines remain the same. The "14 yard lines" must be located 6 yards from the nearest zone line.

Article 5. Goal Line.

The entire width of each goal line shall be a part of the end zone.

Article 6. Team Box.

On each side of the field a team box shall be designated for the players and nonplayers. This team box is located 2 yards off the sideline and between the 20 yard lines. When the playing area is modified, so shall the team box. If teams cannot agree on a sideline, the Referee shall conduct a coin toss. Both team boxes may be located on the same side of the field, provided each team box is marked between their respective 20 and 35 yard lines.

Article 7. End Zone Pylons.

Twelve soft, flexible pylons shall be placed at the inside corner of the intersections of the sideline with the goal lines and the end lines, and at the intersections of the end lines and hash marks extended. The 4 pylons located at the hash marks extended shall be positioned 3' beyond the end line.

Article 8. Sideline Zone Line-to-Gain Markers.

Four 20 yard and two 40 yard line markers, constructed of soft and pliable materials, shall be located 6' beyond the sideline.

Article 9. Field Numbers and Hash Marks.

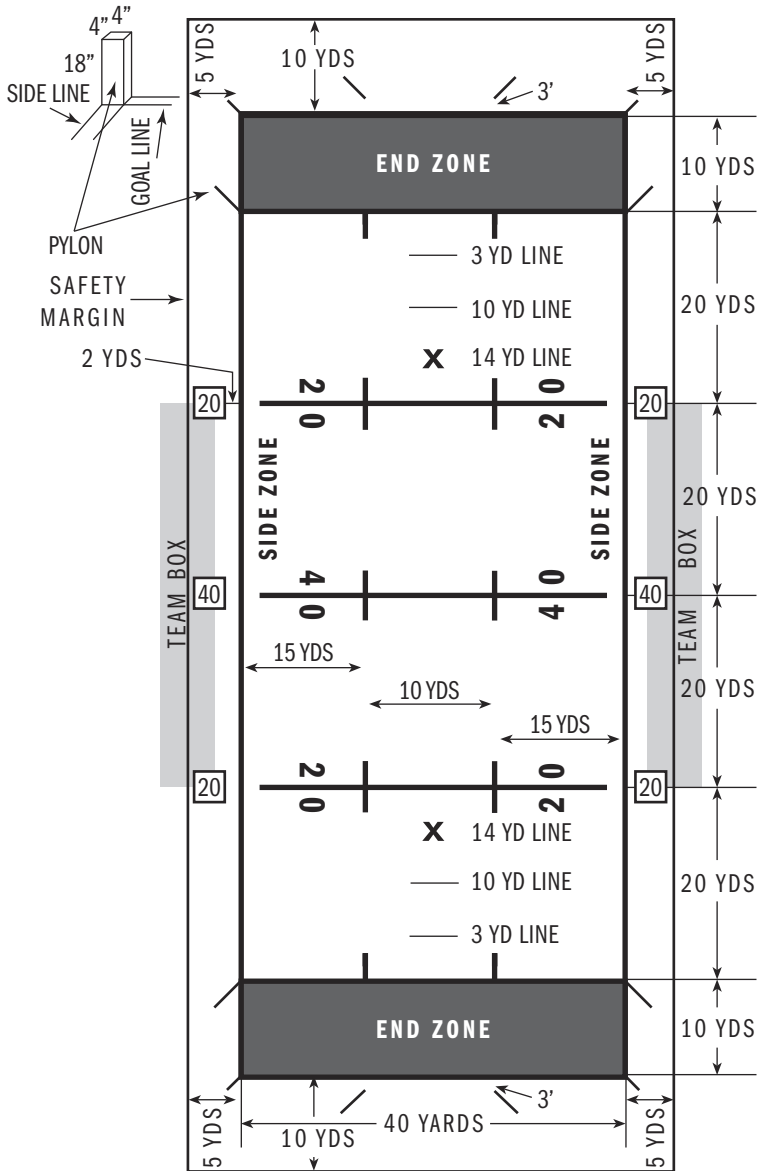
White field yard line numbers shall be 6' in height and 4' in width, with the tops of the numbers 5 yards from the sidelines, if used. Hash marks shall be 6' long and 4" wide, and intersect with the 20 and 40 yard lines. Additional hash marks, 3' long and 4" wide, shall touch the goal line and extend into the field of play.

Article 10. Field Orientation.

It is highly recommended that fields be laid out in a north/south orientation when new facilities are planned.

Article 11. Field Slope.

It is recommended there be a slope of 1/4" per foot from the center of the field to each sideline on a natural grass field.



TEAM BOX

SECTION 3. GAME EQUIPMENT

Article 1. The Ball.

The official ball shall be pebble-grained leather or rubber covered and meet the recommendations of size and shape for a regulation football. There are no requirements regarding ball pressure and markings. Men shall use the regular size ball only. The regular, intermediate, youth, or junior size football shall be used for Women's and Corec games. The Referee shall be the sole judge of any ball offered for play and may change the ball during play at his/her discretion. During the game, each team shall use a legal ball of its choice when in possession.

Article 2. Ball Spotters.

Two soft and pliable ball spotters shall be used. One, orange in color, shall mark the A scrimmage line. The 2nd, gold in color, shall mark the B scrimmage line. The ball spotters shall always be 1 yard apart.

Article 3. Down Box.

A down box shall be used to indicate the number of the down and placed at the zone line-to-gain. It shall be positioned 2 yards out-of-bounds and operated under the jurisdiction of the Line Judge for 3 and 4 Person Crews and the Referee for a 2 Person Crew. During the Try, the down box shall display the point value (1, 2, or 3) declared by A and be placed at the goal line.

SECTION 4. PLAYER EQUIPMENT - REQUIRED

Article 1. Jersey.

Players of opposing teams shall wear contrasting colored jerseys, without pockets, numbered on the front or rear. Players of the same team shall wear the same color or similar colored jerseys with different numbers. The visiting team is responsible for avoidance of similarity of colors. Jerseys shall be either:



- A. Long enough so they remain tucked in the pants/shorts during the entire down or
 - B. Short enough so there is a minimum of 4" from the bottom of the jersey to the player's waistline.
- The Referee shall use a fist to measure the distance between the waistline and the bottom of the jersey.



Article 2. Pants/Shorts.

Each player shall wear pants or shorts. They shall be a different color than the flags.



Article 3. Flag Belt.

Each player shall wear a 1 piece quick release belt, without any knots, at the waistline with 3 flags permanently attached, 1 flag on each side and 1 in the center of the back. The flags shall be a minimum of 2" wide and 14" long when measured from the edge of the belt. The flags should be of a contrasting color to the opponent's flags. The belt must have a spring loaded clip. Note: If the flags are not located on each hip and the tailbone, then the player must change to an appropriate size belt that meets the Rule. **Penalty:** Live Ball Foul. Failure to have the flag belt legally attached at the snap, 5 yards from the previous spot (S23).



PLAY. A-1 breaks the huddle not wearing a flag belt or the jersey is untucked as the 25 second count is running: (a) The Referee informs A-1 of the problem and as A-1 secures a flag belt or tucks in the jersey the 25 second count expires; or (b) the Referee points out the problem to A-1 who refuses to

acquire a flag belt or tuck in the jersey; (c) the Referee does not see A-1 without a flag belt as the ball is snapped and A-1 advances 25 yards before tagged by B-4; or (d) the Referee observes that A-1 or B-1 was not wearing a flag belt during the down. **RULING.** In (a), penalize A for delay of game. In (b), penalize A for unsportsmanlike conduct. In (c) and (d), the offended team can take the result of the play or penalize the offending team 5 yards from the previous spot for not wearing required equipment.

Article 4. Shoes.

Shoes shall be made of a canvas, leather, or synthetic material which covers the foot attached to a firm sole of leather, rubber, or composition material which may have cleats or be cleatless. Cleats are limited to studs or projections which do not exceed 1/2" in length and are made with nonabrasive rubber or rubber-type synthetic material which does not chip or develop a cutting edge. Rubber cleats with a tipped metal material are legal.

Article 5. Penalty.

Failure to wear required equipment in Articles 1-4. *Penalty:* Live Ball or Dead Ball Foul. 5 yards (S23).

SECTION 5. PLAYER EQUIPMENT – OPTIONAL

Article 1. Elastic Bandage.

Players may use an elastic bandage no more than 2 turns thick in any given area. It can be anchored at each end by tape not to exceed 2 turns.

Article 2. Gloves.

Players may wear gloves which must consist of a soft, pliable, and nonabrasive material.

Article 3. Headwear.

- Players may wear a knit or stocking cap. The cap will have no bill. It can have a knit ball on top.
- Players may wear a headband no wider than 2" and made of non-abrasive unadorned single-colored cloth, elastic, fiber, soft leather, or rubber. Rubber or cloth elastic bands may be used to control hair.
- Players may wear a soft rubber hat.

Article 4. Pads.

Players may wear soft, pliable pads on the leg, knee, and/or ankle. Soft and yielding padded compression shorts and shirts are legal apparel.

Article 5. Mouth and Tooth Protector.

It is strongly recommended that a mouth piece be worn by all players.

Article 6. Play Books.

- Players may carry a play book inside their clothing made of a yielding material only and must not be visible. If carried on the field, a player must keep the play book rather than throw it on the ground.
- Players may wear a soft, pliable wrist/forearm band that contains plays.

Article 7. Sunglasses.

Players may wear pliable and non-rigid sunglasses.

Article 8. Face Shield.

Players may wear a face shield molded to the face with no protrusions to protect against a facial injury.

SECTION 6. PLAYER EQUIPMENT – ILLEGAL

Article 1. Illegal Equipment.

A player wearing illegal equipment shall not be permitted to play. This applies to any equipment which, in the opinion of the Referee, is dangerous or confusing. Types of equipment or substances which shall always be declared illegal include:

- A. Headwear containing any hard, unyielding, stiff material, including billed hats, or items containing exposed knots. EXCEPTION: Face Shield.
- B. Jewelry.
- C. Pads or braces worn above the waist. Casts worn above or below the waist.
- D. Shoes with ceramic, screw-in, detachable cleats, or any projecting metal. EXCEPTION: Screw-in cleats are allowed if the screw is part of the cleat.
- E. Shirts or jerseys which do not remain tucked in. Any hood on a coat, sweatshirt, or shirt which does not remain tucked in. Tear-away jerseys or jerseys that have been altered in any manner which produces a knot-like protrusion or creates a tear-away jersey. Jerseys which have an arm opening more than 4" below the armpit. The Referee will use a fist to measure the distance of the jersey opening.
- F. Pants or shorts with any belt(s), belt loop(s), pocket(s), or exposed drawstring(s).
- G. Leg and knee braces made of hard, unyielding material, unless covered on both sides and all edges overlapped, and any other hard substance unless covered with at least 1/2" of closed cell, slow recovery rubber, or other material of similar thickness and physical properties.
- H. Any slippery or sticky foreign substance on any equipment or exposed part of the body.
- I. Equipment which includes computers or any electronic or mechanical devices for communication.
- J. Exposed metal on clothes or person. **This includes "O" or "D" rings used to secure flag belts.**
- K. Towels attached at the player's waist (flag only).**
- L. Flags that can be detached from the flag belt.**

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 10 yards (S27).

PLAY. A-10 enters the field wearing illegal player equipment: (a) the Referee sees it prior to the snap or (b) the Referee sees it either during or after the down. **RULING.** In (a), the Referee will inform A-10 to return to the team box to repair or replace the illegal equipment. In (b), the Referee will enforce an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty against A-10.

SECTION 7. PLAYER EQUIPMENT – MISSING OR ILLEGAL

When any required player equipment is missing or when illegal equipment is found on any incoming substitute or player, correction shall be made before participation. An official's time-out shall be declared to permit prompt repair of equipment which becomes illegal or defective through use.

SECTION 8. COACHES' FIELD EQUIPMENT

Article 1.

Local Area Network (LAN) phones and/or headsets may be used by coaches, other nonplayers, and players. However, players may use LAN phones and/or headsets only during authorized sideline conferences.

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 10 yards (S27).



RULE 2. DEFINITIONS OF PLAYING TERMS

SECTION 1. BALL – DEAD, LIVE, AND LOOSE

Article 1. Dead Ball.

A dead ball is a ball not in play. The ball is dead during the interval between downs.

Article 2. Live Ball.

A live ball is a ball in play. A ball becomes live when the ball is legally snapped and a down is in progress.

Article 3. Loose Ball.

A loose ball is a pass, fumble, or a kick. A loose ball that has not yet touched the ground is in flight. A grounded loose ball is one that has touched the ground. Any loose ball continues to be a loose ball until a player secures possession of it or until it becomes dead by Rule, whichever comes first.

Article 4. When the Ball is Ready for Play.

A dead ball is ready for play when the Referee sounds the whistle and signals “ready for play” (S1).

SECTION 2. BATTING

Article 1. Batting.

Batting is intentionally slapping or striking the ball with the hand or arm.

SECTION 3. CATCH, INTERCEPTION, SIMULTANEOUS CATCH, AND TOUCHING

Article 1. Catch.

A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball which is in flight, and first contacting the ground inbounds while maintaining possession of the ball.

- A. If 1 foot first lands inbounds and the receiver has possession and control of the ball, it is a catch or interception even though a subsequent step or fall takes the receiver out-of-bounds.
- B. A catch by any kneeling or prone inbounds player is a completion or interception.
- C. It is not a catch or interception if an airborne player's initial contact with the ground causes a loss of player possession and either the ball contacts the ground or the player is out-of-bounds prior to regaining player possession. NOTE: If in doubt, it is a catch.

Article 2. Interception.

An interception is the catch of an opponent's fumble or pass.

Article 3. Recovery.

A recovery is gaining possession of a live ball after it strikes the ground.

Article 4. Simultaneous Catch or Recovery.

A simultaneous catch or recovery is a catch or recovery in which there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing players who are inbounds.

Article 5. Touching.

Catching is always preceded by touching the ball; thus, if touching causes the ball to become dead, securing possession of the ball has no significance. Touching refers to any contact with the ball.

SECTION 4. DOWN AND BETWEEN DOWNS**Article 1.**

A down is a unit of the game which starts, after the ball is ready for play, with a legal snap and ends when the ball next becomes dead. Between downs is the interval during which the ball is dead.

SECTION 5. ENCROACHMENT**Article 1.**

Encroachment is a term to indicate a player is illegally in the neutral zone. An entering substitute is not considered to be a player for encroachment restrictions until he/she is on his/her team's side of the neutral zone.

SECTION 6. FIGHTING**Article 1.**

Fighting is any attempt by a player or nonplayer to strike or engage an opponent in a combative manner unrelated to football. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s), or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact.

SECTION 7. FOUL AND FLAGRANT FOUL**Article 1. Foul.**

A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed. NOTE: If in doubt, it is not a foul.

Article 2. Flagrant Foul.

A flagrant foul is so severe or extreme that it places an opponent in danger of serious injury and/or involves violations that are extremely or persistently vulgar or abusive conduct.

SECTION 8. FUMBLE**Article 1.**

A fumble is a loss of player possession other than by handing, passing, or punting the ball.

SECTION 9. GOAL LINE**Article 1.**

Each goal line is a vertical plane separating the end zone from the field of play. The plane of the goal line extends beyond the sideline.

SECTION 10. HANDING THE BALL**Article 1.**

Handing the ball is transferring player possession from 1 teammate to another without throwing or punting it.

SECTION 11. HUDDLE**Article 1.**

A huddle is 2 or more offensive players grouped together after the ball is ready for play and before assuming scrimmage formation prior to the snap.

SECTION 12. HURLING**Article 1.**

Hurling is an attempt by a player to jump with 1 or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent who is contacting the ground with no part of his/her body, except 1 or both feet.

SECTION 13. KICKS**Article 1. Kicker.**

The kicker is any player who legally punts. The kicker is a runner until he/she actually punts the ball.

Article 2. Legal and Illegal Kicks.

A legal kick is a punt by a player of the team in possession when such a kick is permitted by Rule. Any punt continues to be a punt until it is caught by a player or becomes dead. Kicking the ball in any other manner is illegal.

Article 3. Punt.

A punt is made by K under restrictions which prohibits either team from advancing beyond their scrimmage lines until the ball is punted. A player becomes a kicker when his/her knee, lower leg, or foot makes contact with the ball before it strikes the ground.

SECTION 14. LOSS OF A DOWN**Article 1.**

“Loss of a down” means “loss of the right to repeat the down.”

SECTION 15. MUFF**Article 1.**

A muff is an unsuccessful attempt to catch a ball, the ball being touched in the attempt.

SECTION 16. NEUTRAL ZONE

Article 1.

The neutral zone is from the forward point of the football 1 yard to the B scrimmage line and extended to each sideline. It is established when the ball is marked ready for play.

SECTION 17. PASSER

Article 1.

The passer is the player who has thrown a legal forward pass. He/she remains the passer while the ball is in flight or until he/she moves to participate in the play.

SECTION 18. PASSES

Article 1. Passing.

Passing the ball is throwing it. In a pass, the ball travels in flight. A pass continues to be a pass until caught, intercepted, or the ball becomes dead. The initial direction determines whether a pass is forward or backward.

Article 2. Forward and Backward Pass.

A forward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction toward the opponent's end line. A backward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction parallel with or toward the passer's end line. A pass continues to be a pass until it is caught or strikes the ground. A backward pass or fumble that hits the ground is ruled dead at that spot.

SECTION 19. PENALTY

Article 1.

A penalty is a result imposed by Rule against a team or team member that has committed a foul.

SECTION 20. POSSESSION

Article 1.

A ball in player possession is a live ball held or controlled by a player after it has been handed or snapped to him/her, or after he/she caught or recovered it. A ball in team possession is a live ball that is in player possession or one that is loose following loss of such player possession. A live ball is always in possession of a team. A change of possession occurs when the opponent gains player possession during the down.


SECTION 21. REMOVING THE FLAG BELT



Article 1. Flag Belt Removal.

When the flag belt is clearly taken from the runner in possession of the ball, the ball is declared dead and the down shall end. If a flag belt inadvertently falls to the ground, a 1 hand tag between the shoulders and knees constitutes capture. A player may leave his/her feet to remove the flag belt.

Article 2. Contact.

 In an attempt to remove the flag belt from a runner, an opponent may contact the body, but not the face, neck, or any part of the head of the runner with their hands. An opponent may not hold, push, or knock the runner down in an attempt to remove the flag belt.

SECTION 22. SCREEN BLOCKING**Article 1.**

Screen blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without using any part of the body to initiate contact.

SECTION 23. SCRIMMAGE**Article 1. Scrimmage Line.**

The scrimmage line for A is the yard line and its vertical plane which passes through the forward point of the ball. The scrimmage line for B is the yard line and its vertical plane which passes 1 yard from the point of the ball nearest its own goal line. B's scrimmage line may extend into their end zone.

SECTION 24. SHIFT**Article 1.**

A shift is the action of 1 or more offensive players who, after a huddle or after taking set positions, move to a new set position before the ensuing snap.

SECTION 25. TAGGING**Article 1.**

Tagging is placing 1 hand anywhere between the shoulders and knees, including the hand and arm, of an opponent with the ball. The tagger may leave his/her feet to make the tag. Pushing, striking, slapping, and holding are not permitted. If the player trips the runner in his/her attempt to make a diving tag, it is a foul.

SECTION 26. PLAYER AND TEAM DESIGNATIONS**Article 1. A and B.**

A is the team which snaps the ball. The opponent of A is B. A player of A is A-1 and teammates are A-2 and A-3. Other abbreviations are B-1 for a player of B, K-1 for a player of the kickers, and R-1 for a receiver.

Article 2. Disqualified Player.

A disqualified player is one who becomes ineligible and is removed from further participation in the game.

Article 3. Offensive and Defensive Team.

The offensive team is the team in possession or the team to which the ball belongs. The defensive team is the opposing team.

Article 4. Player and Nonplayer.

A player is any one of the participants in the game. A nonplayer is a coach, trainer, other attendant, a substitute, or a replaced player who does not participate by touching the ball, hindering an opponent, or influencing the play.

Article 5. Runner.

The runner is the player in possession of a live ball or simulating possession of a live ball. Once a player catches or intercepts a pass, he/she becomes a runner.

Article 6. Snapper.

The snapper is the player who snaps the ball. He/she is a line player.

Article 7. Substitute.

A substitute is a team member who may replace a player.

RULE 3. PERIODS, TIME FACTORS, AND SUBSTITUTIONS

SECTION 1. START OF EACH HALF

Article 1. Coin Toss.

Three minutes before the start of the game the Referee shall instruct the visiting captain to give a “heads” or “tails” choice before the coin toss. The Referee will then toss and catch the coin in the presence of the opposing captains. All officials shall be present for the coin toss.

The captain winning the toss shall have a choice of options for the 1st half or shall defer (S10) his/her option to the 2nd half. The options for each half shall be:

- A. To choose whether his/her team will start on offense or defense.
- B. To choose the goal his/her team will defend. The captain, not having the 1st choice of options for a half, shall exercise the remaining option.

Article 2. Change Periods.

Between the 1st and 2nd and between the 3rd and 4th periods, the teams shall change goals. Team possession, number of the next down, and the zone line-to-gain remain unchanged.

Article 3. Forfeit Time.

Game time is forfeit time.

Article 4. Start 1st and 3rd Periods.

Unless moved by penalty or field dimensions have been shortened, the ball shall be snapped on the 14 yard line to start the 1st and 3rd periods.

SECTION 2. GAME TIME

Article 1. Playing Time and Intermissions.

Playing time shall be 48 minutes, divided into 4 periods of 12 minutes each. The intermission between the 2nd and 3rd periods shall be 5 minutes. When overtime is used, there will be a 3 minute intermission. NOTE: Timing rules may be modified due to institutional program needs.

Article 2. Interrupted and Shortened Games.

- A. When thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, suspend play immediately. Wait at least 30 minutes prior to resuming play. If subsequent thunder is heard or lightning is seen after the beginning of the 30 minute count, reset the clock and another 30 minute count will begin. NOTE: If in doubt, consider the safety of all paramount to the game.
- B. When weather conditions are construed to be hazardous to life or limb of the participants, the crew of officials is authorized to delay or suspend the game.
- C. By mutual agreement of the opposing captains or head coaches and the Referee, any remaining period may be shortened or the game terminated at any time.
- D. Games interrupted because of events beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority shall be continued from the point of interruption, unless the opposing captains and/or head coaches and the Referee agree to terminate the game with the existing score, or there are institutional or Championship Tournament Rules (Rule 11) which apply.

Article 3. Extension of Periods.

A period shall be extended by an untimed down (S1), if one of the following occurred during a down in which time expires:

- A. There was a foul (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer fouls, fouls for which enforcement by Rule result in a safety, or fouls which specify loss of down) by either team and the penalty is accepted. For loss of down fouls, any score by the team which fouled is cancelled.
- B. There was a double foul.
- C. There was an inadvertent whistle.
- D. If a touchdown was scored, the Try is attempted unless the touchdown is scored during the last down of the 4th period and the point(s) would not affect the outcome of the game or playoff qualifying.

If (A), (B), or (C) occurs during the untimed down (S1), the procedure is repeated. NOTE: The period shall not be extended further when the defense fouls during a successful Try and the offended team accepts the results of the play with enforcement of the penalty from the succeeding spot.

Article 4. Game Timer.

It is recommended that playing time be kept on a stop watch operated by the Back Judge.

Article 5. First 22 Minutes of Each Half.

The clock shall start on the snap. It will run continuously for the first 22 minutes of each half unless it is stopped for a:

- A. Team time-out – starts on the snap.
- B. Referee's time-out – starts on the ready for play.
- C. End of the 1st or 3rd period – starts on the snap.

Article 6. 2 Minute Warning.

Approximately 2 minutes before the end of the 2nd and 4th periods, the Referee shall stop the clock and inform both captains of the playing time remaining in that period. The clock starts on the snap. The Back Judge will announce to the captains the remaining time and status of the clock after every play during the final 2 minutes of the 2nd and 4th periods.

Article 7. Last 2 Minutes.

During the final 2 minutes of the 2nd and 4th periods the clock will stop for a:

- A. Incomplete legal or incomplete illegal forward pass – starts on the snap.
- B. Out-of-bounds – starts on the snap.
- C. Safety – starts on the snap.
- D. Team time-out – starts on the snap.
- E. First down – dependent on the previous play.
- F. Touchdown – starts on the snap (after the Try).
- G. Penalty and administration – dependent on the previous play (EXCEPTION: Delay of game foul is accepted – starts on the snap).
- H. Referee's time-out – starts at his/her discretion.
- I. Touchback – starts on the snap.

- J. A is awarded a new series – dependent on the previous play.
- K. B is awarded a new series – starts on the snap.
- L. Either team is awarded a new series following a legal punt – starts on the snap.
- M. Team attempting to conserve time illegally (includes intentional grounding and a backward pass thrown intentionally out of bounds) – starts on the ready.
- N. Team attempting to consume time illegally – starts on the snap.
- O. Inadvertent whistle – starts on the ready.

PLAY. Inside the final 2 minutes of the 2nd or 4th periods, A-1: (a) advances the ball across the zone line-to-gain and is deflagged inbounds; or (b) advances the ball across the zone line-to-gain, runs 5 more yards, and flag guards before stepping out-of-bounds. **RULING.** In (a), the clock stops for the 1st down and will start when the Referee marks the ball ready for play. In (b), the clock stops for the player stepping out-of-bounds and will start on the snap, regardless of whether or not the penalty is accepted.

Article 8. Correct Timing Errors.

The Referee shall have authority to correct obvious timing errors if discovery is prior to the 2nd live ball following the error unless the period has officially ended.

Article 9. Ending a Period.

Following delay to ensure:

- A. No foul has occurred.
- B. No obvious timing error has occurred.
- C. No request for a coach-Referee conference has occurred.
- D. No other irregularity has occurred.

The Referee shall hold the ball in 1 hand overhead (S14) to indicate the period has officially ended.

SECTION 3. TIE GAME

Article 1. Mandatory Meeting.

If a game ends with a tie score, the officials shall bring all players and coaches of both teams to the center of the field. They shall discuss the tie breaker procedures and answer all questions prior to the coin toss. After this meeting, the captains will stay while the remaining players and coaches return to their respective team box.

Article 2. Coin Toss.

A coin will be tossed by the Referee to determine the options as in the start of the game. The visiting captain shall call the toss. There will be only 1 coin flip during the overtime. If additional overtime periods are played, captains will alternate choices. The winner of the toss shall be given options of offense, defense, or direction. The loser of the toss shall make a choice of the remaining options. All overtime periods are played toward the same goal line.

Article 3. Tie Breaker.

Unless moved by penalty, each team shall start 1st and goal from the B (see 2-26-1) 10 yard line. The object will be to score a touchdown. An overtime period consists of a series of 4 downs by each team. If the score

is still tied after 1 period, play will proceed to a 2nd period or as many as are needed to determine a winner. If the 1st team which is awarded the ball scores, the opponent will still have a chance to win the game. Unless moved by penalty, they will start 1st and goal from the B 10 yard line. A Try will be attempted and scored as indicated in Rule 8. When B secures possession, the ball is dead and the series is over. The ball will be placed at the B 10 yard line, and the original defense will begin their series of 4 downs, if available. Each team is entitled to 1 time-out only, during the entire overtime.

Article 4. Fouls and Penalties.

They are administered similar to the regular game. A shall be awarded a new series of 4 downs when an automatic 1st down foul is accepted. Dead ball fouls following a touchdown are penalized on the Try. Dead ball fouls following a successful Try will be penalized from the succeeding spot, the B 10 yard line, if accepted. NOTE: The goal line shall **always** be zone line-to-gain in overtime, regardless of the number of overtimes played.

SECTION 4. TIME-OUTS

Article 1. How Charged.

The Referee shall declare a time-out when he/she suspends play for any reason. Each time-out shall be charged either to the Referee or 1 of the teams.

Article 2. Official's Time-Out.

The Referee shall declare an official's time-out when an excess time-out is allowed for an injured player. The Referee may declare an official's time-out for any contingency not covered elsewhere by the Rules. If a time-out is for repair or replacement of player equipment which becomes illegal through play and is considered dangerous to other players, the Referee shall charge himself/herself.

Article 3. Charged Time-Outs.

Each team is entitled to 3 charged time-outs during each half. Successive charged time-outs may be granted to each team during a dead ball period. If the ball is dead and a team has not exhausted its charged time-outs, the Referee shall allow a time-out and charge that team or complete a coach-Referee conference. NOTE: Number of time-outs may be modified due to institutional program needs.

Article 4. Length of Time-Outs.

A charged time-out requested by any player, player coach, or head coach which is legally granted shall be 1 minute and can be shortened if both teams are ready. Other time-outs may be longer only if the Referee deems it necessary.

Article 5. Coach-Referee Conference.

When a team requests a charged time-out for a misapplication or misinterpretation of a Rule, the Referee and 1 other official will confer with the captain, player coach, or head coach. The request must be made prior to the time the ball becomes live following the play to be reviewed unless the half has officially ended. If the Referee changes his/her ruling, it is an official's time-out. If the ruling is not changed, it is a charged time-out. If the team has used its available time-outs, a delay of game penalty will be assessed.

Article 6. Notification.

The Referee shall notify both teams 5 seconds before a charged time-out expires. When 3 time-outs have been charged to a team in a half, the Referee shall notify both captains, both head coaches, and all officials. NOTE: The Referee will communicate the number of team time-outs remaining for each team to the A and B captains and all officials after each charged time-out is taken.

Article 7. Authorized Conferences.

There are 2 types of authorized conferences permitted during charged time-outs:

- A. Players and nonplayers may meet directly in front of the team box within 5 yards of the sideline; or
- B. One coach or player coach may enter his/her team's huddle between the hash marks to confer with no more than 7 players (**Corec Rule—8 players**).

Article 8. Injured Player.

An injured or apparently injured player who is discovered by an official while the ball is dead and the clock is stopped, shall be replaced for at least 1 down unless the halftime or overtime intermission occurs. A player who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has any amount of blood on his/her uniform or on the player shall be considered an injured player.

Article 9. Concussion.

Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional.

SECTION 5. DELAYS**Article 1. Delay of Game.**

The ball must be put in play promptly and legally. Any action or inaction by either team which tends to prevent this is delay of game. This includes:

- A. Failure to snap within 25 seconds after the ball is declared ready for play.
- B. Putting the ball in play before it is declared ready for play.
- C. Deliberately advancing the ball after it is declared dead.
- D. Coach-Referee Conference after all permissible charged time-outs for the coach's team have been used, and during which the Referee is requested to reconsider the application of a Rule and no change results.

Penalty: Dead Ball Foul, Delay of Game, 5 yards from the succeeding spot (S7 and S21).

SECTION 6. CONSERVING OR CONSUMING TIME

Article 1. Illegally Conserving or Consuming Time.

When a team attempts to conserve or consume time illegally, the Referee shall order the clock started or stopped. NOTE: If in doubt, apply conserving/consuming time.

PLAY. As the game clock is running near the end of a period, A stalls and allows the 25 second count to expire. **RULING.** Delay of game penalty. The Referee shall order the game clock started on the next snap.

PLAY. A, losing, is deflagged with 10 seconds left in the game. They line up quickly and snap the ball prior to the Referee marking it ready for play. There are 2 seconds on the clock. **RULING.** Delay of game penalty. The Referee will start the game clock on the ready as A is attempting to conserve time. Prior to sounding the whistle, the Referee will inform the A captain or head coach that the game clock will start on the ready.

PLAY. During the 4th period, A leads B 14-12 with the game clock running. A-3 false starts with 50 seconds remaining on the game clock. **RULING.** Enforce false start, if accepted. The Referee will order the game clock started on the snap due to A attempting to consume time.

SECTION 7. SUBSTITUTIONS

Article 1. Eligible Substitutions.

Between downs any number of eligible substitutes may replace players provided the substitution is completed by having the replaced players off the field before the ball is snapped. An incoming substitute must enter the field directly from his/her team area. A replaced player must leave the field immediately at the sideline nearest his/her team area prior to the ball being snapped. An entering substitute shall be on his/her team's side of the neutral zone when the ball is snapped. *Penalty:* Illegal Substitution, 5 yards (S22). If it is a dead ball or nonplayer foul, 5 yards from the succeeding spot (S7 and S22).

PLAY. A has 8 players on the field. A-8 realizes this and runs toward his end line to get off the field: (a) he steps over the end line prior to the snap; or (b) he steps over the end line after the ball is snapped.

RULING. Illegal substitution. In (a), dead ball foul and (b), live ball foul.

Article 2. Legal Substitutions.

During the same dead ball interval, no substitute shall become a player and then withdraw, and no player shall withdraw and then re-enter as a substitute unless a penalty is accepted, a dead ball foul occurs, there is a charged time-out, or a period ends. *Penalty:* Illegal Substitution, Dead Ball Foul, 5 yards from the succeeding spot (S7 and S22).

RULE 4. BALL IN PLAY, DEAD BALL, AND OUT-OF-BOUNDS**SECTION 1. BALL IN PLAY – DEAD BALL****Article 1. Dead Ball Becomes Live.**

A dead ball, after having been declared ready for play, becomes a live ball when it is snapped legally.

Article 2. Ball Declared Dead.

A live ball becomes dead and an official shall sound his/her whistle or declare it dead when:

- A. It goes out-of-bounds.
- B. Any part of the runner other than a hand(s) or foot (feet) touches the ground.

PLAY. QB A-1 rolls out and slips, but regains his/her balance as the ball in contact with his/her hand touches the ground. **RULING.** Play continues as a ball in possession is considered part of the hand.

- C. A touchdown, touchback, safety, or successful Try is made.
- D. The ball strikes the ground following 1st touching by K.
- E. K catches a punt which is beyond the neutral zone; when an untouched punt comes to rest on the ground and no player attempts to secure it.
- F. A forward pass strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players.
- G. A backward pass or fumble by a player strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players. A ball snapped, which hits the ground before or after getting to the intended receiver, is dead at the spot where it hits the ground. NOTE: If in doubt, a snap close to the ground remains live.
- H. A forward pass is legally completed or a loose ball is caught by a player on, above, or behind the opponent's goal line.
- I. **A runner has a flag belt removed legally by an opponent. A flag belt is removed when the clip is detached from the belt, the belt is torn into more than 1 piece, or the flag is torn off the belt (flag only). NOTE: If in doubt, the flag belt has been pulled.**
- J. **A runner is legally tagged (flag only).**
- K. A runner is legally tagged with 1 hand between the shoulders and knees, including the hand and arm (touch only).

PLAY. B-2 deflags/tags A-4 after the passed ball is touched by A-4 and: (a) the ball is muffed then caught by A-4; or (b) the ball is muffed then intercepted by B-2; or (c) the ball is muffed then touched by B-2 and finally caught by A-4. **RULING.** In (a), (b), and (c), the ball is live and reverts to a 1 hand tag in (a) and (c). The ball becomes dead when the runner is tagged/deflagged legally.

- L. A passer is deflagged/tagged prior to releasing the ball. NOTE: If in doubt, the ball is released.
- M. A muff of a punt strikes the ground.
- N. K's punt breaks the plane of R's goal line.
- O. B secures possession during a Try or overtime.

- P. An official sounds his/her whistle inadvertently during a down or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, when:
1. The ball is in player possession – the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where declared dead or replay the down.
 2. The ball is loose from a fumble, backward pass, illegal kick, or illegal forward pass – the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.
 3. During a legal forward pass or a punt – the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down replayed.

If a foul occurs during any of the above downs, an accepted penalty shall be administered as in any other play situation. When the foul is accepted, disregard the inadvertent whistle. NOTE: There is no time added to the game clock during a down with an inadvertent whistle.

SECTION 2. INBOUNDS SPOT

Article 1. Placement of Dead Ball.

When the ball becomes dead between the hash marks, play is resumed at the dead ball spot. If the ball becomes dead in a side zone, place the ball at the nearest hash mark at the corresponding yard line.

Article 2. Anywhere Between the Hash Marks.

Before the ready for play signal, A may designate the spot from which the ball is put in play anywhere between the hash marks: for the start of each half; for a Try; following a touchback, safety, Try, and awarded catch after a punt; for the start of each series in overtime.

SECTION 3. OUT-OF-BOUNDS

Article 1. Player Out-of-Bounds.

A player or other person is out-of-bounds when any part of the person is touching anything, other than another player or official, who is on or outside the sideline or end line.

Article 2. Player in Possession Out-of-Bounds.

A ball in player possession is out-of-bounds when the runner or the ball touches anything, other than another player or official, which is on or outside the sideline or end line.

Article 3. Loose Ball Out-of-Bounds.

A loose ball is out-of-bounds when it touches anything, including a player or official, who is out-of-bounds.

RULE 5. SERIES OF DOWNS, NUMBER OF DOWN, AND TEAM POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY

SECTION 1. A SERIES – HOW STARTED, HOW BROKEN, RENEWED

Article 1. A Down Is a Unit.

A down is a unit of the game which starts with a legal snap and ends when the ball next becomes dead. Between downs is any period when the ball is dead.

Article 2. Series of Downs.

A shall have 4 consecutive downs to advance to the next zone. Any down may be repeated or lost if provided by the Rules.

Article 3. Zone Line-to-Gain.

The zone line-to-gain in any series shall be the zone in advance of the ball, unless distance has been lost due to penalty or failure to gain. In such case, the original zone in advance of the ball at the beginning of the series of downs is the zone line-to-gain. The most forward point of the ball, when declared dead between the goal lines, shall be the determining factor.

Article 4. Awarding a New Series.

A new series of downs shall be awarded when a team moves the ball into the next zone on a play free from penalty; or a penalty against the opponents moves the ball into the next zone; or an accepted penalty against the opponents involves an automatic 1st down; or after enforcement of a penalty against A, the ball is in advance of the zone line-to-gain; or either team has obtained legal possession of a ball as a result of a penalty, punt, touchback, pass interception, or failure to gain the zone in advance of the ball.

NOTE: If in doubt, the out-of-bounds punt is "short" of the zone line-to-gain.

Article 5. Incorrect Down.

Until a new series is awarded, the Referee shall have authority to correct an error in the number of downs.

SECTION 2. DOWN AND POSSESSION AFTER A PENALTY

Article 1. Penalty Resulting in a 1st Down.

After a penalty which leaves the ball in possession of a team beyond its zone line-to-gain, or when a penalty stipulates a 1st down, the down and distance established by that penalty shall be 1st down with next zone line-to-gain.

PLAY. Fourth and 5 from A's 15 yard line. A-1 throws an illegal forward pass beyond the A scrimmage line: (a) at A's 23 yard line and the ball hits the ground. (b) at A's 26 yard line and the ball hits the ground.

RULING. In (a), B's ball on A's 18 yard line, 1st down and goal to go. Since the 5 yard penalty put A 2 yards short of the zone line-to-gain on 4th down, the loss of down awards the ball to B. In (b), A is penalized 5 yards and loss of down which puts the ball on the 21 yard line, 1st down and 19. Even though an illegal forward pass carries a loss of down, since the 5 yard penalty enforcement places the ball beyond the 20 yard line, it is 1st down for A.

Article 2. Foul Before Change of Team Possession.

Following a distance penalty between the goal lines which occurs during a down and before any change of team possession during that down, the ball belongs to A. The down shall be repeated unless the penalty also involves loss of a down, or leaves the ball on or beyond the zone line-to-gain. If the penalty involves loss of a down, the down shall count as 1 of the 4 in that series.

Article 3. Foul After Change of Team Possession.

Following a distance penalty for a foul committed after team possession has changed during that down, the ball belongs to the team in possession when the foul occurred. The down and distance established by that penalty shall be 1st down with zone line-to-gain.

PLAY. B-4 intercepts a pass by A-1 and returns it to the A 25 yard line. During the run by B-4, B-2 makes illegal contact with A-6 at the A 29 yard line. **RULING.** B is penalized 10 yards utilizing the All-But-One Principle from the A 29 yard line – the spot of the foul. It is B's ball, 1st down and 19. B obtained the ball with “clean hands.”

Article 4. Penalty Declined.

If a penalty is declined, the number of the next down shall be whatever it would have been if that foul had not occurred.

Article 5. Rule Decisions Final.

A Rules decision may not be changed after the ball is next legally snapped.

RULE 6. KICKING THE BALL

SECTION 1. PUNT

Article 1. Legal Punt.

A legal punt is a kick made in accordance with the Rules. Quick punts are illegal. *Penalty:* Illegal Kick, 10 yards (S31).

Article 2. Punt.

Prior to making the ball ready for play on 4th down, the Referee must ask the A captain if he/she wants to punt. The Referee must announce this decision to all A and B players and all officials (S43). The A captain may declare a punt on any down. After such announcement, the ball must be punted. EXCEPTION: If A. an A or B time-out is called, B. the period ends, or C. a foul occurs anytime prior to or during this down after the A captain's decision which results in the kicking team having the right to repeat the down again, the Referee must ask the A captain whether or not he/she wants to punt and communicate this decision to the B captain (S43).

PLAY. 4th and 22. The Referee asks the A captain if he/she wants to punt or "go for it." The A captain delays his/her decision. **RULING.** The Referee can enforce "trying to consume time" and stop the game clock, if he/she thinks the A captain is using delaying tactics.

Article 3. Formation and Snap.

Neither K nor R may enter the neutral zone until the ball is punted. *Penalty:* Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot (S19). NOTE: Rules 7-1, 7-2, and 7-3 apply prior to and during the snap only.

Article 4. Punting the Ball.

After receiving the snap, the kicker must punt the ball immediately in a continuous motion. *Penalty:* Illegal Procedure, 5 yards (S19).

PLAY. 4th and 15. K announces a punt. There are 2 minutes remaining in the 1st half when the ball is snapped. K-2 snaps the ball to K-3 who holds the ball for 6 or 7 seconds, then punts it out-of-bounds. Approximately 15 seconds runs off the clock. **RULING.** The Referee will enforce "trying to consume time." Penalize K 5 yards for illegal procedure from the previous spot. Reset the game clock to 2 minutes and start the clock on the snap.

Article 5. After Being Punted.

Once the ball is punted, any R player may block the kick. If the blocked punt hits the ground, it is dead at that spot. If the punt is blocked by any R player behind K's scrimmage line and then caught by any K player behind K's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange), K may run and/or throw a pass. R may advance the punt anywhere in the field of play. A K player cannot punt the ball to himself/herself or any other K player. K may punt the ball once only per down. *Penalty:* Illegal Kicking, 10 yards (S31).

Article 6. Punt Crosses K's Scrimmage Line.

When a punt, which has crossed K's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange), touches a player from either team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead and belongs to R. If it hits an R player and then is caught

in the air, it can be advanced by R. If caught by K beyond R's scrimmage line, the ball is dead, belongs to K, and a new series begins for K.

PLAY. R-1, attempting to catch a punt, muffs the ball. K-3 catches the ball before it hits the ground and runs for a touchdown. **RULING.** K's ball at the spot where the ball was caught, 1st down and zone line-to-gain. During a punt, K cannot advance a muff by R. However, K can advance an airborne fumble by R because the punt has ended with possession.

Article 7. 1st Touching.

If any K player touches a punt after it crosses K's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange) and before it is touched there by any R player, it is referred to as "1st touching" (S16). R may take the ball at that spot or may choose to have the ball put in play as determined by the action which follows 1st touching. The right of R to take the ball at the spot of 1st touching by K is cancelled if R touches the punt and thereafter during the down commits a foul or if the penalty is accepted for any foul committed during the down.

Article 8. Punt Out-of-Bounds Between the Goal Lines or at Rest.

If a punt goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines or comes to rest inbounds untouched and no player attempts to secure it, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team at that spot.

Article 9. Punt Behind the Goal Line.

When a punt breaks the plane of R's goal line, it is a touchback unless R chooses the spot of 1st touching by K.

SECTION 2. KICK CATCHING INTERFERENCE

Article 1. Interference.

While any punt is in flight beyond K's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange), K shall not touch the ball or R, nor obstruct R's path to the ball, unless the punt has been touched by R. K may catch, touch, muff, or bat a punt in flight beyond K's scrimmage line if no R player is in position to catch the ball. *Penalty:* Kick Catching Interference, 10 yards (S33).

PLAY. R-1, attempting to catch a punt, touches the ball which is then caught by K-1 before striking the ground. **RULING.** Not interference. Protection against kick catching interference ceases when any R player touches the ball. It is dead where caught and belongs to K, 1st down and zone line-to-gain.

PLAY. A punt is in flight and (a) K-3 is in the path of R-2's attempt to catch the ball, or (b) K-4 tags or deflags R-2 before he/she touches the ball. **RULING.** In (a) and (b), Kick catching interference.

PLAY. A punt is in flight and K-1 touches the ball. (a) R-1 is in position to catch the kick. (b) No receiver is in position to catch the kick. **RULING.** (a) Kick catching interference. (b) There is no kick catching interference since no receiver was in a position to catch the kick.

SECTION 3. SIGNALS

Article 1. Signal.

Players shall ignore any signals given by K or R. The ball remains live.

RULE 7. SNAPPING, HANDING, AND PASSING THE BALL

SECTION 1. THE SCRIMMAGE

Article 1. The Start.

All plays must be started by a legal snap next to the orange ball spotter, which is on or between the hash marks. The ball may be moved with approval by the Referee due to poor field conditions.

Article 2. Ball Responsibility.

A players are responsible for retrieving the ball after a down. The snapper will bring the ball from the huddle to the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange). A small towel may be placed under the ball, regardless of weather or field conditions.

Article 3. Stances.

Players may use a 2, 3, or 4 point stance.

SECTION 2. PRIOR TO THE SNAP

Article 1. Encroachment.

Following the ready for play and until the snap, no B player may encroach, touch the ball, nor may any player contact opponents or interfere with them in any other way. This includes standing in the neutral zone to give defensive signals or shifting through the zone. After the snapper has placed his/her hand(s) on the ball, it is encroachment for any player to break the scrimmage line plane, except for the snapper's right to be over the ball. *Penalty:* Dead Ball Foul, Encroachment, 5 yards from the succeeding spot (S7 and S18). During the interval between downs when 2 or more encroachment fouls are committed by B, the penalty will be 10 yards for the subsequent encroachment fouls.

PLAY. After the ball is marked ready for play by the Referee, B-4 charges into the neutral zone beyond B's scrimmage line (2nd ball spotter-gold), to give A a 1st down. **RULING.** Dead ball foul for encroachment, 5 yards. The penalty is declined by A. B is informed by the Referee that if this foul occurs again during the same dead ball interval, a 10 yard penalty will be enforced, if accepted.

Article 2. False Start.

No A player shall make a false start. A false start includes simulating a charge or start of a play. An infraction of this Rule may be penalized whether or not the ball is snapped and the penalty for any resultant encroachment shall be cancelled. *Penalty:* Dead Ball Foul, False Start, 5 yards from the succeeding spot (S7 and S19).

Article 3. Snap.

The snapper, after assuming position for the snap at the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange) and adjusting the ball, may neither move nor change the position of the ball in a manner simulating the beginning of a play until it is snapped. An infraction of this provision may be penalized, whether or not the ball is snapped, and the penalty for any resultant encroachment foul by an opponent shall be cancelled. When over the ball, the snapper shall have his/her feet behind his/her scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange). The snapper shall pass the ball back from its position on the ground/towel/orange ball spotter with a quick and continuous motion of the hand(s). The ball shall leave the hand(s) in this motion. There is no Rule restriction regarding placement of the long axis of the ball at right angles to the A scrimmage line. NOTE: The snapper

may have one or both knees on the ground during the snap. *Penalty:* Dead Ball Foul, Illegal Snap, 5 yards from the succeeding spot (S7 and S19).

SECTION 3. POSITION AND ACTION DURING THE SNAP

Article 1. Legal Position.

Anytime on or after the ball is marked ready for play, each A player must momentarily be at least 5 yards inbounds before the snap. **NOTE:** If a B player covers an A player positioned within 5 yards of the sideline, it is not a foul. *Penalty:* Illegal Formation, 5 yards (S19).

Article 2. Minimum Line Players.

The snapper is the only A player required to be on their scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange) at the snap.

Article 3. Motion.

Only 1 A player may be in motion, but not in motion toward the opponent's goal line at the snap. Other A players must be stationary in their positions without movement of their feet, body, head, or arms. *Penalty:* Illegal Motion, 5 yards (S20).

PLAY. After a huddle, all A players come to a stop and remain stationary for a full second, then A-2 goes in motion legally and the ball is snapped. **RULING.** Legal.

Article 4. Direct Snap.

The player who receives the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange). Direct snaps are illegal. The snapper may not snap the ball to him/herself. *Penalty:* Illegal Formation, 5 yards (S19). **NOTE:** If in doubt, the A player receiving the snap is 2 yards back.

PLAY. A-1 is under the center. The center snaps the ball through the legs of A-1 to A-6 who is 5 yards behind A's scrimmage line and legally in motion. **RULING.** Legal. The snap was received by an A player who was at least 2 yards behind A's scrimmage line.

Article 5. Shift.

In a snap preceded by a huddle or shift, all A players must come to a complete stop and remain stationary in legal position without movement of feet, body, head, or arms for at least 1 full second before the snap. *Penalty:* Illegal Shift, 5 yards (S20).

PLAY. Following a huddle or shift 1 A player takes a preliminary position, then advances or drops into a final position. **RULING.** Such movement constitutes a shift; all A players must hold their final positions for at least 1 second before the snap.

PLAY. A-1 goes in motion legally as A-2 moves to a new position in the backfield, sets, and the ball is snapped. **RULING.** Illegal Shift, 5 yards.

SECTION 4. HANDING THE BALL

Article 1. No Restrictions

Any player may hand the ball forward or backward at any time.

SECTION 5. MALE RUNNER

Article 1. Corec Rule.

An A male runner cannot advance the ball through A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange). There are no restrictions:

- A. During a run by a male runner once the ball has been touched by any player beyond the A or K scrimmage line.
- B. During a run by a female runner.
- C. After a change of team possession

Penalty: Illegal Advancement, 5 yards from the previous spot (S19).

NOTE: See Illegal Forward Pass – Corec Rule

PLAY. Male A-1 throws a forward pass to female A-2 beyond the neutral zone who then throws a backward pass to male A-3 who is behind A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange). Male A-3 runs through A's scrimmage line for a 10 yard gain. **RULING.** Legal Play.

PLAY. Third and 5 on A 15. The play is “open.” Male A-1 throws a legal forward pass to male A-3 who first touches the ball behind the A scrimmage line, juggles it through A's scrimmage line, and catches it beyond. **RULING.** Legal Play. A-3 becomes a runner when he possesses the ball. The next play is “closed.”

SECTION 6. BACKWARD PASS AND FUMBLE

Article 1. When Legal.

A runner may pass the ball backward or lose player possession by a fumble anytime except if intentionally thrown out-of-bounds to conserve time. **Penalty:** Illegal Pass, 5 yards from the spot of the pass or fumble and loss of down (S35 and S9). The Referee will start the clock on the ready for play. **NOTES:** If in doubt, the pass is backward. See Rule 9, Batting and Kicking.

Article 2. Caught or Intercepted.

A backward pass or fumble in flight may be caught or intercepted by any other player inbounds and advanced. A player may not throw an untouched backward pass to him/herself. **Penalty:** Illegal Pass, 5 yards from the spot of the pass and loss of down if by A before possession changes during a scrimmage down (S35 and S9).

Article 3. Simultaneous Catch by Opposing Players.

If a backward pass or fumble in flight is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams inbounds, the ball becomes dead at the spot of the catch and belongs to the offensive team.

Article 4. Out-of-Bounds.

A backward pass or fumble which goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines belongs to the offensive team at the out-of-bounds spot. If out-of-bounds behind a goal line, it is a touchback or safety.

Article 5. Ball Dead When It Hits the Ground.

A backward pass or fumble which touches the ground between the goal lines is dead at the spot where it touches the ground and belongs to the last team in possession.

SECTION 7. LEGAL AND ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS**Article 1. Legal Forward Pass.**

All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass. During a scrimmage down and before team possession has changed, a forward pass may be thrown provided the passer's feet are on or behind the plane of A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange) when the ball leaves the passer's hand. Only 1 forward pass can be thrown per down. **NOTE:** If in doubt, the passer is behind the A scrimmage line.

PLAY. A-1 runs with the ball beyond the A scrimmage line, then returns behind the A scrimmage line and throws a forward pass. **RULING.** Legal play.

PLAY. A-1 throws a backward pass from A's 31 yard line which is caught by A-6 at the A 33 yard line. **RULING.** Legal play. The initial direction of a pass determines whether the pass is forward or backward. While a backward pass may have its flight path altered by wind or forward player momentum and subsequently be caught beyond the point of release, this does not change the status of the pass.

PLAY. A-1 throws a legal forward pass which is controlled by airborne A-2. Prior to returning to the ground, A-2 throws the ball forward or backward to A-3 who runs for a touchdown. **RULING.** Legal play. The pass remains a pass until A-2 alights on the ground for a completion. Since A-2 is airborne, he/she may bat or throw the legal forward pass in any direction.

Article 2. Illegal Forward Pass.

A forward pass is illegal:

- If the passer's foot is beyond the plane of A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange) when the ball leaves his/her hand (S35 and S9).
- If thrown after team possession has changed (S35).
- If intentionally thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage (S36 and S9).
- If a passer catches his/her untouched forward pass (S35 and S9).
- If there is more than 1 forward pass per down (S35).

Penalty: Illegal pass, 5 yards from the spot of the pass and a loss of down if by A before possession changes during a scrimmage down (S35 and S9). **NOTE:** If in doubt, the pass is legal.

PLAY. A-1 throws a short forward pass: (a) A-1 catches; (b) the ball is tipped by A-4, or B-3, then A-1 catches; or (c) A-6 catches pass and throws a backward pass to A-1. **RULING.** In (a), illegal forward pass. In (b) and (c), the play is legal as another player touched the ball before A-1 again possessed it. However, A cannot throw a 2nd forward pass during the down.

PLAY. QB A-1 catches the snap from the center and IMMEDIATELY throws the ball into the ground to stop the clock. **RULING.** This play is legal provided the QB is not trying to avoid a loss of yardage.

Article 3. Illegal Forward Pass – Corec Rule.

- The term “closed” (S41) means a male player may NOT complete a legal forward pass to any other male player. The term “open” (S40) means any player can complete a legal forward pass to any other player. **NOTE:** All illegal forward pass fouls are classified as fouls during a running play. Thus, illegal forward passes do not change the “open/closed” status of a down.

- B.** The first down of each half or overtime possession shall be “open.” The first down of a new series following a team change of possession shall be “open.”
- C.** If the crew of officials erroneously indicate the “open/closed” status of a down, the play is nullified and the down will be repeated.
- D.** During the offensive team’s possession there may not be 2 consecutive legal forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. This Rule applies to the Try.
- E.** If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or female receiver for positive yards. The spot where the ball becomes dead by Rule must be beyond the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange). There is NO foul for a female receiver being tagged or deflagged behind the A scrimmage line. The next legal forward pass completion remains “closed.”
- F.** A legal forward pass caught jointly by male and female teammates is considered a female reception.
- G.** There are no other restrictions concerning a male passer completing legal forward passes to a female receiver, or female to female, or female to male.
- H.** Any foul, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next legal forward pass completion is “open” or “closed.”

Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass, 5 yards from the spot where the 2nd consecutive male to male completed legal forward pass is released, and a loss of down (S35 and S9).

PLAY. Second and 15 on A 25. The down is “closed” – the last legal forward pass completion was male to male. (a) Male A-1 throws a legal forward pass caught by female A-2 at the A 23. Female A-2 runs to the A 26 and is deflagged; or (b) Same play, except Female A-2 is deflagged at the A 24. **RULING.** (a) The next down is “open.” A gained positive yards. In (b) there is no foul. The next down is still “closed.” A did not gain positive yards. The dead ball spot was behind the A scrimmage line.

PLAY. Second and 7 on A 13. This down is “closed.” Male A-1 completes a legal forward pass to female A-2 at the A 19. After the catch, A-2 guards her flag belt at the A 22. **RULING.** If accepted, enforce guarding the flag belt, 10 yards from the spot of the foul. It would be A’s ball 2nd and 8 on the A 12. All fouls carry their usual enforcement. The next down will be “open” since there was a male to female legal forward pass completion, and the ball became dead beyond the A scrimmage line. Whether the foul is accepted or declined has no effect on “open” or “closed” restrictions.

PLAY. The down is “closed.” Male A-1 completes a pass to female A-2 for positive yards. A-3 commits illegal contact and B-2 roughs the passer. **RULING.** Double foul. Repeat the down. The down is “open” since female A-2 caught a pass for positive yards.

PLAY. The down is “closed.” Male A-1 throws a legal forward pass beyond the scrimmage line to male A-2 who secures the pass with his feet off the ground. Male A-2 tosses the ball forward or backward to female A-3 prior to touching the ground. **RULING.** Completed pass. The next down is “open.” **NOTE:** Male A-2 did not complete a catch since his feet were off the ground. He “handled” a loose ball.

Article 4. Illegal Forward Pass – Corec Rule.

If a female passer completes a forward pass to a male receiver behind the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange) on either an “open” or “closed” play and any A male runner advances beyond this

scrimmage line, it is an illegal forward pass. **Penalty:** Illegal Forward Pass, 5 yards from the spot of the pass and loss of down (\$35 and \$9).

PLAY. The down is “closed.” Female A-1 throws a legal forward pass from the A 26 to male A-6 who catches the ball behind his scrimmage line and: (a) advances the ball beyond his scrimmage line for positive yards; or (b) is deflagged behind his scrimmage line. **RULING.** In (a), Illegal Forward Pass. Male A-6 advanced the ball through the A scrimmage line. Enforce the foul from the A 26. The next down is “closed” because the pass was illegal. (b) Legal play. The next down is still “closed.”

Article 5. After Illegal Forward Pass.

When an illegal forward pass touches the ground or goes out-of-bounds the ball becomes dead and belongs to the passing team, at the spot from where the pass was thrown, unless a new series of downs has been created. In such a case the ball belongs to the passing team if, after enforcement of the penalty, the ball is left in advance of the zone line-to-gain, or belongs to the opponents if the ball, after the penalty, did not make the next zone line-to-gain and the foul occurred during 4th down. If a player catches an illegal forward pass, the ball continues in play until declared dead.

SECTION 8. COMPLETED OR INTERCEPTED PASSES

Article 1. Pass Caught or Intercepted.

A forward pass is completed when caught by a member of the passing team inbounds. A forward pass is intercepted when caught by a member of the opposing team inbounds. It is counted as a completion or interception as long as the 1st part of the receiver to make contact with the ground after the catch, usually 1 foot, touches inbounds.

PLAY. A-1 throws a forward pass which is low and near the ground to A-2, who appears to make the catch.

RULING. The officials must visibly see the ball strike the ground to rule incomplete. If an official does not see the ball hit the ground, it will be ruled a completed pass.

PLAY. A-1 throws a forward pass to A-2. Prior to catching the forward pass, A-2 steps out-of-bounds on the sideline, possesses the ball in flight and lands inbounds. **RULING.** Completed pass (it might be illegal participation, see Rule 9).

Article 2. Simultaneous Catch by Opposing Players.

If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams inbounds, the ball becomes dead at the spot of the catch and belongs to the offensive team.

SECTION 9. INCOMPLETE PASS

Article 1. Becomes Dead.

When a forward pass touches the ground or anything out-of-bounds, it becomes dead.

SECTION 10. FORWARD PASS INTERFERENCE

Article 1. Interference.

During a down in which a legal forward pass crosses A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange) contact which interferes with an eligible receiver who is beyond A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange) is pass interference unless it occurs when 2 or more eligible receivers make a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, catch, or bat a pass. Hindering an opponent's vision without making an attempt to catch, intercept or bat the ball is pass interference, even though no contact was made. The player must place 1 or both hands in front of the opponent's face or wave his/her hand(s) or arm(s) near the opponent's face. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged/tagged prior to touching a forward pass thrown beyond A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange).

PLAY. A-1 throws a legal forward pass toward A-5 who is beyond A's scrimmage line. Before A-5 touches the pass, B-2 deflags A-5. **RULING.** Defensive pass interference.

PLAY. B-1 defending against a legal forward pass beyond A's scrimmage line, waves his/her arms in the face of A-2 who is attempting to catch the pass. **RULING.** Defensive pass interference.

Article 2. Offensive Pass Interference.

After the ball is snapped, and until the pass has been touched by any player, there shall be no offensive pass interference beyond A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange). *Penalty:* Offensive Pass Interference, 10 yards from the previous spot (S33).

Article 3. Defensive Pass Interference.

After the pass is thrown, and until the pass has been touched by any player, there shall be no defensive pass interference beyond A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange) while the pass is in flight. *Penalty:* Defensive Pass Interference, 10 yards from the previous spot (S33). If the pass interference by either player is intentional or unsportsmanlike, his/her team shall be penalized an additional 10 yards (S27).

PLAY. A-3 muffs a legal forward pass and B-2 pushes A-3 out of the way in an attempt to secure the ball. **RULING.** Personal foul for illegal contact, penalize 10 yards.

Article 4. Not Interference.

Contact by B which is obviously away from the direction of the forward pass is not pass interference but may be a personal foul.

Article 5. Catchable/Uncatchable.

Whether a pass is catchable or uncatchable has no bearing on offensive and defensive forward pass interference.

RULE 8. SCORING PLAYS AND TOUCHBACK

SECTION 1. COMMUNICATION

Article 1. Teams and Officials.

The Referee will communicate the current score to the A and B captains, head coaches, and all officials after each touchdown, Try, and safety. If there is a disagreement regarding the current or final score, the Referee will make the final decision after consulting with the other officials and, if available, the scorekeeper.

SECTION 2. FORFEITED GAME

Article 1. Forfeited Score.

The score of a forfeited game shall be: Offended Team-1, Opponent-0. If the offended team is ahead at the time of the forfeit, the score stands. A Referee's decision to forfeit a game is final.

SECTION 3. MERCY RULE

Article 1. 2 Minute Warning.

If a team is 19 or more points (**Corec Rule – 25 points**) ahead when the Referee announces the 2 minute warning for the 4th period, the game shall be over. Prior to implementing the Mercy Rule, the Referee shall apply the Extension of Period Rule. NOTE: Game clock starts according to Rule 3.

PLAY. Score (men's game): A-10, B-32. With 2:10 remaining in the 4th period, QB A-1 throws a pass to A-2. B-1 commits defensive pass interference. Pass falls incomplete. Game clock is at 2:00. **RULING.** Penalty is enforced and play continues. Mercy Rule is not applied until a down free of any accepted live ball fouls occurs.

PLAY. Score (women's game): A-10, B-36. A scores a touchdown with 2:10 remaining on the clock in the 4th period. **RULING.** A must call a team time-out to stop the clock prior to the 2 minute warning in order to go for a 2 point Try. If A trails by 19 or more points when the Referee announces the 2 minute warning, the Mercy Rule is enforced and the game is over.

Article 2. After 2 Minute Warning.

If a team scores during the last 2 minutes of the 4th period and that score creates a point differential of 19 or more points (**Corec Rule – 25 points**), the game shall end at that point.

SECTION 4. PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY



Article 1. Player Responsibility.

The player scoring must raise his/her arms so the nearest official can deflag the player. If the player is not able to be deflagged and the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the score is disallowed, the offending team is penalized, and the player is disqualified. **Penalty:** Personal Foul, 10 yards from the previous spot (S38 and S47). If by A, loss of down (S9). If by B, automatic 1st down (S8).

SECTION 5. TOUCHDOWN = 6 OR 9 POINTS

Article 1. Touchdown Values.

If a female scores a touchdown, the point value is 9. If a female player throws a legal forward pass and a touchdown is scored by any A player, prior to a change of team possession, the point value is 9 (Corec Rule). All other touchdowns are 6 points.

Article 2. How Scored.



It is a touchdown when a runner advances from the field of play so that the ball penetrates the vertical plane of the opponent's goal line. It is a touchdown when a loose ball is caught by a player while the ball is on or behind the opponent's goal line.

SECTION 6. TRY = 1, 2, OR 3 POINTS

Article 1. Referee's Responsibility and Team's Choice.

The Referee must speak to the captain only, asking him/her whether the Try shall be from the 3, 10, or 20 yard line. Once the A captain makes the choice, he/she may change the decision only when an A or B charged time-out is taken. However, this decision cannot be changed once either team commits a foul. The Referee will ask the scoring captain where he/she would like the ball placed on or between the hash marks. Enforcement of yardage penalties does not change the value of the Try. The point(s) shall be awarded if the Try results in what would have been a touchdown.

Article 2. 1, 2, or 3 Points.

An opportunity to score 1 point from the 3 yard line, 2 points from the 10 yard line, or 3 points from the 20 yard line by running or passing only shall be granted the team scoring a touchdown. NOTE: If a touchdown is scored on the last timed down of the 4th period, the Try is not attempted, unless it will affect the outcome of the game or playoff qualifying.

Article 3. Try Begins and Ends.

The Try begins when the ball is marked ready for play. The Try ends when B secures possession, the Try is successful, or the ball becomes dead by Rule. B cannot score during the Try.

Article 4. Next Play.

After a Try, the ball shall be snapped by the opponent of the scoring team at their own 14 yard line, unless moved by penalty or to begin overtime.

SECTION 7. FORCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Article 1. Force.

The force imparted by a player who punts, passes, snaps, or fumbles the ball shall be considered responsible for the ball's progress in any direction even though its course is deflected, or reversed, after striking the ground or after striking a player of either team. However, the initial force is considered expended and a new force is provided if a loose ball is illegally kicked or batted or it is contacted again after coming to rest.

PLAY. Second and 16 on A 4. A-1 throws a backward pass that is batted by B-1 at the A 2. The ball lands in the A end zone. **RULING.** Safety. The force which put the ball in the A end zone was the backward pass.

Article 2. Responsibility.

The team responsible for a ball being on, above, or behind a goal line is the team whose player:

- A. Carries the ball to or across that goal line.
- B. Imparts to the ball an impetus which forces it to or across that goal line.
- C. Incurs a penalty which leaves the ball on or behind the goal line.

SECTION 8. MOMENTUM, SAFETY, AND TOUCHBACK**Article 1. Safety = 2 Points.**

It is a safety when:

- A. A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across his/her own goal line, and it becomes dead there in his/her team's possession.
EXCEPTION: Momentum Rule—When a defensive player intercepts his/her opponent's forward pass, fumble, backward pass, or an R player catches a punt between his/her 5 yard line and the goal line and his/her original momentum carries him/her into the end zone where the ball is declared dead in his/her team's possession behind the goal line, the ball belongs to the defensive team at the spot where possession was gained.
- B. A player punts, passes, fumbles, snaps, muffs, or bats a loose ball from the field of play to or across his/her goal line and the ball subsequently becomes dead there in his/her team's possession. This includes when the ball is declared dead on or behind their goal line. However, it does not apply to a legal forward pass which becomes incomplete.
- C. A player on offense commits any foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from a spot in his/her end zone; or throws an illegal forward pass from his/her end zone and the penalty is declined in a situation which leaves him/her in possession at the spot of the illegal pass and with the ball having been forced into the end zone by the passing team.

PLAY. A-1, after receiving the snap in his/her end zone, is deflagged/tagged with the ball above the goal line, its forward point in the field of play. **RULING.** Safety. The entire ball has to be in the field of play when taking it out of your own end zone.

- D. After a safety, the ball shall be snapped by the scoring team at their own 14 yard line, unless moved by penalty.

Article 2. Touchback.

It is a touchback when:

- A. K's punt breaks the plane of R's goal line.
- B. The ball is out-of-bounds behind a goal line (except from an incomplete forward pass), when the ball becomes dead in possession of a player on, above, or behind the player's own goal line, or when the ball becomes dead not in possession on, above, or behind the team's own goal line, and the attacking team is responsible. NOTES: If in doubt, it is a touchback. If in doubt, the out-of-bounds punt near the goal line is a touchback.

PLAY. B-1 intercepts a pass in his/her end zone: (a) runs for a touchdown; or (b) runs around in his/her end zone and is deflagged or steps across the end line. **RULING.** In (a), Touchdown. A player can run the ball out of his/her end zone. In (b), Touchback. A's force put the ball into B's end zone.

PLAY. A-1 running for an apparent touchdown fumbles the ball on the B 3 yard line. The ball lands in the B end zone. **RULING.** Touchback. The force which put the ball in the end zone was the fumble.

PLAY. K-4 punts to R-3, who touches the ball in flight at the R 4 yard line. The ball bounces off his/her hands and lands in the end zone. **RULING.** Touchback. The initial force was imparted by K and the ball was never in possession of R-3.

C. After a touchback, the ball shall be snapped from the nearest 14 yard line, unless moved by penalty.

NOTE: Teams cannot score points by a field goal attempt.

RULE 9. CONDUCT OF PLAYERS AND OTHERS

SECTION 1. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Article 1. Noncontact Acts.

No player or nonplayer shall commit noncontact acts during a period or intermission.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- A. Refusal to comply or abide by the request or decision of an official.
- B. Using words similar to the offensive audibles and quarterback cadence prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with A's signals or movements.
- C. Intentionally kicking at the ball, other than during a punt.
- D. Leaving the field between downs to gain an advantage unless replaced or with permission of the Referee.
- E. Participate while wearing illegal player equipment.
- F. Being outside the team box, but not on the field, during a live ball. **NOTE:** During a dead ball, coaches can be a maximum of 2 steps on the field for coaching purposes only.

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 10 yards (S27) (S7 and S27 if dead ball). If flagrant in 1A, 1B, 1C, and 1D, the offender shall be disqualified (S47). In article 1F the 1st offense is a warning (S15), the 2nd offense is 5 yards (S7 and S29), and each subsequent offense is 10 yards (S7, S29, and S27).

PLAY. B-1 calls defensive signals loudly: (a) before A gets set; or (b) while A is yelling cadence or audibles. B-1 is not using words similar to A's cadence or audibles. **RULING.** Legal in (a) and (b).

Article 2. Dead Ball Fouls.

When the ball becomes dead in possession of a player, he/she shall not:

- A. Intentionally kick the ball.
- B. Spike the ball into the ground.
- C. Throw the ball high into the air.

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 10 yards (S7 and S27), and if flagrant, the offender will be disqualified (S47).

Article 3. Prohibited Acts.

There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct by players or nonplayers. Examples, but are not limited to:

- A. Attempting to influence a decision by an official.
- B. Disrespectfully addressing an official.
- C. Indicating objections to an official's decision.
- D. Holding an unauthorized conference, or being on the field illegally.
- E. Using profanity, taunting, insulting, or vulgar language or gestures.
- F. Intentionally contacting a game official (DQ).
- G. Leaving the team box and entering the field during a fight (DQ).

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 10 yards (S27) (S7 and S27 if dead ball), and if flagrant, the offender shall be disqualified (S47). In Article 3F and 3G, the offender will be disqualified.

PLAY. Nonplayers voice disapproval using abusive language concerning a judgement call by the Back Judge.
RULING. The Referee should call an “official’s time-out.” Inform the A captain and/or head coaches that such behavior is unacceptable and tell the captain to communicate this information to his/her bench. If such behavior is exhibited again during the game, penalize 10 yards for unsportsmanlike conduct. It is imperative that the officials stop such behavior the 1st time it occurs. A and B are present to play the game, not to officiate. When the officials accept the game assignment, they must be ready to take control.

Article 4. 2nd Unsportsmanlike Foul.

The 2nd unsportsmanlike foul by the same player or nonplayer results in disqualification.

Article 5. Ejection.

If a player or nonplayer is ejected from a game due to unsportsmanlike conduct, he/she may be allowed to remain on the bench. If the ejected player or nonplayer creates a problem for the game officials from the bench area, he/she will be told to leave the field area. The field area is defined as “out of sight, out of sound.” If the ejected player or nonplayer refuses to leave after a reasonable amount of time, the Referee will inform the captain/coach that the game will be forfeited.

Article 6. 4th Unsportsmanlike Foul.

The 4th unsportsmanlike foul by the same team results in their forfeiture of the game. NOTE: By institutional adoption this number can be reduced to 3.

SECTION 2. UNFAIR ACTS

Article 1. Refusal to Play or Halving the Distance.

If a team refuses to play within 2 minutes after being ordered by the Referee, or if a team repeatedly commits fouls which can be penalized only by halving the distance to its goal line, the Referee may enforce any penalty he/she considers equitable, including the awarding of a score. For refusal to play, or for repeated fouls, the Referee shall, after 1 warning, forfeit the game to the opponents.

Article 2. Unfair Acts.

No player or nonplayer shall use verbiage or commit any act not in accordance with the spirit of fair play for the purposes of confusing the opponent. *Penalty:* Unfair Act, 10 yards (S38).

PLAY. (a) A-2 shouts to the Referee “wet ball, wet ball” in an attempt to have B relax. A-2 then snaps the ball and play begins; (b) A-2 snaps the ball, but only 1 person leaves the scrimmage line. All other teammates stand up and yell at the person that the snap count was on 2. When B relaxes, A-1 throws the ball to the person who left the scrimmage line; or (c) during the down B-1 yells at runner A-1 to throw him the ball. **RULING.** In (a), (b), and (c), Unfair Act. Use of verbiage or acts to gain an unfair advantage. Penalize using All-But-One. Play (a) is dead ball foul while (b) and (c) are live ball fouls. NOTE: Voice inflection by the QB is not an unfair act.

SECTION 3. PERSONAL FOULS

Article 1. Restrictions.

No player or nonplayer shall commit a personal foul during a period or an intermission. Any other act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul. No player or nonplayer shall:

- A. Strip or attempt to strip the ball from a runner by punching, striking, or grabbing it (S38). NOTE: Any player who controls a pass with both feet off the ground becomes a runner when the 1st part of the person touches the ground.
- B. Throw the runner to the ground (S38).
- C. Hurdle any other player (S38).
- D. Contact an opponent either before or after the ball is declared dead (S38).
- E. Make contact of any nature with an opponent which is deemed unnecessary including using fists, locked hands, elbows, or any part of the forearm or hand, except according to Rule (S38).
- F. Drive or run into an opponent (S38).
- G. Position himself/herself on the shoulders or body of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage (S38).
- H. Tackle the runner by grasping or encircling with the hand(s) or arm(s) and taking the opponent toward the ground as in tackle football (S38 and S47) (DQ).
- I. Fight an opponent (S38 and S47) (DQ). NOTE: Each player who participates in the fight will be assessed 1 flagrant personal foul for fighting.

Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards, and if flagrant, the offender will be disqualified (S47). In Articles 1H and 1I, the offender will be disqualified.

PLAY. B-2, moving toward A-1 who has the ball in his/her possession: (a) B-2 grabs/strips the ball from A-1; or (b) B-2 tries to knock the ball out of A-1's hands. **RULING.** In (a) and (b), this is a personal foul for stripping the ball. B-2 must go for the flag belt or the tag.

PLAY. A-1, running for a score, dives into the end zone: (a) breaks the plane with the ball without contacting any B player; (b) charges into B-3 at the B 1; or (c) charges into B-4 in the end zone after crossing the goal line. **RULING.** In (a), the score counts. In (b), a 10 yard penalty is assessed against A from the B 1. In (c), the score counts and A will be assessed a 10 yard dead ball penalty on the Try or at the 14.

Article 2. Roughing the Passer.

Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear the ball has been thrown forward legally. No defensive player shall contact the passer who is standing still or fading back as he/she is considered out of the play after the pass. Roughing the passer restrictions do not apply if the forward pass is thrown from beyond A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange). *Penalty:* Roughing the Passer, 10 yards, automatic 1st down (S34 and S8).

PLAY. B-3 jumps to block a legal forward pass thrown by A-1 behind the scrimmage line and: (a) blocks the ball and, avoiding unnecessary contact, brushes A-1; (b) is unsuccessful in blocking the pass and charges into A-1; (c) blocks the ball and charges into A-1; or (d) contacts passer A-1's hand or arm. **RULING.** In (a), no foul; in (b), (c), and (d), roughing the passer, 10 yards and an automatic 1st down. If the rusher contacts the passer's hand or arm, whether or not he/she touches the pass, it is roughing the passer.

PLAY. B-3 contacts the arm of A-1, who is attempting to pass. Then the ball is: (a) fumbled, (b) not released, or (c) thrown backward. **RULING.** Personal Foul, illegal contact, 10 yards, in (a), (b), and (c). **NOTE:** Roughness by an opponent beyond the scrimmage line could be illegal contact against a player who throws an illegal pass beyond the scrimmage line.

Article 3. Screen Blocking.

The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back when screen blocking. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his/her hand or arm to break a fall or to retain his/her balance. A player must be on his/her feet before, during, and after screen blocking. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards (S38).

Article 4. Screen Blocking Fundamentals.

A player who screens shall not:

- A. Take a position closer than a normal step when behind a stationary opponent.
- B. Make contact when assuming a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent.
- C. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that his/her opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take his/her stationary position. This position will vary and may be 1 to 2 normal steps or strides from the opponent.
- D. After assuming his/her legal screening position move to maintain it, unless he/she moves in the same direction and path as his/her opponent. If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results, he/she has committed a personal foul.

Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards (S38).

Article 5. Blocking and Interlocked Interference.

Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere for him/her by screen blocking, but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards (S38).

Article 6. Use of Hands or Arms by the Defense.

Opponents must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to displace the opponent. A defender may use his/her arms or hands to break a fall or retain his/her balance. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards (S38).


SECTION 4. RUNNER

Article 1. Flag Belt Removal.



- A. Players must have possession of the ball before they can be deflagged legally by an opponent.
- B. When a runner loses his/her flag belt either accidentally, inadvertently (not removed by grabbing or pulling), or on purpose, play continues. The deflagging reverts to a 1 hand tag of the runner between the shoulders and knees by an opponent.
- C. In circumstances where a flag belt is removed illegally by a player, play should continue with the option of the penalty or the play. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards (S38).

- D. An opponent intentionally pulling a flag belt from an offensive player without the ball is illegal. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards (S38).**
- E. Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain an advantage including tying, using foreign materials, or other such acts is illegal. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards from the previous spot, and player disqualification (S38 and S47). If by A, loss of down (S9). If by B, automatic 1st down (S8).**
- F. A nonplayer deflags or interferes with a runner. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards (S38). The Referee will award a touchdown (S5) and disqualify (S47) the nonplayer.**


 **PLAY. A-1 carries the ball when B-1 and B-2 attempt to deflag the runner. B-1 and B-2 touch or grasp the flag belt momentarily. A-1 continues to run a few steps and the flag belt falls to the ground. RULING. A-1 is down where the original deflag was attempted. B-1 and B-2 are deemed to have caused the deflag.**

Article 2. Guarding the Flag Belt.

 **Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Examples of flag guarding include, but are not limited to:**

- A. Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt.**
- B. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt.**
- C. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt.**

***Penalty:* Flag Guarding, 10 yards (S24).**

 **PLAY. A-1 places the ball on his/her hip, rolls out, and throws a forward pass. RULING. If B-1 could not reach the flag belt because A-1 had placed the ball on the belt, then penalize; however, if B was not close enough to deflag A-1, then do not penalize. Advantage versus disadvantage is the key.**


Article 3. Stiff Arm.

The runner shall be prohibited from contacting an opponent with extended hand or arm. This includes the use of a "stiff arm" extended to ward off an opponent attempting to deflag/tag. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards (S38).

Article 4. Help the Runner.

The runner shall not grasp a teammate or be grasped, pulled, or pushed by a teammate. *Penalty:* Help the Runner, 5 yards (S44).

Article 5. Obstruct the Runner.

 **An opponent shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the flag belt or making a legal tag. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards (S42).**

Article 6. Charge.

A runner shall not charge into nor contact an opponent in his/her path nor attempt to run between 2 opponents or between an opponent and a sideline, unless the space is such as to provide a reasonable chance for him/her to go through without contact. If a runner in his/her progress has established a straight line path, he/she may not be crowded out of that path, but if an opponent is able to legally establish a defensive position in that path, the runner must avoid contact by changing direction. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards (S38).



PLAY. A-1 running toward B-2, who is attempting to deflag A-1: (a) goes around B-2 to avoid being deflagged; (b) deliberately runs through B-2 making no attempt to avoid contact; or (c) ducks his/her head while contacting B-2. RULING. In (a), Legal play. In (b) and (c), an A personal foul, 10 yards. If B-2 is stationary, A-1 must go around. The charge/block principles used in basketball apply.

SECTION 5. BATTING AND KICKING

Article 1. Batting a Loose Ball.

Players shall not bat a loose ball other than a pass or fumble in flight. EXCEPTION 1: A backward pass in flight shall not be batted or thrown forward by the passing team. EXCEPTION 2: K may bat a grounded or an airborne punt beyond the K scrimmage line toward their own goal line. *Penalty:* Illegal Batting, 10 yards (S31).

Article 2. Batting a Ball in Player Possession.

A ball in player possession shall not be batted forward by a player of the team in possession. *Penalty:* Illegal Batting, 10 yards (S31).

Article 3. Illegal Kicking.

No player shall intentionally kick a ball other than a punt. NOTE: An illegal kick shall be treated like a fumble. *Penalty:* Illegal Kicking, 10 yards (S31).

SECTION 6. ILLEGAL PARTICIPATION

Article 1. It is Illegal Participation:

- A. To have 8 (**Corec Rule-9**) or more players participating at the snap.
- B. To have more than the legal number of males or females participating at the snap (Corec Rule).**
- C. If an injured player is not replaced for at least 1 down; unless the halftime or overtime intermission occurs.
- D. To use a player, replaced player, or substitute in a substitution or pretended substitution to deceive opponents at or immediately before the snap.
- E. For a disqualified player to reenter the game.
- F. For a replaced player or substitute to hinder an opponent, touch the ball, influence the play, or otherwise participate.
- G. If, prior to a change of possession, an A or K player goes out-of-bounds and returns inbounds during the down to participate, unless blocked out-of-bounds by an opponent. If a player is blocked out-of-bounds by an opponent and returns inbounds during the down, he/she shall return at the first opportunity. During the down, no player shall intentionally go out-of-bounds and return to the field, intentionally touch the ball, influence the play, or otherwise participate.
- H. When any player, replaced player, or substitute enters during a down.

Penalty: Illegal Participation, 10 yards (S28).

PLAY. QB A-1 throws a legal forward pass to A-2. A-2 steps on the sideline, returns inbounds, and catches the pass. **RULING.** Completed pass, Illegal Participation, 10 yards.

RULE 10. ENFORCEMENT OF PENALTIES

SECTION 1. PROCEDURE AFTER A FOUL

Article 1. Definitions.

A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed. Types of fouls are:

- A. Dead Ball – A foul which occurs in the time interval after a down has ended and before the ball is next legally snapped.
- B. Live Ball – A foul which occurs during a down.
- C. Simultaneous with the Snap – An act which becomes a foul when the ball is snapped.

Article 2. Captain's Choice.

When a foul occurs during a live ball, the Referee shall, at the end of the down, notify both captains. He/she shall inform the captain of the offended team regarding the rights of penalty acceptance or declination and shall indicate to him/her the number of the ensuing down, distance to be gained, and status of the ball for each available choice. The distance penalty for any foul may be declined. If the penalty is declined or if there is a double foul, there is no loss of distance. The captain's choice of options may not be revoked. Decisions involving penalties shall be made before any charged time-out is granted.

Article 3. Dead Ball Foul.

When a foul occurs during a dead ball either between downs or before a snap, the officials shall not permit the ball to become live. The penalty for any foul between downs, any nonplayer foul, or any unsportsmanlike foul, is enforced from the succeeding spot (EXCEPTION: 10-3-10 and 10-3-11). If a dead ball foul occurs after time expires for any period, the penalty shall be measured from the succeeding spot. The succeeding spot is where the ball would next be snapped if a foul had not occurred.

Article 4. Live Ball/Dead Ball Foul.

When a live ball foul by 1 team is followed by a dead ball foul by the opponent, the penalties are administered separately and in the order of occurrence. When the same team commits a live ball foul followed by 1 or more dead ball fouls, all fouls may be penalized.

Article 5. Establishing the Zone Line-to-Gain.

- A. On a live ball foul mark off the penalty yardage first then establish the zone line-to-gain.
- B. Penalties for fouls with succeeding spot enforcement which occur prior to the ready for play signal shall be administered before setting the zone line-to-gain down box for a new series.
- C. Penalties for fouls with succeeding spot enforcement which occur after the ready for play signal shall be administered after setting the zone line-to-gain down box for a new series.

NOTE: During overtime, the zone line-to-gain is always the goal line.

PLAY. Third and 2 on A 18. A-2 runs to the A 26. (a) A-2 flag guards at the A 25 and is deflagged at the A 35; or (b) A-2 is deflagged at the A 26. The Referee calls an unsportsmanlike conduct foul on A-2 prior to the ready for play signal. **RULING.** (a) Penalize A 10 yards for flag guarding, A's ball 3rd and 5 on A 15. (b) Penalize A 10 yards for the dead ball foul from the A 26, 1st and 4 on A 16.

SECTION 2. TYPES OF PLAY AND BASIC ENFORCEMENT SPOTS

Article 1. Live Ball Fouls.

Any live ball foul is penalized according to the All-But-One Enforcement Principle except:

- A. A foul which occurs simultaneously with the snap is penalized from the previous spot.
- B. A nonplayer foul, unsportsmanlike foul, or dead ball foul is penalized from the succeeding spot.

Article 2. All-But-One Enforcement Principle.

Enforcement philosophy is based on the premise that a team is given the advantage of the distance which is gained without assistance of a foul. It is assumed that the only foul which would give this aid is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot. Therefore, all fouls but this one, which is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot, are penalized from the basic spot. This 1 foul is penalized from the spot of the foul (See Figure 1). NOTE: EXCEPTION: Roughing the passer – See Article 4 below.

Article 3. 2 Types of Plays.

Whenever the ball is live, 1 of 2 types of plays is in progress, either a loose ball play or a running play. The type of play has no significance unless a foul occurs. If a foul does occur, the officials must know whether it was during a loose ball play or during a running play. This determines the basic spot of enforcement.

Article 4. Loose Ball Play.

A loose ball play is action during:

- A. A punt, other than post scrimmage kick fouls.
- B. A legal forward pass.
- C. A backward pass (including the snap), illegal kick, or fumble made by A from on or behind their scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange) and prior to a change of team possession.
- D. The run or runs which precedes such legal pass, punt, or fumble.

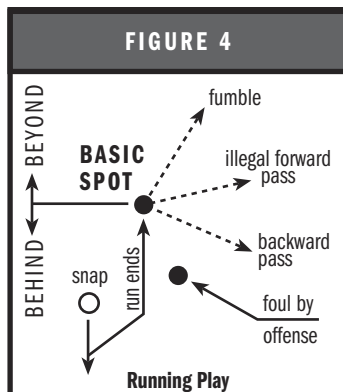
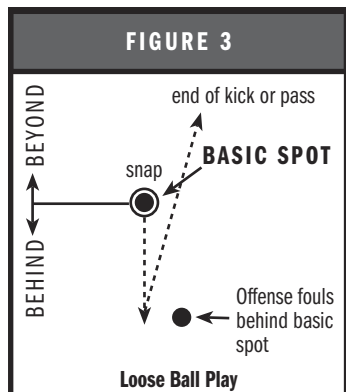
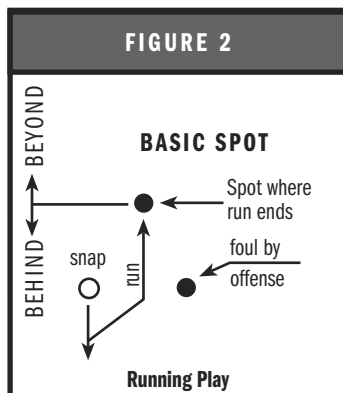
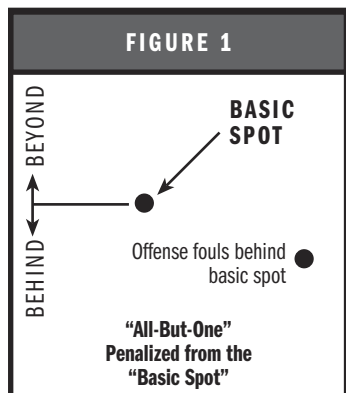
If a foul occurs during a loose ball play, the basic enforcement spot is the previous spot, the spot of the snap (See Figure 3).

PLAY. First and 13 on A 27. QB A-1 throws a legal forward pass. While the pass is in flight, A-2 illegally contacts a B player on the A 25. The pass is complete and the runner is deflagged on the A 30. **RULING.** If accepted, penalize from the A 25, 1st and 25 on A 15. The penalty is enforced at the spot of the foul since the offense fouled behind the basic spot which is the previous spot or where the ball was snapped.

EXCEPTION 1: The penalty for roughing the passer on a completed forward pass will be enforced from the dead ball spot when the run ends beyond A's scrimmage line and no change of possession has occurred.

PLAY. Fourth and 8 on A 32. Passer A-1 is roughed by B-1: (a) forward pass is complete to A-2 who is tagged/deflagged at the A 35; (b) pass is incomplete; or (c) forward pass is complete to A-2 who is tagged/deflagged at the A 28. **RULING.** Roughing the passer. (a) A's ball, 1st and 15 on B 35; in (b) and (c), it is A's ball, 1st and 18 on the B 38. In (b) and (c), penalize from the previous spot.

BASIC ENFORCEMENT SPOTS



EXCEPTION 2: A post scrimmage kick (PSK) foul is an R foul that occurs on R's side of the neutral zone prior to the end of the kick during a punt that ends beyond the neutral zone and K does not have possession of the ball when the kick ends. The PSK spot is the spot where the kick ends. R retains the ball after penalty enforcement from the PSK spot when a PSK foul occurs. R fouls behind the PSK spot are spot fouls. The spot where the kick ends is R's 14 if the kick ends in R's end zone.

PLAY. During a punt, R-2 illegally contacts K-2 beyond the neutral zone at the R 34. The kick then becomes dead: (a) when the punt breaks the plane of R's goal line; (b) when the punt rolls out-of-bounds at the R 31; or (c) when R-1 catches the punt at the R 32 and is deflagged at the R 36. **RULING.** Enforce all 3 plays utilizing PSK penalty enforcement as follows: (a) Enforce at the PSK spot, the R 14, 1st and 13 at the R 7; (b) enforce at the R 31 since the spot of the foul is behind the PSK spot, 1st and 19 at the R 21; (c) enforce at the PSK spot, the R 32 where the punt was caught by R-1, 1st and 18 on the R 22. In (a), (b), and (c), R retains the football, 1st down.

EXCEPTION 3: Kick catching interference, 10 yards from the spot of the foul and a 1st down, or 10 yards from the previous spot and replay the down.

Article 5. Running Play.

A running play is any action which is not a loose ball play.

- A. Behind the line, it includes:
 1. A run which is not followed by a loose ball behind the line.
 2. A run which is followed by an illegal pass from behind the line.
- B. Beyond the line, it includes any run.

If a foul occurs during a running play, the basic enforcement spot is the spot where the run ends:

- A. Where the ball becomes dead if the runner does not lose possession.
- B. Where the player loses possession if his/her run is followed by his/her fumble into the opponent's end zone, his/her illegal forward pass, or his/her backward pass beyond the scrimmage line that is intercepted.
- C. At the spot of the catch when the momentum rule is in effect.

PLAY. K-1's punt is caught by R-1. During the run, R-1 flag guards at the R 22. R-1 is then deflagged by K-1 at the R 40. **RULING.** Penalize Team R 10 yards from the R 22 which is the spot of the foul, R's ball 1st and 8 on R 12. Once the punt is caught, the loose ball play has ended. It is now a running play. The foul by the offensive team behind the basic spot, the end of the run, is enforced from the spot of the foul.

PLAY. K-1's punt is caught by R-1. During the run, K-2 illegally contacts R-1 at the K 35. R-1 is deflagged/tagged at the K 28. **RULING.** Penalize K 10 yards from the K 28 which is the end of the run, R's ball 1st and goal on the K 18. All fouls, except by the offense behind the end of the run, are penalized from the basic spot, the end of the run.

PLAY. Third and 2 on A 38. QB A-1 runs 2 yards beyond the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange) and throws an illegal forward pass from the A 40. **RULING.** Fourth and 5 on A 35. All illegal forward passes are treated as running plays. Penalize from the spot where the pass was thrown, the end of the run.

PLAY. Third and 5 on A 35. QB A-1 throws a legal forward pass to receiver A-2 who runs to the B 19 and flag guards. A-2 scores an apparent touchdown. **RULING.** No touchdown. Penalize A-2 10 yards from the B 19, 1st and 9 on B 29. Once A-2 caught the pass, it became a running play. Since there was a foul by the offense behind the end of the run, which is the goal line, penalize from the spot of the foul.

SECTION 3. SPECIAL ENFORCEMENTS

Article 1. Automatic 1st Down Fouls.

Fouls by B which give A an automatic 1st down (S8) are Roughing the Passer and Illegal Secured Flag Belt.

Article 2. Dead Ball Fouls.

Penalties for dead ball fouls are enforced separately and in the order of occurrence. Dead ball fouls are not coupled with live ball fouls or other dead ball fouls to create double or multiple fouls. Where there are 10 yard dead ball fouls (or live ball fouls treated as dead ball fouls) committed by each team prior to penalty administration, each 10 yard foul will cancel a 10 yard foul on the other team. Any remaining 10 yard fouls will be enforced. Any 5 yard dead ball fouls will be enforced separately and in order of occurrence and would never cancel with a 10 yard foul.

Article 3. Double Foul.

It is a double foul if both teams commit fouls (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) during the same down in which:

- A. There is no change of team possession.
- B. There is a change of team possession, and the team in possession at the end of the down fouls prior to the final change of possession.
- C. There is a change of team possession and the team in final possession accepts the penalty for its opponent's foul.

In (A), (B), and (C), the penalties cancel and the down is replayed.

EXCEPTION 1: If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of team possession, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball, provided its foul is not prior to the final change of team possession and it declined the penalty for its opponents foul(s) (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer). This exception is commonly referred to as the principle of "clean hands." **NOTE:** This Rule does not apply to double fouls during a Try or overtime period. **EXCEPTION 2:** PSK foul. R must decline the K fouls (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer).

Play. K-1 punts, R-1 catches the ball and throws an illegal forward pass from the R 26. R-2 catches the pass and K-2 holds R-2 prior to the tag/deflag. **Ruling.** The Referee will present the following options to the R captain: (1) if you accept the holding foul by K-2, it is a double foul, and the ball will be punted again, if elected; (2) if you want to keep the ball, you must decline the holding foul by K-2. The Referee will mark off 5 yards to R's 21 for the illegal forward pass, R's ball, 1st and 19.

Play. A 2nd and goal on the B 6. B-1 intercepts A-1's pass in the B end zone. On the return, B-1 flag guards in the B end zone and A-2 holds on the B 10. B-1 is deflagged/tagged at the B 12. **Ruling.** Fouls offset and the down is replayed. (If B declines A's penalty, it would be a safety.)

Article 4. Goal Line.

For a defensive team foul, if the enforcement spot which is now the basic spot, is on or behind the offended team's goal line, any measurement is from the succeeding spot or goal line.

Play. B intercepts a pass in the B end zone, A commits an illegal contact foul, and B then is deflagged/tagged in the end zone. **Ruling.** Option for B—decline the illegal contact foul and accept a touchback, 1st and 6 on B 14, or accept the illegal contact foul and it will be 1st and 16 on B 24, enforced from the succeeding spot, the B 14.

Play. A 3rd and 14 on A 6. Passer A-1 runs back into his/her end zone. B-1 commits illegal contact. B-2 then deflags A-2 in the A end zone. **Ruling.** A 3rd and 10 on A 10. Enforce at goal line.

Play. B-1 intercepts a pass in the B end zone. B-3 commits an illegal contact foul after the interception on the B 5 yard line. **Ruling.** B's ball, 1st and 17-1/2 on the B 2-1/2. The basic spot on a touchback is the 14. Penalize from the B 5.

Article 5. Half the Distance.

A measurement cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line. If the penalty is greater than this, the ball is placed halfway between the enforcement spot and the goal line.

Article 6. Last Play of Period.

Succeeding spot fouls that occur: A. during the last play of the game; B. during the last play of an overtime period; or C. dead ball fouls which occur after the last play of a game or overtime period. These fouls can be carried over to overtime, unless a touchdown is scored on that play, in which case the penalty can only be enforced on the Try.

PLAY. Score (men's game): A-13, B-21. On last timed down of 4th period, A-1 scores touchdown and B-1 roughs passer. Score is now A-19, B-21. **RULING.** Roughing the passer penalty must be enforced on the Try since overtime might not be played. Same ruling if score was tied.

Article 7. Loss of Down Fouls.

Loss of down (S9) fouls by A: Illegal Backward Pass, Illegal Forward Pass, and Illegal Secured Flag Belt.

Article 8. Multiple Foul.

When 2 or more live ball fouls (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) are committed during the same down by the same team, only 1 penalty may be chosen by the offended team.

Article 9. Safety.

If the offensive team throws an illegal forward pass from its end zone or commits any other foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from on or behind its goal line which is now the basic spot, it is a safety.

PLAY. A-1 flag guards and is then deflagged in his or her end zone. **RULING.** Safety.

Article 10. Touchdown.

- A. If there is a foul by the scoring team (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) during a down which results in a touchdown, the acceptance of the penalty nullifies the score.
- B. If an opponent of the scoring team commits a foul (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) during a down in which a touchdown is scored, and there was not a change of team possession during the down, A may accept the results of the play and then choose to have the foul enforced either on the Try, or after the Try, at the succeeding spot.
- C. If an opponent of the scoring team commits a foul (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) during a down in which a touchdown is scored, and there was a change of team possession during the down, and such foul occurs after the change of team possession, the scoring team may accept the results of the play and then choose to have the foul enforced either on the Try, or after the Try, at the succeeding spot.
- D. If either team commits an unsportsmanlike or nonplayer foul during the down in which a touchdown is scored, the opponent may accept the results of the play and then choose to have the foul enforced either on the Try, or after the Try, at the succeeding spot.

NOTE: In B, C, and D above, unless moved by penalty, the succeeding spot will be the 14 yard line or the 10 yard line in overtime.

Play. Third and goal on B 6. QB A-1 runs for a touchdown. B-1 illegally contacts A-3 prior to the touchdown on the B 2. **Ruling.** Touchdown. The Referee will ask the A captain or coach whether they wish to go for a 1, 2, or 3 point Try, after explaining that the 10 yard penalty will be enforced as part of the Try or at the 14 yard line. Once the A captain makes a decision, penalize B 10 yards or half the distance on the Try from the 3, 10, or 20 yard line, if A chose that option.

Article 11. Try.

- A. If either team commits a dead ball foul following a touchdown and prior to the initial ready for play on a Try, the offended team has the option of enforcing the penalty on the Try, or after the Try, at the succeeding spot.
- B. If there is a foul by A (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) during a down which results in a successful Try, acceptance of the penalty nullifies the score. If the foul carries a loss of down, the Try is not replayed.
- C. If there is a foul by B during a successful Try, the penalty may be enforced at the succeeding spot.
- D. If a double foul occurs, the down is replayed.

Play. QB A-1 scores a touchdown and then spikes the ball. **Ruling.** The touchdown counts. Initially the Referee will ask the B captain or head coach whether he/she wants the unsportsmanlike foul enforced on either the Try or the succeeding spot. Then the Referee will ask the A captain or head coach whether he/she wants to go for a 1, 2, or 3 point Try. Once the A captain or head coach makes a decision, penalize A 10 yards on the Try from the 3, 10, or 20 yard line, if B chose that option.

Play. Try. QB A-1 runs across the B goal line for a successful 2 point Try. B-1 grabs and holds A-1's jersey in an unsuccessful attempt to deflag A-1. **Ruling.** Score 2 points for A. Penalize B half the distance for holding at the succeeding spot, the B 14. It will be 1st and 13 at the B 7.

RULE 11. CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENTS

SECTION 1. PLAYING RULES AND OFFICIALS

Article 1. Playing Rules.

All local, area, state, regional, and national championship tournaments must be conducted in accordance with the NIRSA Rules Book and Officials' Manual.

Article 2. Complete the Game.

All games must be completed unless the Referee and the opposing captains and/or head coaches mutually agree to terminate the game (see Rule 3, Section 2). In the event of rain or any other cause which interrupts a game, the game must be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped.

Article 3. Officials.

Three officials are required for each game. Four officials are strongly recommended.

Article 4. Field Dimensions.

Review Rule 1 carefully for field dimensions and required safety margins around the field(s).

Article 5. Mercy Rule.

The NIRSA Mercy Rule (Rule 8) will be used for all games in Pool Play and single elimination playoffs.

Article 6. Try.

If a touchdown is scored on the last timed down of the 4th period or during overtime, the Try must be attempted during Pool Play because it can affect playoff qualifying, unless the Mercy Rule is applied.

SECTION 2. SCHEDULING

Article 1. Minimum Number of Games.

All teams must be scheduled for a minimum of 2 games. Pool Play, with 2 teams qualifying from each pool for the single elimination tournament, is strongly recommended. Whenever possible, 3 or 4 team pools are highly recommended.

Article 2. Qualifying Pool Play Order of Finish.

The official order of finish in qualifying Pool Play shall be determined by the Tournament Director based upon the following criteria:

- A. If a 2-way tie exists, it will be decided by who beat whom in head-to-head competition.
- B. If a 3-way tie exists, it will be decided as follows:
 1. Forfeit-The team that forfeits is dropped to the lowest possible position among the 3 or 4 tied teams.
 2. The difference between total points scored versus total points allowed. For example: A defeated B 7-0, B defeated C 7-6, and C defeated A 13-6.

| <u>TEAM A</u> | <u>TEAM B</u> | <u>TEAM C</u> |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 7 0 | 0 7 | 6 7 |
| <u>6 13</u> | <u>7 6</u> | <u>13 6</u> |
| 13 13 | 7 13 | 19 13 |
| DIFF= 0 | DIFF= -6 | DIFF= +6 |

Thus C finishes 1st, A finishes 2nd, and B does not qualify.

3. If 2 teams have the same point differential, then who beat whom in head-to-head competition will determine playoff placement.
4. If all 3 teams have the same point differential, then the total points scored will determine playoff placement.
5. If 2 teams have scored the same number of points, then who beat whom in head-to-head competition will determine playoff placement.
6. If all 3 teams have scored the same number of points, then the fewest points allowed will determine playoff placement.
7. If 2 teams have allowed the same number of points, then who beat whom in head-to-head competition will determine playoff placement.
8. If all 3 teams have allowed the same number of points, the following procedure will be used:
 - a. The 3 teams will play a round robin (A vs. B, B vs. C, C vs. A) tournament using the NIRSA Rules Book Tie Game Procedure (Rule 3).
 - b. Win-Loss record, then point differential, points scored, and points allowed (see items B, 2-7 above to determine playoff placement).

Article 3. Seeding.

Every effort will be made to gather as much information as possible to seed teams.

Article 4. Home and Visiting Teams.

- A. Pool Play—The 1st team listed is the home team. The 2nd team listed is the visitor.
- B. Single/Double Elimination—The top team listed is the home team, and the bottom team listed is the visitor.

Article 5. NIRSA Transgender Athlete Participation Policy.

NOTE: Member schools are encouraged to adopt and use the NIRSA Transgender Athlete Participation Policy for their events (see www.nirsa.org/player-eligibility). This policy is mandatory for NIRSA Championship Series events.

SECTION 3. PROTEST PROCEDURE-RULE INTERPRETATION

Article 1. Judgement.

Protests involving misapplication or misinterpretation of a Rule will be considered, but judgement calls by officials will not receive any consideration.

Article 2. Coach-Referee Conference.

- A. A player, directed by the head coach or captain, may request and be granted a time-out so the coach or captain and the Referee can review a decision which may have resulted from a misapplication or misinterpretation of a Rule. Such requests must be made prior to the time the ball becomes live following the play to be reviewed, unless the period has officially ended.
- B. When a time-out is granted, the Referee will confer with the coach or captain only. If the conference results in the Referee altering his/her ruling, the opposing coach or captain will be notified, the revision will be made, and the time-out shall be an official's time-out. If the Referee's ruling prevails, the time-out is charged to the team requesting the conference. If the team is out of time-outs, a delay of game penalty will be assessed.

- C. If, upon the decision of the Referee, either head coach or captain does not agree with the official's ruling, the Director of the Tournament Rules Committee or a member of that committee will be called to the field to render a final decision.

SECTION 4. PROTEST PROCEDURES-ELIGIBILITY

Article 1. Prior to the Game.

Protests concerning player eligibility must be made to the Tournament staff or game officials PRIOR to the game in question. The Tournament staff will investigate the eligibility of all players upon request.

Article 2. Eligibility.

- A. An ineligible player is any person who does not meet the tournament's eligibility requirements and whose name and identification or social security number does not appear on the team's roster.
- B. All participants must present a valid picture ID card prior to each game they are scheduled to play. If a participant cannot provide valid identification, then he/she will not be allowed to participate in that game.
- C. Any person participating in the tournament found to be ineligible by the Championship Tournament Committee shall be suspended from further player participation in the tournament.
- D. Any team using an ineligible player shall forfeit ALL games in which the ineligible player participated. NOTE: If this occurs during the Pool Play, teams that have lost to the said team will be awarded a win. If this occurs during the single elimination bracket, teams that have already been eliminated will not advance in the tournament.
- E. A player, as well as his/her team, competing under an assumed name, will be suspended for the remainder of the tournament.

Article 3. After the Tournament.

All teams using ineligible players will be reported to their respective institutions. In addition, those players will be placed on a 1-year suspension by the Tournament Director.

SECTION 5. SPORTSMANSHIP CODE OF CONDUCT

Article 1. Good Sportsmanship.

Good sportsmanship is vital to every contest. The team coach or captain is responsible for the actions of all team members and for any spectators directly related to that team BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER the game. Each team's institution will be held responsible for the conduct of their players, nonplayers, and spectators.

Article 2. Number of Unsportsmanlike Conduct/Flagrant Personal Fouls.

As cited in Rule 9, unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are assessed by game officials for types of conduct that are unacceptable. Their decisions are final. Players and teams who accrue a number of unsportsmanlike conduct fouls will be disqualified from games and suspended from further participation in tournament games as follows:

- A. One player or nonplayer receives 2 unsportsmanlike conduct fouls or a flagrant personal foul during a game. *Penalty:* Disqualification from that game, suspension from the team's next game played, and probation for the remainder of the tournament. If it is the last tournament game the team plays, then the player or nonplayer will be suspended for the 1st game at that tournament the following year.

- B. Fighting – Each player or nonplayer involved will receive 2 unsportsmanlike conduct fouls for the game. *Penalty:* Disqualification from that game, suspension from the team’s next 2 games played, and probation for the remainder of the tournament. NOTE: Two unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are for recordkeeping purposes only. See Rule 9 for assessing a penalty for fighting during a game.
- C. Shoving, striking, physically, and/or verbally abusing any member of the Tournament staff either on-site or off-site. *Penalty:* Each player or nonplayer involved will receive 3 unsportsmanlike conduct fouls for the game, and suspension from participating for the remainder of the tournament as well as next year’s tournament. NOTE: 3 unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are for recordkeeping purposes only.
- D. One player or nonplayer receives 3 unsportsmanlike conduct/flagrant personal fouls during the tournament. *Penalty:* Disqualification from that game, and suspension from participating for the remainder of the tournament.
- E. One team receives 4 unsportsmanlike conduct/flagrant personal fouls during a game. *Penalty:* The team forfeits that game, and probation for the remainder of the tournament.
- F. One team receives 5 unsportsmanlike conduct/flagrant personal fouls during the tournament. *Penalty:* The team is dropped from the tournament.
- G. Unsportsmanlike conduct fouls assessed against spectators will be “charged” to the team captain.
- H. It must be emphasized that the game officials can assess unsportsmanlike conduct/flagrant personal fouls before the game has started and after it has ended.

Article 3. Special Situations.

- A. The Championships Tournament Committee will inform players, nonplayers, or spectators when they are placed on probation, suspended, or dropped from future games or the tournament.
- B. The Championships Tournament Committee may hold a mandatory meeting with players, nonplayers, or spectators concerning additional sanctions due to any excessive unsportsmanlike conduct/flagrant personal fouls. This includes sanctions for next year’s tournament based upon actions during or after the last game played. Their decision is final.
- C. If a player or nonplayer violates any suspension and plays, the team will be dropped from the tournament.
- D. If a player, nonplayer, or a team is eliminated from the tournament for unsportsmanlike conduct/flagrant personal fouls, they are not eligible for any All-Tournament awards.

Article 4. After the Tournament.

Any player or nonplayer, who will be suspended from a game(s) at next year’s tournament, will be reported to their respective institution.

FOULS AND PENALTIES SUMMARY

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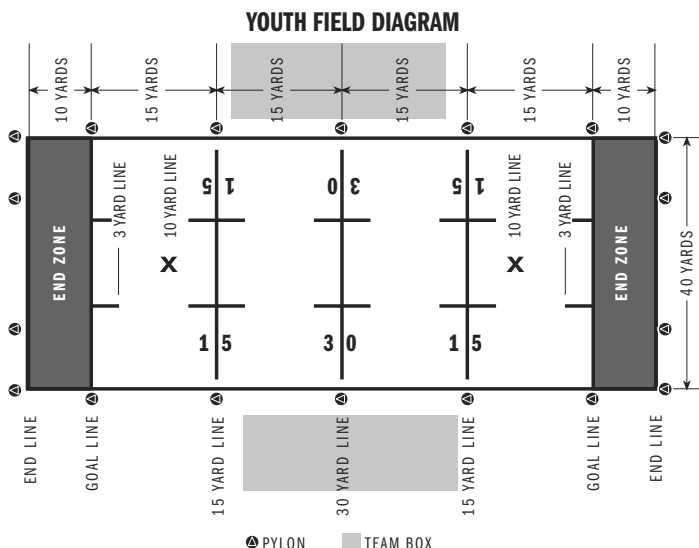
COREC FOOTBALL RULES SUMMARY

- 1-1-2 The Game.** The game shall be played between 2 teams of 8 players, 4 men and 4 women. Teams with 7 players shall be 4 men and 3 women or 4 women and 3 men. Six players, 3 men and 3 women, 4 men and 2 women, or 4 women and 2 men, are required to start the game and avoid a forfeit. The game may be continued with less than 6 players as long as the team has a chance to win. NOTE: If in doubt, continue the game. *Penalty:* Illegal Participation, 10 yards (S28).
- 1-3-1 The Ball.** The regular, intermediate, youth, or junior size football shall be used.
- 7-5-1 Male Runner.** An A male runner cannot advance the ball through A's scrimmage line. There are no restrictions: during a run by a male runner once the ball has been touched beyond the A or K scrimmage line; during a run by a female runner; and after a change of team possession. *Penalty:* Illegal Advancement, 5 yards from the previous spot (S19).
- 7-7-3 Male to Male Completion.** During the offensive team's possession, there may not be 2 consecutive legal forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. This Rule applies to the Try. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yards. The spot where the ball becomes dead by Rule must be beyond the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange). There are no other restrictions concerning a male passer completing legal forward passes to a female receiver, or female to female, or female to male. A legal forward pass caught jointly by male and female teammates is considered a female reception. *Penalty:* Illegal Forward Pass, 5 yards from the spot where the 2nd consecutive male to male completed legal forward pass is released, and a loss of down. (S35 and S9). Any foul, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next legal forward pass completion is “open” or “closed.”
- 7-7-4 Illegal Forward Pass.** If a female passer completes a forward pass to a male receiver behind the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange) on either an “open” or “closed” play, and any A male runner advances beyond this scrimmage line, it is an illegal forward pass. *Penalty:* Illegal Forward Pass, 5 yards from the spot of the pass and loss of down (S35 and S9).
- 8-3-1 Mercy Rule.** If a team is 25 or more points ahead when the Referee announces the 2 minute warning for the 2nd half, the game shall be over.
- 8-3-2 Mercy Rule.** If a team scores during the last 2 minutes of the 2nd half and that score creates a point differential of 25 or more points, the game shall end at that point.
- 8-4-1 Touchdown Value.** If a female player scores a touchdown, the point value is 9. If a female player throws a legal forward pass and a touchdown is scored by any A player, prior to a change of possession, the point value is 9.

YOUTH FOOTBALL RULES SUMMARY

- 1-2-3 Field Markings.** The width of the field should be lined at 15 yard intervals from goal line to goal line. NOTE: The field measures 60 yards in length, goal line to goal line, and 40 yards in width. This Rule applies to U8, U10, and U12 only.
- 1-2-6 Team Box.** The team area shall be located 2 yards from the sideline and between the 15 yard lines. This Rule applies to U8, U10, and U12 only.
- 1-3-1 Ball Specifications.** The regular, intermediate, youth, junior, or pee wee size football shall be used for youth games.
- 3-1-4 Putting the Ball in Play.** The ball shall be placed at the A 10 yard line to begin each half of a game and following a Try, touchback or safety, unless moved by penalty. NOTE: There are no kickoffs. This Rule applies to U8, U10, and U12 only. U14 leagues will place the ball on the A 15 yard line.
- 6-1-2 Punt.** Prior to making the ball ready for play on 4th down, the Referee must ask the A captain if he/she wants to turn over possession of the football to B. If the A captain responds yes, the Referee will inform the B captain and then mark off 20 yards in advance of the scrimmage line. It will be 1st down for B. There are no punts. This Rule applies to U8 and U10 only.
- 7-3-4 Direct Snap.** The player who receives the snap may be within 2 yards behind the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange). Direct snaps are legal.

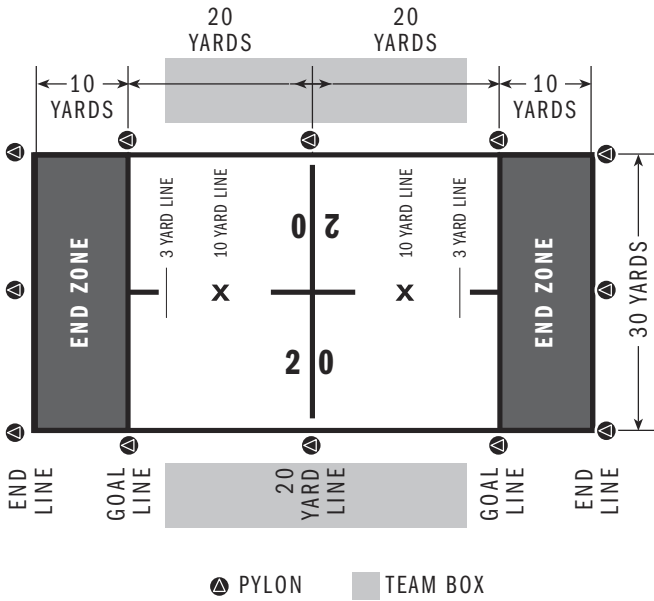
NOTE: U8 = age 8 and under, U10 = age 10 and under, etc. These Rules apply to players age 14 and under only.



4 ON 4 FOOTBALL RULES SUMMARY

- 1-1-1 The Game.** The game shall be played between 2 teams of 4 players each. Three players are required to avoid a forfeit.
- 1-2-3 Zone Markings.** The field measures 40 yards in length, goal line to goal line, and 30 yards in width. There shall be 1 hash mark dividing the field into halves.
- 3-1-1 Coin Toss.** The captain winning the toss shall select offense, defense, direction, or defer their choice to the 2nd half.
- 3-1-4 Putting The Ball In Play.** The ball shall be placed at the A 10 yard line to begin each half of a game and following a Try, touchback, or safety, unless moved by penalty. NOTE: There are no kicks.
- 3-2-1 Game Time.** Playing time shall be two 12 minute halves.
- 3-2-5 First 11 Minutes.** The clock will start on the snap to begin each half. It will run continuously for the first 11 minutes unless stopped by a team or Referee's time-out.
- 3-2-6 One Minute Warning.** Approximately 1 minute before the end of each half the Referee shall stop the clock and inform both captains of the playing time remaining in the half. The clock starts on the snap.
- 3-2-7 Last 1 Minute.** A start, stop clock shall be used.
- 3-3-3 Tie Breaker.** Each team will attempt to score by passing from the 3 yard line for 1 point, from the 10 yard line for 2 points, or from the 20 yard line for 3 points.
- 3-4-3 Charged Time-Outs.** Each team is entitled to 2 charged time-outs per game, including overtimes.
- 5-1-2 Series of Downs.** A team shall have 3 consecutive downs to advance the ball to the next zone by scrimmage.
- 5-1-4 A New Series of Downs.** A new series of downs is awarded when a team moves the ball legally into the next zone or the opponent obtains team possession of the ball by penalty, pass interception, or failure to advance to the next zone.
- Rule 7 Rushing QB.** B cannot cross their scrimmage line until the pass is released. *Penalty:* Illegal Advancement, 3 yards (S19).
- 7-3-2 Minimum Line Players.** The snapper is the only A player required to be on their scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange) at the snap.
- 7-5-1 Runner.** An A runner cannot advance the ball through A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange). There are no restrictions after a change of possession or once a legal forward pass has been touched beyond A's scrimmage line.
- 7-7-1 Legal Forward Pass.** There must be a legal forward pass each down. The receiver must touch the ball beyond A's scrimmage line. A has 5 seconds to release the ball on a forward pass. If not, it is a loss of down and the ball is next snapped at the previous spot. The Referee will sound his/her whistle at 5 seconds if the passer has possession of the football.
- 8-3-1 Mercy Rule.** The Mercy Rule does not apply.
- Rule 10 Enforcement Of Penalties.** All 10 yard penalties are 5 yards and all 5 yard penalties are 3 yards.

4 ON 4 FIELD DIAGRAM



10 COMMANDMENTS FOR CLINICIANS AND OBSERVERS

Keep these important things in mind when evaluating, observing, and teaching:

- 1. Be Fair and Impartial.** We all know many officials we are watching. That should not, and cannot, affect our opinions and evaluations. We are doing a disservice to the players, coaches, officials, and even to our friends we are observing when we are not honest and fair. We must be above reproach.
- 2. We Do Not Know All the Answers.** Find out why he/she did what he/she did before criticizing him or her for it. Find out what happened and why. Then offer suggestions on how it could be done better.
- 3. Be Constructive.** Remember the purpose of an observer is, first and foremost, to improve the quality of the officiating. Also, remember that the only way your comments can help an official to improve is if you share the comments with the official. Approach each official at halftime and after the game, whenever possible. Our officials may be learning the game for the 1st time, so be patient, calm, and answer all their questions, if possible.
- 4. Be Consistent.** We really need to do our best to evaluate everyone on the same scale and give everyone the same information. The most frustrating thing that can happen to an official is when 1 observer tells him/her something in 1 game, and in the next game he/she is told something just the opposite by a different observer.
- 5. Think Big Picture First When Observing.** Too often observers nitpick officials rather than look at the major officiating fundamentals—initial position, read and react then flow, communication with fellow officials and players, dead ball officiating, and so on. Concentrate on the major items first. Then be specific—explain in some detail what happened and how it can be corrected.
- 6. Be Discreet With Your Constructive Comments.** Our criticisms should be shared with the crew but not with other officials. We should be a positive influence on the program and should not criticize officials to other officials or in front of players, coaches, or spectators.
- 7. Praise at Least 3 Times as Much as You Criticize.** We all know people respond better to positive comments than to negative comments, so whenever possible, cast even your criticism in a positive manner, perhaps by praising someone else on the crew as a means of pointing out to another crew member a better way to do it.
- 8. Don't Be Afraid to Say I Do Not Know.** Often we are asked what we thought about a particular play, whether the pass was caught, what the proper mechanic or Rule is, or what happened on a particular play. And often we do not know. Admit it when you do not know. If it is a Rule or mechanic addressed in the NIRSA Rules Book and Officials' Manual, determine the correct answer and follow up with the official.
- 9. Be Careful When Judging Fouls From the Sideline.** Our job as observers is primarily “mechanics oriented” rather than “penalty oriented.” We will occasionally be able to comment on a foul that was called, but normally, we will not see it, or we will not get nearly as good a look at it as the official got.
- 10. Don't Forget What It Is Like to Be on the Field.** Remember how quickly things happen on the field. Remember the angles on the field are different and people can be screened or distracted by other action.

NIRSA FOOTBALL OFFICIALS' MANUAL

This NIRSA Football Officials' Manual has been designed to give every official detailed information regarding officiating mechanics. Through evaluation and study, the techniques presented are recognized and accepted as officiating standards wherever flag and touch football are played.

The following position titles are used:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 2 Person Crew | Referee (R) and Back Judge (BJ) |
| 3 Person Crew | Referee (R), Line Judge (LJ), and Back Judge (BJ) |
| 4 Person Crew | Referee (R), Line Judge (LJ), Field Judge (FJ), and Back Judge (BJ) |

Officials are an integral component to every game. The officiating crew is the third team on the field and should work together to administer a successful game. Trust partner officials but don't be afraid to make a crew save to uphold the integrity of the game. Officials should strive for consistency from play to play and game to game. Whenever possible, try to let the game develop a flow. Remember that officials enforce the rules and players play the game. Show confidence to command respect from players and coaches. Great communication will help develop rapport with both your partner officials and players. Be open to answering reasonable questions quickly and respectfully. Your purpose is to establish a calm and safe playing environment.

Officials should treat every down as a learning experience. It is necessary to plan and prepare before stepping on the field. Be prepared by thoroughly reading the rules, watching games live or on film, taking tests or quizzes, and asking questions. Develop your style of officiating and game management by thinking about advantage/disadvantage, player safety, and so on. Clinicians, observers, and experienced officials are all helpful sources for feedback. Be receptive to critiques and suggestions by having an open mind, good listening skills, and the willingness to learn. Always work hard no matter what the game or who you think may be watching.

PART I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND DUTIES**SECTION 1. BETWEEN HALVES**

- BJ When the clock expires, start your watch immediately and time the halftime.
- ALL Meet the captains at midfield near the end of the halftime, obtain and signal their choices.

SECTION 2. BETWEEN PERIODS

- ALL Note and record down, distance, and yard line nearest foremost point of ball.
- R Measure distance from the nearest yard line to foremost point of ball and estimate distance from nearest hash mark.

SECTION 3. COIN TOSS

- R Wait for the captains at the center of the field. Introduce the captains to each other. Ask the visiting captain to call the toss. The R shall catch the toss.
- A. Indicate the winner of the toss by placing your hand on that captain's shoulder.
 - B. Turn to the sidelines and signal "choice deferred," if applicable (S10).
 - C. Request the 1st choice from captain with the option for the 1st half.
 - D. Obtain the remaining choice from the other captain.
- R Place the captains with their backs to the goal they will defend. Signal winner's choice only, unless winner elects to defend a goal; then give the appropriate signal for the choice of the other captain.
- ALL Meet and record the winner of the toss and options they have selected. Hustle to your position. See that all nonplayers are in their respective team boxes.

SECTION 4. COMMUNICATION

- ALL Teamwork is important among officials. Continuous communication between all officials during the game is essential for effective game administration.

SECTION 5. DO NOT DISCUSS

- ALL Do not discuss with a team the play or players of his/her opponents in a game which you will officiate or are officiating. Do not get mad or even with coaches or players who disagree verbally with your calls.

SECTION 6. DOWN BOX OPERATION

- R The down box is on the R's side of the field in a 2 Person crew. Verify each down prior to declaring the ball ready for play. Signal to move the down box on 1st downs and punts. The down box will be operated on the same side of the field for the entire game unless moved by the R due to special circumstances.
- LJ The down box is on the LJ's side of the field in a 3 and 4 Person crew.
- ALL The down box will be positioned on the zone line-to-gain for every down, including the Try. Know the down and distance on each down. Be cognizant of live ball fouls which carry a loss of down or automatic 1st down and dead ball fouls. Verify the preceding down before changing the down box.
- ALL During the Try the down box will display the point value (1, 2, or 3) declared by A.

- R-LJ Instruct the down box operator to anticipate the play. If there is any chance of the play coming near him/her, move the down box back quickly. Remember, the safety of players and officials is important. Do not drop the down box. Locate the down box a minimum of 6' off the sideline.

SECTION 7. DUTIES: GAME

- ALL Each official must have a thorough knowledge of the duties of his/her position and be fully informed concerning the duties of the other officials. He/she must:
- A. Know the down and distance prior to each snap.
 - B. Be ready to assist any official who is temporarily out of position.
 - C. Observe incorrect rulings by other officials and attempt to prevent and correct.
 - D. Know the prescribed signals and when and how they are used.
 - E. Be alert to action away from the ball when the play has left your immediate area.




SECTION 8. DUTIES: PRE-GAME

- ALL Attendance at the pre-game conference at the time and place designated is mandatory. It is recommended that a period of at least 15 minutes prior to game time be allocated for this purpose. If the R is detained, he/she must notify the L J and request him/her to conduct the meeting.
- ALL Coordinate watches, review rule changes, and check officiating equipment. Check the playing field and player equipment.
- ALL The R will ask the captains and/or head coaches of each team, "Are your players legally equipped according to the rules?"
- R Discuss the following with the captains:
- A. Unusual plays.
 - B. Captains report to 40 yard line for the toss 3 minutes prior to game time.
 - C. Sportsmanship.
- BJ Have correct time of day and an extra stopwatch. Time game and intermission.

SECTION 9. ENFORCEMENT OF PENALTIES

- BJ **Corec penalty only: BJ has primary responsibility for "open" or "closed" status.**
- ALL Throwing the flag: Spot fouls – throw your flag on the corresponding yard line, not toward the players near the spot. Fouls that have no spot – throw your flag high into the air to give the R and the Down Box Operator a chance to see it. If more than 1 flag is thrown, officials must get together.
- ALL Signal time-out (S3) 2 times when ball is declared dead the last 2 minutes of each half. When the ball is declared dead and a foul has occurred, the calling official should give several short, rapid blasts of the whistle to alert players and officials that a foul has occurred, if the R does not see you immediately or you are a distance from the dead ball spot.
- ALL Signal the R the type of foul using the Code of Official Football Signals as you jog to the R to report the foul.
- ALL The official calling the foul reports to the R using the 4 W's:
- A. What: Type of foul. Dead ball or live ball. Describe the foul.
 - B. Who: Offense or defense – except in a punting situation. Then report K or R. Give the number and position of the player who fouled.

- C. When: Status of the ball – loose, in possession or after a change of team possession.
 D. Where: The spot where the run ends or the spot of the foul.
- ALL Do not place a hand on or point to the offending player. Assist each other in holding the dead ball spot and the spot of foul. Cover the foul markers whenever possible for each other.
- ALL Make sure the down box is not moved. The R steps off the correct yardage and places the ball spotters on the ground 1 yard apart. Both the LJ and FJ should “walk off” the penalty yardage independent of the R. Upon reaching the succeeding spot, turn and look at the spot that the R has walked off. If different, communicate to the R. The BJ needs to communicate “half the distance, automatic 1st down, loss of down,” and so on to the R. Correct any mistakes immediately.
- ALL Communicate to the R on penalties enforced half-distance to the goal line.
- ALL Dead ball fouls – immediately think about the down number and yardage for a 1st down.
- R The R notifies the coach and escorts the player to the sideline on all disqualifying fouls (S47).
- ALL The nearest official will notify the coach of fouls by his/her team. Report the position and number.

| CALLING FOULS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Stop clock for foul | 2. Give preliminary signal | 3. Indicate offending team | 4. Give offended Captain options | 5. Referee-Enforce Penalty |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 6. Repeat penalty signal | 7. Indicate offending team | 8. Indicate down | 9. When ball is ready give "ready for play" or ... | 10. Wind clock |
|  |  |  |  |  |

- R When fouls are reported, give the preliminary signal while standing still before explaining the options to the captain. If the choice is obvious, announce it and proceed with enforcement or declination. Otherwise explain the options to the captain. State options briefly, correctly, clearly, and courteously. Repeat the options if the captain is unsure.
- R Give a preliminary signal only for delay of game, encroachment, and false start fouls. For all other fouls, give a preliminary and final signal.

- R After the penalty is completed, take a position clear of the players and stand still. Give the signal to the BJ's side in 2 person and to the LJ's side in 3/4 person.
- A. If a penalty is accepted, signal the foul and extend 1 arm in a pointing fashion, horizontally in the direction of the offending team.
 - B. If a penalty is declined, signal the foul, extend 1 arm in a pointing fashion, horizontally in the direction of the offending team and then give the penalty declined signal (S10).
 - C. If the penalties offset, signal 1 foul, extend 1 arm in a pointing fashion, horizontally in the direction of the offending team. Repeat this procedure for a foul by the other team, then give the penalty declined signal (S10).
 - D. If there was no foul, signal disregard flag (S13).
 - E. Start the clock after a penalty is completed, if it was not otherwise stopped by Rule.

SECTION 10. 1ST DOWNS

- ALL If you are certain the play results in a 1st down, stop the clock (S3) 2 times during the last 2 minutes of each half. Assist the R as to whether to start the clock after awarding A a 1st down.
- ALL When the ball becomes dead near the zone line-to-gain, sell the call by loudly saying "short, short" or "1st down, 1st down." Communicate after each play about the down and distance, especially when the zone line-to-gain is more than 20 yards. Use the "thumb's up" signal with both hands to indicate 2 zone lines-to-gain must be gained for a 1st down. Remind both teams after each play of the necessary yardage needed for a 1st down.
- ALL When the play results in a 1st down, the covering official will raise 1 arm only straight up indicating 1st down.

SECTION 11. FORWARD PROGRESS

- ALL When marking forward progress, keep all players in view.
- ALL Use your downfield foot to signal forward progress to the R.
- R If forward progress is located between the hash marks, hustle to the approximate dead ball spot with the ball spotters. If the dead ball spot is located between the sideline and a hash mark, hustle to the nearest hash mark. Align the orange spotter on the downfield foot of the covering official. After placing the orange ball spotter on the ground, take 1 step forward (1 yard) and place the gold ball spotter on the ground. If the play loses yardage, the LJ will obtain forward progress from the R. The R will then get the ball spotters and align them on forward progress.

SECTION 12. GAME PACING AND TEMPO

- R
- A. To encourage an appropriately-paced contest, the R shall mark the ball ready as soon as A players are behind their scrimmage line and all officials are in proper position.
 - B. The R shall mark the ball ready for play then answer any questions.
 - C. Unless the offense is in a hurry-up, it is not necessary for the R to be behind the deepest offensive back when marking the ball ready, provided he/she can obtain this position well before the snap.

SECTION 13. HELPFUL HINTS

- ALL
- A. Your actions on and off the field must be above reproach.
 - B. Be impartial.
 - C. Be courteous, but firm and fair, when dealing with players and nonplayers.
 - D. Enter the field with a relaxed and confident attitude.
 - E. Do not get upset when people criticize you. Just make the call and enjoy the thrill.

SECTION 14. HURRY-UP OFFENSE

- R
- The Referee will increase the tempo when A is in “hurry-up.” Hustle, but do not hurry. If A is ready to snap, do not mark the ball ready for play until you have hustled behind the deepest back. Backpedal quickly, keeping your eyes on the players and the ball. Check with the other officials to make sure they are ready as you move back. Emphatically inform the center and QB to “wait for my whistle.” Mark the ball ready for play, then announce down and zone line-to-gain, if time allows. Do not delay A snapping the ball in order to announce down and distance. Do not announce down and distance if A has started its cadence. Simply signal the down with your hand. Maintain your poise.

SECTION 15. HUSTLE

- ALL
- Keep the game moving smoothly from start to finish. Hustle, but do not hurry! Do not move too fast. It is better to let the play come to you.

SECTION 16. INCOMPLETE PASS

- ALL
- Only the covering official(s) signal incomplete pass. Stand erect and repeat the signal (S10) 2 times deliberately at shoulder height level.

SECTION 17. JUDGEMENT

- ALL
- Decisions must be instantaneous and a ruling announced with minimal delay. Ensure improved instinctive reactions to play situations by reviewing all possible combinations of circumstances before each game. Let your mind digest what your eyes have seen.
- ALL
- Do not look for fouls. Always be sure of a foul. Never guess, as there are no phantom fouls. Pick up your flag if you realize the foul was not there. If you think it is a foul, it is not! You must know it was a foul.

SECTION 18. LAST 2 MINUTES OF EACH HALF

- ALL
- Officials should vocally communicate the status of the clock including the time remaining, “clock running or stopped,” and “wind on the snap or the ready” throughout the last 2 minutes of each half. Signals are important, but vocalization also keeps the players informed.
- ALL
- Use the time-out signal on out-of-bounds plays, penalties, change of team possession, time-outs, and 1st downs. The touchdown, touchback, safety, and incomplete pass signals automatically stop the clock. All officials must not signal time-out after one of these 4 are signaled. After a 3rd down play, utilize the following signal to indicate stop the clock after 4th down: “Cross your arms against your chest” (S21). Communicate to the other officials.
- R
- Give the 2 minute warning verbally to both captains. Other officials should communicate verbally to the sidelines.

- BJ Announce loudly the remaining time and whether the clock is running or stopped after each play.
- ALL When the ball becomes dead inbounds near the sideline, give the start clock signal (S2) using only 2 turns of your arm. This signal is a sideline mechanic only and must be used when the runner has been deflagged/tagged inbounds near the sideline.
- ALL When the runner advances beyond the zone line-to-gain for a 1st down and is then tagged/deflagged inbounds near the sideline, stop the clock for the 1st down. Remind the R whether the ball became dead inbounds by winding your index finger, or out-of-bounds by snapping your fingers.
- R When time expires in each period, give the signal to indicate that the period is over (S14).

SECTION 19. OFFICIATING UNIFORM

- ALL Officials who wear great looking uniforms send a positive message to players and coaches. Take pride in yourself and your profession!
- ALL The officiating uniform is:
- A. Black and white vertically striped, long or short-sleeved knit shirt with 1" vertical stripes, black knit cuff, and Byron collar.
 - B. Predominantly black athletic pants or black pants with 1-1/4" white stripes only with black socks, or black shorts with black ankle socks, and solid black football shoes with black laces. Shoes need to be shined before each game.
 - C. A black baseball cap with white piping. EXCEPTION: Sponsorships.
 - D. Additional essential equipment includes a plastic whistle, penalty marker, blue bean bag, flipping coin, game card, pencil, and down indicator. The penalty marker shall be a light gold flag (15" x 15") with a middle pouch weighted with soft material—sand, beans, etc.
- NOTE: Penalty flags worn by each official should be virtually hidden from view.

SECTION 20. PHYSICAL CONDITION

- ALL Football officiating is difficult and requires 100 percent concentration.

SECTION 21. RULES KNOWLEDGE

- ALL Knowledge of the rules must be perfect and supplemented by the ability to interpret them correctly through much time and study. All rules should be enforced fairly and consistently. Enforce the "spirit of the rule" by exercising good common sense.

SECTION 22. SIGNALS

- ALL All signals should be given promptly and distinctly. The number of fingers indicate the down, while a closed fist is 4th down. Signal the next down immediately with 1 hand once the ball is dead. On a tough sideline or end line catch or no catch call, give the "catch," "juggle," or "out-of-bounds" signal to "sell" the call. Repeat the signal 2 times. If appropriate, give the time-out signal or incomplete signal first. Do not give a catch signal into the field of play, only on a boundary line. Remember, the only part of officiating to over emphasize is your signaling. Do not mirror touchdown signals. Study the Code of Official Football Signals in the back of this manual.

SECTION 23. TIME-OUT: REFEREE

- R Signal the time-out 2 times (S3) and tap your chest with your hands. Declare the ball ready for play as soon as the need for the time-out has been met.
- ALL Injury: Do not stop the clock immediately if in doubt about the nature of an injury. Ask the player if he/she can continue; wait for a response, then assess the situation. Be deliberate. Permit as much time as is necessary. The safety of the injured player is important.
- ALL When either team is awarded a 1st down during the last 2 minutes of each half, all officials signal a time-out 2 times (S3). If the game is disrupted for any reason, record down, distance, position of ball, score, and time remaining in the game.
- ALL Know the status of the clock – whether to start on the snap or the ready. Communicate this information to the R. Snap your fingers to signal “do not start the clock” or “the clock will start on the snap.” Use a winding motion of your index finger to signal “start the clock” when marking the ball ready for play.

SECTION 24. TIME-OUT: TEAM

- ALL Any official may recognize the team time-out and stop the clock. All officials repeat the time-out signal 2 times (S3). Know the team and player’s number or head coach before signaling. Repeat time-out signal 2 times (S3). Then inform the R.
- L J-FJ-BJ After signaling a time-out 2 times (S3), turn to the requesting team with both arms extended and give 2 chucks.
- R Indicate a charged time-out by pointing to the requesting team, both arms extending, giving 2 chucks. Notify the captain and/or head coach when charged time-outs have been taken. When 55 seconds have expired, go to the ball, get ready signal from each captain, and sound the whistle declaring the ball ready for play.
- ALL Record time-outs including the game time and team. Verbalize and signal with each other during each time-out as to the number remaining for each team. Verbalize to both captains and sidelines the number of time-outs remaining. Do not huddle in a group.

SECTION 25. UNTIMED DOWN

- ALL Know the extension of period, especially the differences between live ball and dead ball fouls.
- BJ Communicate verbally with the Referee at the end of each period whether the period must be extended. You have primary responsibility.

SECTION 26. WHISTLE MECHANICS

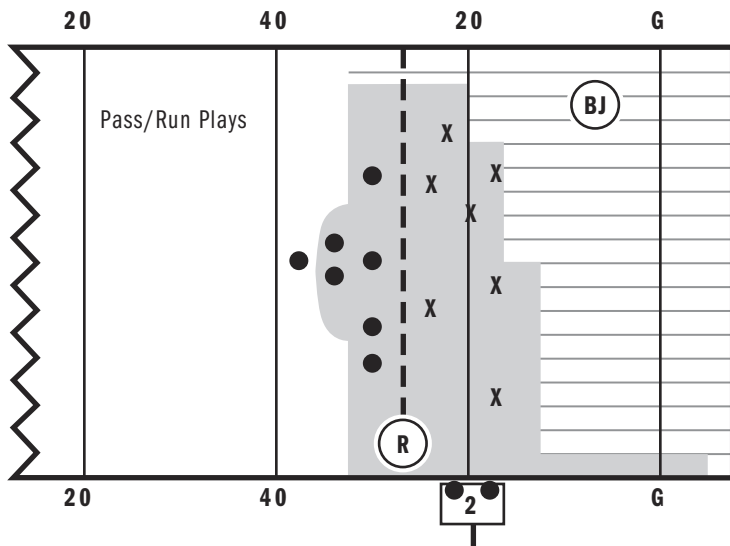
- ALL It is mandatory to keep the plastic whistle in your hand until the ball becomes dead by Rule. Let the play kill itself. Do not be in a hurry to sound your whistle.

PART II. 2 PERSON CREW MECHANICS

SECTION 1. PASSING AND RUNNING PLAYS – POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Article 1. Initial Positions.

- R A. Take a position in the neutral zone and near the sideline. Be at least 7 yards outside the widest player. If a receiver lines up near the sideline, take 2 steps backward and out-of-bounds. Move to a final position to see the ball and all players on or near the scrimmage lines.
- BJ B. Take a position on the side opposite the R. The position will be 17 yards beyond the scrimmage line and 5 yards from the sideline. Being behind the deepest defensive back and avoiding a position which will interfere with them takes priority.
- ALL C. Basic positions may vary depending upon play situations, team formations, field, and weather conditions. Always “box in” the play. Avoid positions which may cause scrambling to avoid interference with players. STAY WIDE! Remember, it is always easier to move in than back pedal.



Article 2. Responsibilities Before the Ball is Snapped.

- R A. Set the ball spotters on or inside the hash marks; check with the BJ for the correct down by raising your arm straight above your head and signal (closed fist for 4th down); communicate verbally to the down box operator; announce the down and distance; sound your whistle sharply and mark the ball ready for play; start your stopwatch for the 25 second count; move the down indicator on your hand to the next finger; back pedal

to the sideline; and keep people on the sidelines back at least 6'. NOTE: When a team is using a hurry-up offense, maintain a consistent tempo throughout the game. Inform the QB and center **not** to snap the ball until your whistle is sounded. Back pedal to your position quickly and visually check that the BJ is ready. Maintain your poise and control. Hustle, but do not hurry.

- R B. **Preventive Officiating Recommendations:** 1. Communicate with the QB when 10 seconds and 5 seconds remain on the 25 second count. If the ball has not been snapped with 5 seconds remaining, count down 5-4-3-2-1 so the QB can hear you; 2. If an A player, usually the QB, is positioned within 2 yards of the center snap, inform him/her to move back; 3. Thrust your backfield foot forward to help the line players position themselves; 4. Communicate verbally to A and B players along the neutral zone to check with you. Move them backward if they are in the neutral zone. 5. Check legality of the players' equipment; 6. If a team is shifting, inform them to "get set"; 7. **Remind the players to tuck in their jerseys and adjust their flag belts if necessary.**
- R C. Basic responsibilities include watching for dead ball fouls, delay of game, legality of the defensive signals, illegal shift-motion-snap, counting the 7 (**Corec-8**) A players (**Flag-count flag belts**) (S12), encroachment, and false start. Take responsibility for any player in motion.
- BJ D. Assist the R lining up the ball spotters relative to the nearest hash mark. This is important on plays that gain 10 or more yards. Thrust your downfield foot ahead on forward progress; raise your arm straight above your head and indicate the next down, (closed fist for 4th down); communicate verbally down and distance to the R; move the down indicator on your hand to the next finger; **Corec game – Communicate verbally and signal to the R whether the next play is "open" (S40) or "closed" (S41)**; back pedal to your initial position before A breaks the huddle; check the offensive formation to determine how close A players are positioned near the sideline. Adjust to a position at least 2 yards outside the widest receiver. Check your stop watch and inform players, coaches, and officials of the remaining time.
- BJ E. **Preventive Officiating Recommendations:** 1. Remind defensive players that contact is illegal – do not "chuck" the receivers; 2. Count the 7 (**Corec-8**) B players (**Flag-count flag belts**) – communicate if they have too many or not enough. Use (S12) for the correct number of players; 3. **Remind the players to tuck in their jerseys and adjust their flag belts if necessary.**
- BJ F. Basic responsibilities include counting the number of B players and assisting the R on illegal shifts, illegal formations, false starts, and legality of defensive signals.

Article 3. Responsibilities After the Ball is Snapped.

- R A. **The R's mental checklist is: Snap, Ball, QB, Rush, and Pass.** Watch the snap striking the ground either before or after touching a player. If so, sound the whistle sharply. Observe B as they rush the passer and move toward the screen blockers. Adjust your position to see through the play and call illegal contact. Read your "keys" after the snap. Do the receivers move downfield and run pass patterns? Do the line players start screen blocking and the backs begin running? Most of the plays are passes. Many runs develop off the pass. If you read run, hold at the neutral zone and observe the screen blockers and defenders ahead of and around the runner. Follow the runner toward your sideline watching for illegal contact and flag guarding. Be careful of the agile runner who changes directions quickly. Mark forward progress with your downfield foot when the runner is deflagged/tagged.
- R B. If the runner moves away from you, continue to officiate. Observe action in the offensive backfield, along the neutral zone and screen blocks around the runner. Move down the scrimmage line, then drift downfield, keeping players in front of you. Try to get the big picture.
- R C. Exciting parts of this game are the many backward passes thrown, especially beyond the neutral zone. Work hard for a position which parallels the runner, especially from the snap to 8 to 10 yards downfield. By staying wide and running parallel with the runner, your position will be excellent to rule on the legality of the pass. When a pass is thrown backward, immediately extend your arm with a closed fist at a 90° angle toward the passing team's end line and yell "back" (S17). If thrown forward beyond A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange) or after a change of team possession, drop your flag on the corresponding yard line where the pass was thrown.
- R D. If you read pass, move 2 to 3 yards toward the offensive backfield. Remember to stay wide and keep your shoulders parallel to the sideline. Shuffle your feet similar to a defensive basketball player, keeping in mind not to cross your feet. This will allow you to move in either direction quickly. Take a position to determine whether a pass thrown behind the A scrimmage line is forward or backward. If the pass is backward, extend your arm with a closed fist at a 90° angle toward the passing team's end line (S17), yell "back" and "sell" the call. If intended to be thrown backward, but the pass goes forward, extend your arm with an open hand forward and yell "forward" (S45). Remember, if in doubt, the pass is backward. Protect the quarterback. Once the pass is released, yell "ball's away." This will help the defense avoid roughing the passer. When the pass is released and a defender is close to the passer, keep your eyes there a few seconds to rule on legality of any contact. Do not be a "head wagger" and miss this important call.
- R E. When the passer moves toward the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter–orange), follow him/her and stay wide. If a forward pass is thrown near the 1st ball spotter–orange, hustle to the spot where the ball was released. Check the spot of the pass with the ball spotter. Remember, if in doubt, the pass is legal.
- R F. You are solely responsible for calling intentional grounding. If necessary, seek information from the BJ concerning A players in the area where the pass was thrown.

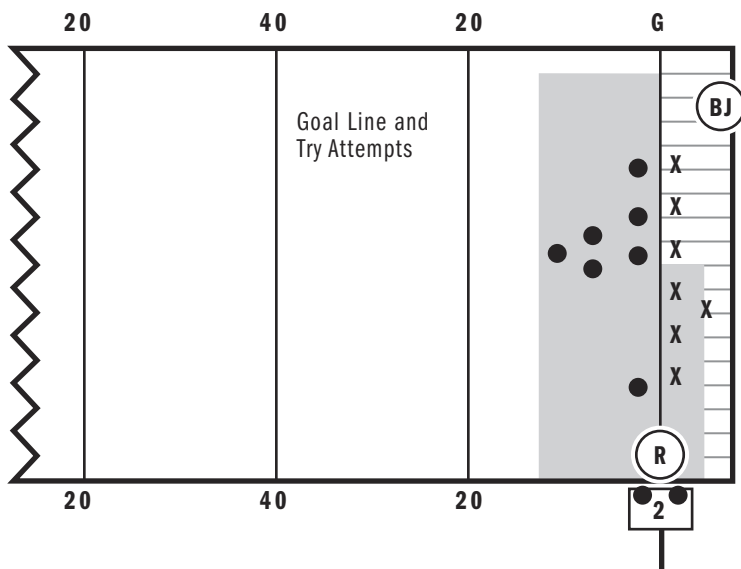
- R G. Once the pass is thrown, move quickly to the most advantageous position to see between the receiver and defender. Adjust your position for the angle. This will place you in the proper position to help the BJ rule on pass interference by either player. Stay wide. Always be in a position to cover any pass near the sideline.
- R H. A large percentage of the passes are designed for short or intermediate yardage. Therefore, you are responsible for forward progress to approximately 8 to 10 yards beyond the neutral zone. Constantly be aware of the zone line-to-gain and the goal line. Sell the close call by hustling to the dead ball yard line. Hustle and stay parallel to the sideline until you reach the yard line where the ball becomes dead. Then “square off” and move toward the ball 2 or 3 steps. Keep all players in front of your view. Thrust your downfield foot forward to mark the foremost point of the ball. Remind A players to take the ball back to their huddle.
- BJ I. **The BJ’s mental checklist is: Snap, Players, Passer, Zone, and Ball.** When the ball is snapped, your 1st couple of steps are always backward. Read your “keys” for pass versus run. If a run develops, watch for screen blocking ahead of and around the runner. If the runner or receiver moves toward your sideline, hustle to that sideline for an “outside looking in” angle. This is the “boxing-in” principle. Do not get caught on the inside. If the runner moves toward the R’s side, do not overcommit too fast. Throwbacks and cutbacks are very common. Let the flow of the play dictate your movement.
- BJ J. As the ball is snapped, observe any illegal contact by players on and beyond the neutral zone. Use your peripheral vision to watch all the receivers coming off the scrimmage line. The R cannot help because he/she will be observing the line and backfield play. Continue to move backward as the receivers establish their patterns. Let the play come to you. Do not allow any receivers behind you. The end line is your responsibility. Take a quick look at the passer’s eyes. In most cases, he/she will show you where the pass is going. Your objective is moving to a position to obtain an angle which allows you to see between the receiver and the defender as the ball arrives.
- ALL K. Rule on all forward passes thrown in or near your area. This is especially true on button hooks, traps, and muffs. If in doubt on a pass being complete or incomplete, concede the call to the official facing the receiver. Do not give the catch signal into the field of play. If you think it is a catch, move toward the forward progress spot when the ball becomes dead and look for help.
- ALL L. The pass thrown toward the sideline is a challenging call. Read the “keys” at the snap. Be aware of the receiver who moves toward the sideline. Once the passer releases the ball, begin adjusting your position to the receiver. Most calls are missed because the official is either too close to the receiver or not straddling the sideline. Adjust your position so you are at least 5 yards away from the receiver, standing still. Watch the feet 1st and then the ball. Pause an instant. “Let your mind digest what your eyes have seen.” Remember, you have responsibility for the A player who goes out-of-bounds and returns to participate. Throw your hat and say the player’s number. Take responsibility for your sideline-end line to end line. Be ready to move quickly downfield on a long pass.

- ALL M. When the runner steps out-of-bounds, move to the spot and hold it. Do not drop your bean bag on the spot unless the play gets rough out-of-bounds. Keep your eyes on the players out-of-bounds until all action has stopped and they have returned inbounds. This may mean pivoting and facing out-of-bounds. Be deliberate and take your time for 3 to 4 seconds. If there is a late hit, it must be penalized. Signal time-out immediately during the last 2 minutes of either half. Repeat the signal 2 times. Look professional by giving good sharp signals.

SECTION 2. GOAL LINE AND TRY PLAYS – POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Article 1. Initial Positions.

- BJ A. Whenever the ball is snapped on or inside the 5 yard line, stand on the end line, 5 yards from the sideline. The end line is your responsibility. Watch the wide receivers as they break the huddle. If they are positioned near the sideline, move closer to the sideline.



Article 2. Responsibilities.

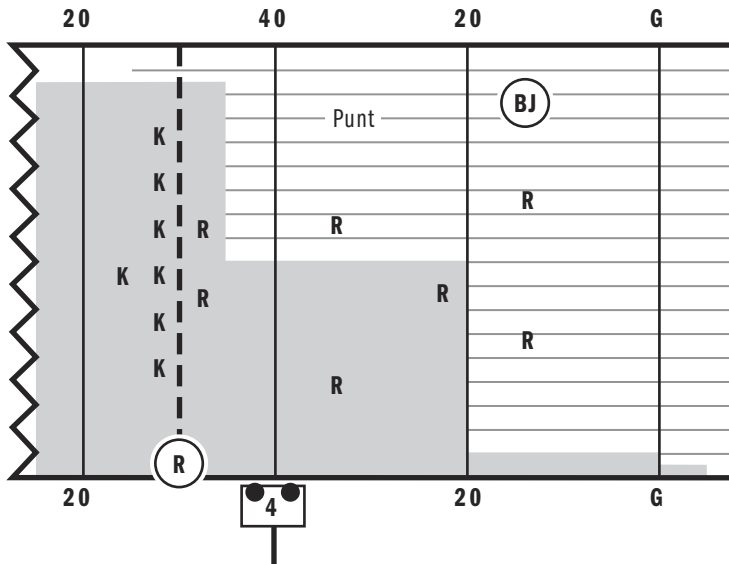
- R A. Do not signal a touchdown until all requirements have been met. Stay on the scrimmage line. Do not move toward the backfield. You must be in a position to rule forward progress or touchdown inside the 10 yard line. Always know where the goal line is. Your objective is to be straddling the goal line before the ball breaks the plane in possession. If the runner or receiver is near your sideline, move out-of-bounds 2 yards. If the runner or pass goes toward the opposite sideline, hustle down the goal line for a better look.

- R B. Reverse mechanics: When A is near their goal line, on or inside their 8 yard line, move toward the goal line after the snap. This will put you in great position to rule on a possible safety.
- BJ C. Stay on the end line and let the play develop. Do not overcommit and risk getting trapped.
- ALL D. Indicate the score using a sharp touchdown signal only when in a position to see possession by the offense in the opponent's end zone. You must see the football! Do not mirror another official's touchdown signal. If you see a touchdown, then signal it. After signaling, the closest official must then remove the player's flag belt to insure the belt was secured legally.
- R E. After the touchdown, explain the Try options to the captain. Secure the choice and announce it to the players and officials. Set the orange ball spotter on the 3, 10, or 20 yard line.

SECTION 3. PUNTS – POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Article 1. Initial Positions and Responsibilities Before the Ball is Snapped.

- R A. Positions are the same as run/pass plays. Count the K players (**Flag-count flag belts**) (**S12**). Prior to all 4th down plays, ask the A captain if he/she wants to punt. Communicate this decision to all A and B players. If there is a charged team time-out, end of period, or penalty, again ask the A captain if he/she wants to punt. Then inform the B captain of this decision. If A wants to punt, announce it to all players and officials (S43). Inform both teams to stay out of the neutral zone until the ball is kicked. Backpedal to the sideline and check for correct positioning of the BJ. Do not allow the ball to be snapped until everyone has met the punt requirements. Penalize any encroachment, false start, or illegal snap as a dead ball foul.



- BJ B. Take a position parallel to the deepest receivers and at least 10 yards wide of the nearest receiver. Do not get caught inside. Count the R players (**Flag-count flag belts**) (S12).

Article 2. Responsibilities After the Ball is Snapped.

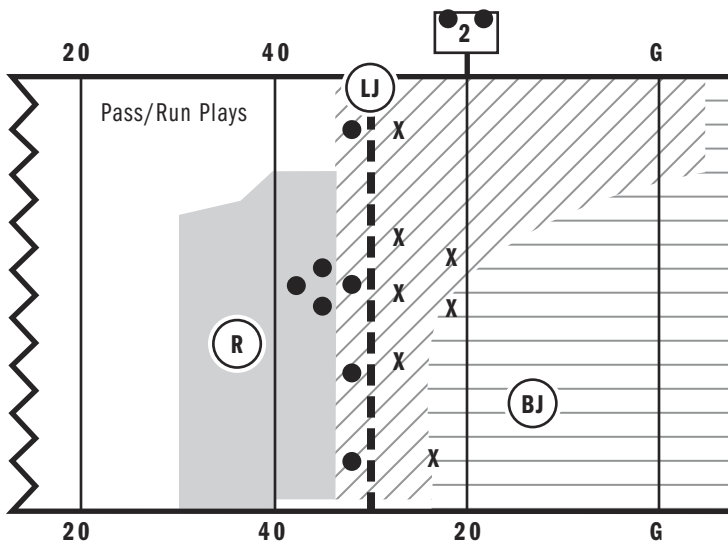
- R A. Watch for the snap hitting the ground, the kicker punting the ball, the ball crossing the A scrimmage line, and the players staying out of the neutral zone until the punt. After the kick, stay near the K scrimmage line and sideline, watching for illegal contact. Know where the runner is by using your peripheral vision, but do not concentrate on him/her. Remember, the screen blocking ahead of the runner is your primary responsibility.
- BJ B. Once the punt is caught, drop your bean bag where the kick ends, then move with the flow watching for illegal contact. You are responsible for the B goal line and end line. If punted near the goal line, stay wide and straddle the goal line. Know whether the punt breaks the plane. For long punts out-of-bounds on your sideline, mark the out-of-bounds spot. Coordinate this coverage with the R.
- ALL C. Be alert for kick catching interference, fumbles, muffs, and backward passes. If the runner moves into your area, move toward a position to rule on backward passes. Stay parallel with the runner.

PART III. 3 PERSON CREW MECHANICS

SECTION 1. PASSING AND RUNNING PLAYS – POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Article 1. Initial Positions.

- R A. Take a position on the side opposite the L J and same side as the B J. Take a position 7 yards behind and 7 yards outside the deepest offensive back at a 45° angle. Take a final position to see the snap, backs, and line players, except the wide-out receivers.
- L J B. Take a position on the side opposite the R in the neutral zone standing on the sideline. If a receiver lines up near the sideline, take 2 steps backward and out-of-bounds. Take a final position to see the snap and all players on or near the scrimmage lines.
- B J C. Take a position on the side opposite the L J. Your initial position will be 17 yards beyond the scrimmage line and 5 yards from the sideline. Stay at 17 yards until the ball is snapped on or inside B's 10 yard line (goal line mechanics). Being behind the deepest defensive back and avoiding a position which will interfere with them takes priority. If a receiver is positioned near the sideline, move closer toward the sideline.
- ALL D. Basic positions may vary depending upon play situations, team formations, field, and weather conditions. Always "box in" the play. Avoid positions which may cause scrambling. Avoid interfering with the players. STAY WIDE! Remember, it is easier to move in than back.



Article 2. Responsibilities Before the Ball is Snapped.

- R A. Set the ball spotters on or inside the hash marks; check with the other officials for the correct down; check the down box; announce the down and distance; sound your whistle sharply

and mark the ball ready for play; start your stopwatch for the 25 second count; move the down indicator on your hand to the next finger; and hustle to your initial position. **A note of caution:** When a team is using a hurry-up offense, maintain a consistent tempo throughout the game. Inform the QB and center **not** to snap the ball until the whistle is sounded. Back pedal to your position quickly and visually check that the LJ and BJ are ready. Maintain your poise and control of the game. Hustle, but do not hurry.

- R B. **Preventive Officiating Recommendations:** 1. Communicate with the QB when 10 seconds and 5 seconds remain on the 25 second count. If the ball has not been snapped with 5 seconds remaining, count down 5-4-3-2-1 so the QB can hear you; 2. If an A player, usually the QB, is positioned within 2 yards of the center snap, inform him/her to move back; 3. Remind the QB that all players must be set for 1 second; 4. Check legality of the players' equipment; 5. If a team is shifting, inform them to "get set"; 6. **Remind the players to tuck in their jerseys and adjust their flag belts if necessary.**
- R C. Basic duties include watching for delay of game, legality of the defensive signals, illegal shift-motion-procedure-snap, false start, and counting the 7 (**Corec-8**) A players (**Flag-count flag belts**) (S12).
- L J D. Thrust your downfield foot ahead to mark forward progress; raise your arm straight above your head and indicate the next down (closed fist for 4th down); communicate verbally to the down box operator and the other officials about the next down number; move the down indicator on your hand to the next finger; back pedal to the sideline; other than during a hurry-up offense, be in your initial position before A breaks the huddle; and keep people on the sideline back at least 6'.
- L J E. **Preventive Officiating Recommendations:** 1. Thrust your backfield foot forward to help the line players position themselves; 2. Communicate verbally to the A and B players along the neutral zone to check with you. Move them backward if they are in the neutral zone. **Take charge** and be in control of the scrimmage lines. **3. Remind the players to tuck in their jerseys and adjust their flag belts if necessary.**
- L J F. Basic responsibilities include counting the 7 (**Corec-8**) A players (**Flag-count flag belts**) (S12), encroachment, false start, and illegal shift-motion-snap. Take responsibility for any player in motion.
- BJ G. Thrust your downfield foot ahead to mark forward progress; raise your arm straight above your head and indicate the next down (closed fist for 4th down); communicate verbally down and distance to other officials; move the down indicator on your hand to the next finger; **Corec game—Communicate verbally and signal to the R and the L J whether the next play is "open" (S40) or "closed" (S41)**; back pedal to your initial position before A breaks the huddle; check offensive formation to determine how close A players are positioned near the sideline and keep people on the sidelines back at least 6'. Be wider than the widest offensive player. Check your stop watch and inform players, coaches, and officials of the remaining time.

- BJ H. **Preventive Officiating Recommendations:** 1. Remind B that contact is illegal—do not “chuck” the receivers; 2. Count the B players (**Flag-count flag belts**)—(S12) communicate if they have too many or not enough; **3. Remind the players to tuck in their jerseys and adjust their flag belts if necessary.**
- R-BJ I. Whenever the dead ball spot is outside the nearest hash mark, the BJ will assist the R by finding the nearest hash mark and lining up the R.

Article 3. Responsibilities After the Ball is Snapped.

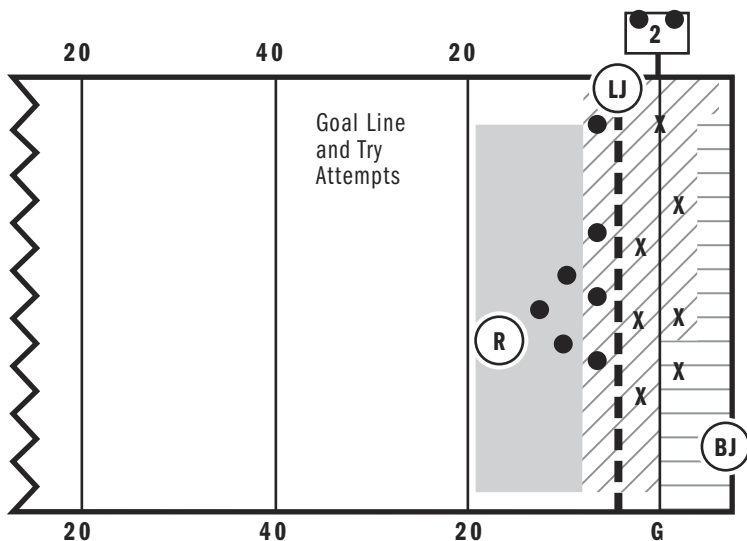
- R A. **The R's mental checklist is: Snap, Ball, QB, Rush, and Pass.** Watch for the snap striking the ground either before or after touching a player. Observe B as they rush the QB and move toward the screen blockers. Adjust your position to see through the play and rule on illegal contact maintaining a 45° angle. Follow the runner toward your sideline behind the scrimmage line maintaining an “inside looking out” angle to see the inside arm of the runner for a possible flag guard. Be careful of the agile runner who can change directions quickly. Stay inside and do not follow the runner too tightly, maintaining a 5 yard cushion. Always be aware of the throw-back. Mark forward progress if the runner is deflagged/tagged behind the scrimmage line. Observe fouls around and ahead of the runner after he/she crosses the neutral zone. Maintain a position at or near the scrimmage line to observe action around the runner. You are responsible for the pitch person.
- R B. If the QB backpedals more than 2 to 3 yards, take a step backward for every step he/she does. Protect the QB. Do not be a “head wagger!” When the pass is thrown, keep your eyes on the passer until there is no threat of a foul. Remember, the QB is your primary responsibility.
- R C. Take a position to rule whether a pass thrown behind the neutral zone is forward or backward. If the pass is backward, extend your arm with a closed fist at a 90° angle toward the passing team's end line (S17), yell “back” and “sell” the call, if close. If intended to be thrown backward, but the pass goes forward, extend your arm with an open hand forward (S45) and yell “forward.” Remember, if in doubt, the pass is backward. Once the pass is released, yell “ball's away.” This will help B avoid roughing the passer.
- R D. When the passer moves toward the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange), follow. If a forward pass is thrown near the 1st ball spotter-orange, hustle to the spot where the ball was released (men and women only). Check the spot of the pass with the 1st ball spotter-orange. Remember, if in doubt, the pass is legal.
- R E. You are solely responsible for calling intentional grounding. If necessary, seek information from the other officials whether any A players were in the area where the pass was thrown.
- L J F. **The L J's mental checklist is: Snap, Players, Passer, Zone, and Ball.** Read your “keys” after the snap. Do the receivers move downfield and run pass patterns? Do the line players start screen blocking and the backs begin running? Most plays are passes. Many runs develop off the pass. If you read run, hold at the neutral zone and observe the screen blockers and defenders ahead of and around the runner. If you read pass, slide downfield 3 to 5 yards initially. Move no later than 1 second after the snap. Keep your shoulders parallel to the sideline. Shuffle your feet similar to a defensive basketball player, keeping in mind not to

cross your feet. This will allow you to move in either direction quickly. Observe the initial charge of the line players for a foul by either team. Then watch for any illegal contact by the receivers and defensive backs primarily on your side of the field. Switch your sight briefly from the players downfield back to the QB. Read the QB's eyes. Anticipate the play, but do not anticipate the call. Once the ball is thrown, move quickly to the most advantageous position to see between the receiver and defender. Adjust your position for the best angle. This will place you in proper position to rule on a foul by either player. Stay wide. Be in a position to cover any pass near the sideline.

- L J G. If the runner moves away from you, continue to officiate. Observe action in the offensive backfield, along the neutral zone and screen blocks around the runner. Move down the scrimmage line, then drift downfield keeping players in front of you. Try to get the big picture.
- L J H. An exciting part of this game are the many backward passes thrown, especially beyond the neutral zone. Work hard for a position which parallels the runner, especially from the neutral zone to 20 yards downfield. By staying wide and parallel to the runner, your position will be excellent to rule on the legality of the pass. When a pass is backward, immediately extend your arm with a closed fist at a 90° angle toward A's end line (S17) and yell "back." If thrown forward beyond A's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter-orange) or after a change of team possession, throw your flag to the corresponding yard line where the pass was released.
- L J I. A large percentage of plays are designed for short or intermediate yardage. You are responsible for forward progress to approximately 20 yards beyond the neutral zone. This is why being parallel to the runner is so important. Be prepared to take the runner to the goal line. Constantly be aware of the zone line-to-gain and the goal line. Sell the close call by hustling to the dead ball spot. Hustle and stay parallel to the sideline until you reach the yard line where the ball became dead. Then "square off" and move toward the ball. Keep players in front of you and in your view. Thrust your downfield foot forward to mark the foremost point of the ball.
- L J J. **Corec Games—Stay on the scrimmage line after the snap. Be ready to rule when the ball crosses the A scrimmage line. If the runner moves near the line or the pass is caught near the line, verbalize "beyond" and extend your downfield arm at a 90° angle toward the defensive team's end line once the ball is touched beyond the A scrimmage line. On a closed play, if the play involves a female passer or female receiver of a legal forward pass, and the runner is downed near the A scrimmage line, "sell" the call of "short, short" if short of the line or "positive" if positive yardage is gained to "open" the next down. Rule on whether the passer is behind or beyond the 1st ball spotter-orange.**
- L J-BJ K. Drop your bean bag where a player loses possession when a fumble lands in an opponent's end zone, or when a fumble or backward pass beyond the scrimmage line is intercepted.
- L J-BJ L. The pass thrown toward the sideline is a challenging call for the L J and BJ. Read the "keys" at the snap. Be aware of the receiver who moves toward your sideline. Once the

passer releases the ball, begin adjusting your position to the receiver. Most calls are missed because the official is either too close to the receiver or not straddling the sideline. Adjust your position so you are at least 5 yards away from the receiver, standing still. Stop-N-Watch. Watch the feet first and then the ball. Pause an instant. “Let your mind digest what your eyes have seen.” Remember, you have responsibility for the A player who goes out-of-bounds and returns to participate. Throw your hat and say the player’s number. Take responsibility for your respective sideline-end line to end line. Be ready to move quickly downfield on a long pass.

- LJ-BJ M. Watch for out-of-bounds plays on your sideline. When the runner steps out-of-bounds, move to the spot and hold it. Do not drop your bean bag on the spot unless the play gets rough out-of-bounds. Keep your eyes on the players out-of-bounds until all action has stopped and they have returned in bounds. This may mean pivoting and facing out-of-bounds. Be deliberate and take your time for 3 to 4 seconds. If there is a late hit, it must be penalized.
- BJ N. **The BJ’s mental checklist is: Snap, Players, Passer, Zone, and Ball.** When the ball is snapped, your 1st couple of steps are always backward. Read your “keys” for pass versus run. If a run develops, watch the screen blockers ahead of and around the runner. If the runner or receiver moves toward the sideline, hustle to that sideline for an “outside looking in” angle. This is the “boxing-in” principle. Do not get caught inside. If the runner moves toward the LJ’s side, do not overcommit too fast. Throwbacks and cutbacks are very common. Let the flow of the play dictate your movement.
- BJ O. As the ball is snapped, observe any illegal contact by players in and directly beyond the neutral zone especially on your half of the field. Continue to move backward as the receivers establish their patterns. Let the play come to you. Do not allow any receivers behind you. The end line is your responsibility. Take a quick look at the passer’s eyes. In most cases, he/she will show you where the pass is going. Your objective is moving to a position to see between the receiver and defender as the ball arrives.
- ALL P. Rule on forward passes thrown in or near your area. This is especially true on button hooks, traps, and muffs. If in doubt on a pass being complete or incomplete, concede the call to the official facing the receiver. Do not give the catch signal in the field of play. If you think it is a catch, move toward the forward progress spot when the ball becomes dead and look for help.
- ALL Q. After the ball is dead, be in a position to cover late blocks, roughness, and other fouls. When dead in your area, hustle in and thrust your downfield foot forward to mark progress. Remind A players to take the ball back to their huddle.
- ALL R. If the ball goes out-of-bounds, signal time-out immediately during the last 2 minutes of either half. The other officials will clean up around you until there is no threat of a foul. Repeat the time-out signal 2 times. Look professional by giving good sharp signals.



SECTION 2. GOAL LINE AND TRY PLAYS – POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Article 1. Initial Positions.

- R-L J A. Positions are the same as run/pass plays.
- BJ B. Whenever the ball is snapped on or inside the 10 yard line, stand on the end line, 5 yards from the sideline. The end line is your responsibility. Watch the wide receivers as they break the huddle. If they are positioned near the sideline, move closer to it.

Article 2. Responsibilities—Goal to Go.

- R A. Signal touchdown only after all requirements have been met and you have checked for any penalty flags. Help rule on forward progress only if the L J's vision is blocked.
- L J B. After the snap, hustle to the goal line and rule on either a touchdown or forward progress short of the goal line. This is important. Always know where the goal line is on short yardage situations. Stay wide. Your objective is to be straddling the goal line when the ball breaks the plane in possession. If the runner or receiver is near your sideline, move out-of-bounds 2 yards for an "outside in" look. If the runner or passer moves toward the opposite sideline, hustle down the goal line for a better look. However, keep all players in front of you, and be ready for any reverse or broken field runs.
- BJ C. Stay on the end line and let the play develop. Do not overcommit and risk getting trapped. Let the play come to you.
- L J-BJ D. Indicate the score by giving a sharp touchdown signal only when in a position to see possession by the offense in the opponent's end zone. Be deliberate. You must see the

football! Do not mirror another official's touchdown signal. If you see touchdown, then signal it. After signaling, the closest official must remove the player's flag belt to insure the belt was secured legally.

- R E. After the touchdown, speak to the scoring team's captain. Explain the Try options to the captain. Secure his/her choice and announce it to all players and officials. Set the orange ball spotter on the 3, 10, or 20 yard line.

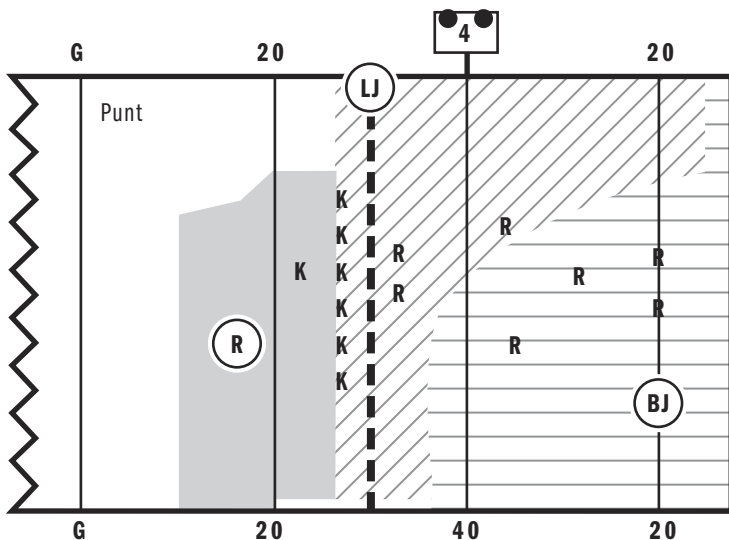
Article 3. Responsibilities—Reverse Goal Line Mechanics.

- R-LJ A. When A is near their own goal line, between the 8 and 15 yard line, the R will straddle the goal line and be wide. As the QB rolls to either sideline, stay on the goal line to rule on a possible safety. When the ball is snapped on or inside the A 8 yard line, the L J will move toward the goal line at the snap (corec, men's, and women's games), while the R will be on the end line prior to the snap. Once the goal line is no longer threatened, the R and L J will move upfield similar to the other players.

SECTION 3. PUNTS – POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Article 1. Initial Positions.

- R-LJ A. Positions are the same as run/pass plays. Count the K players (**Flag-count flag belts**) (S12).
- BJ B. Take a position on the same side as the R. Be parallel to the deepest receivers and at least 10 yards wide of the nearest receiver. Responsibilities are the same as 2 Person.



Article 2. Responsibilities Before the Ball is Snapped.

- R A. Prior to all 4th down plays, ask the A captain if he/she wants to punt. Communicate this decision to all A and B players (S43). If there is a charged team time-out, end of period or penalty, again ask the A captain if he/she wants to punt. Then inform the B captain of this decision. If A wants to punt, announce it to all players and officials (S43). Inform both teams to stay out of the neutral zone until the ball is punted. Check for correct positioning of the other officials. Do not allow the ball to be snapped until everyone has met the punt requirements. Penalize any encroachment, illegal snap, or false start as a dead ball foul.

Article 3. Responsibilities After the Ball is Snapped.

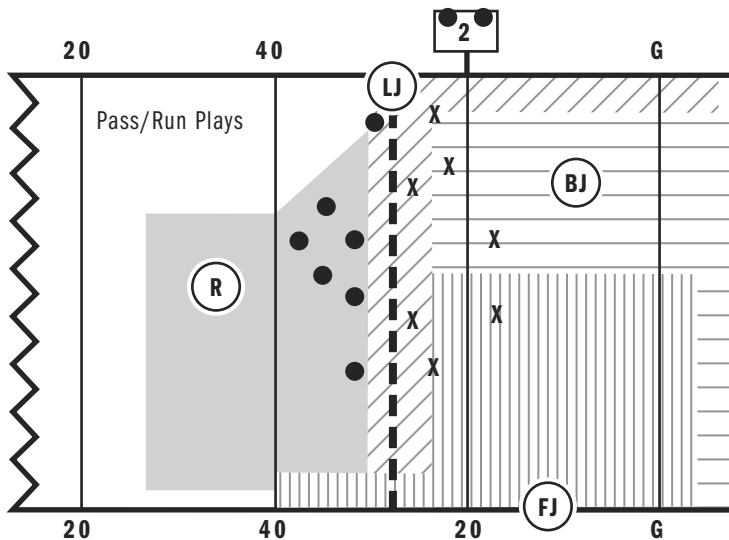
- R A. Watch for the snap hitting the ground and the kicker punting the ball. If the punt goes out-of-bounds in flight, line up the deep official by chopping your arm as he/she reaches the out-of-bounds spot. After the punt, move to the K scrimmage line, watching for any illegal contact, especially in the center of the field. Know where the runner is by using your peripheral vision, but focus on the screen blocking ahead of the runner.
- L J B. Rule on any scrimmage line fouls. Hold your initial position after the punt. Be ready to rule on whether the punt crosses the K scrimmage line. Observe the players for any illegal contact, concentrating primarily on your half of the field. Know where the ball is using your peripheral vision. If the punt is kicked short, take responsibility for the receiver and drop your bean bag where the kick ends. You are responsible for your sideline on a punt return.
- BJ C. Once the punt is caught, drop your bean bag where the kick ends, then move with the flow watching for illegal contact. You are responsible for the B goal line and end line. If punted near this goal line, stay wide and straddle the goal line. Know whether the punt breaks the plane.
- L J-BJ D. If punted out-of-bounds on the ground, mark the spot. If punted out-of-bounds in the air, jog to the "approximate" area, then begin walking slowly until the R chops his/her arm (S1) to mark the spot. By walking slowly, you are indicating to the R this is where "I think the punt went out-of-bounds."
- ALL E. Be alert for kick catching interference, fumbles, muffs, and backward passes. If the runner moves into your area, move toward a position to rule on the direction of a pass, by staying parallel with the runner.

PART IV. 4 PERSON CREW MECHANICS

SECTION 1. PASSING AND RUNNING PLAYS – POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Article 1. Initial Positions.

- R A. Take an initial position on the side opposite the L J and B J and on the same side as the F J. Line up 7 yards behind and 7 yards outside the deepest offensive back. Take a final position to see the snap, backs, and line players, except the wide-out receivers.
- L J B. Take an initial position on the side opposite the R and F J in the neutral zone and standing on the sideline. If a receiver lines up near the sideline, take 2 steps backward and out-of-bounds. Take a final position to see the snap and all players on and near the scrimmage lines.
- F J C. Take a position on the side opposite the L J and B J and the same side as the R. Start on the sideline and 10 yards downfield beyond the scrimmage line. If a receiver lines up near the sideline, take 2 steps backward and out-of-bounds. Line up at a 45° angle to the sideline for a better look. The initial position will vary dependent upon down, distance, and team tendencies. On the 3rd and 4th downs, stay at the zone line-to-gain, 2 yards out-of-bounds, until the ball crosses it. However, if it is 3rd or 4th down and less than 2 yards for a 1st down, move to the zone line-to-gain only after the L J states "line's good." Always be aware of the zone line-to-gain. It is the F J's primary responsibility. The objective is to be straddling the zone line-to-gain whenever the runner or receiver crosses it. This exciting game is primarily pass oriented. Being downfield 10 yards is an ideal position to observe receivers and defenders.
- B J D. Take a position on the side opposite the R and F J and same side as the L J. The initial position will be 17 yards beyond the scrimmage line, 15 yards from the sideline. Being behind the deepest defensive back and avoiding a position which will interfere with them takes priority.



- ALL E. Basic positions may vary depending upon play situations, team formations, field, and weather conditions. Always “box in” the play. Avoid positions which may cause scrambling to avoid interference with the players.

Article 2. Responsibilities Before the Ball is Snapped.

- ALL A. Many responsibilities are the same for 3 and 4 Person. Rather than repeat this information, indicated below are the differences. In addition, the FJ responsibilities are described in detail.
- FJ B. Thrust downfield foot ahead on forward progress; communicate verbally about down and distance to the other officials; move down indicator on your hand to the next finger; back pedal to the sideline; and keep people on the sideline back at least 6'. Basic responsibilities include counting the B players (**Flag-count flag belts**) (S12) and knowing your assigned receivers and defenders.
- FJ C. Adjust initial position based upon the down and distance, unless it is 3rd or 4th down. If the distance is more than 10 yards, move deeper; if less than 10 yards then “stay home.” Do not take a position in the neutral zone.

Article 3. Responsibilities After the Ball is Snapped.

- R A. Basic responsibilities are the same as 3 Person. Be more deliberate watching the passer after the release. Do not be a “**head wagger**.”
- LJ B. Hold your initial position in the neutral zone after the snap. Observe screen blockers and defenders in the neutral zone and behind. Then move downfield approximately 3 yards. Move no later than 1 second after the snap (**EXCEPTION: Corec game—Hold initial position in the neutral zone until the ball is beyond the A scrimmage line**). Be ready to rule on any passes thrown short. The R is responsible for whether the passer is beyond the scrimmage line when releasing the ball. Coordinate coverage with the BJ. Remember, the near sideline is your primary responsibility, end line to end line. Be prepared to assist the FJ with the dead ball spot near the zone line-to-gain close to your sideline. If the runner goes out-of-bounds, it is your call.
- FJ C. **The FJ's mental checklist is: Snap, Players, Passer, Zone, and Ball.** The near sideline is your primary responsibility from end line to end line. Stay wide. Maintain an “outside looking in” position at all times. Read your “keys” after the snap. When the ball is snapped, immediately start moving backward only, unless it is 3rd or 4th down. Your goal is to stay ahead of the runner and/or receivers and lead them to the goal line. Read the play and react as needed. If you read pass, watch the closest receivers and defenders for illegal contact. As the pass routes develop, switch from person to person to zone coverage. Switch your sight from the players downfield back to the QB. Read the QB's eyes. Once the ball is thrown, move quickly to the most advantageous position to see between the receiver and defender. Stop-N-Watch at moment of judgement. Adjust your position for the angle.
- FJ D. The pass thrown toward the sideline is a challenging call. Read the “keys” at the snap. Be aware of the receiver who moves toward your sideline. Once the passer releases the ball, begin adjusting your position to the receiver. Most calls are missed because the official is either too close to the receiver or not straddling the sideline. Adjust your position so you are at least 5 yards away from the receiver, standing still. Watch the feet first and then the ball. Pause an instant. “Let your mind digest what your eyes have seen.” Remember, you

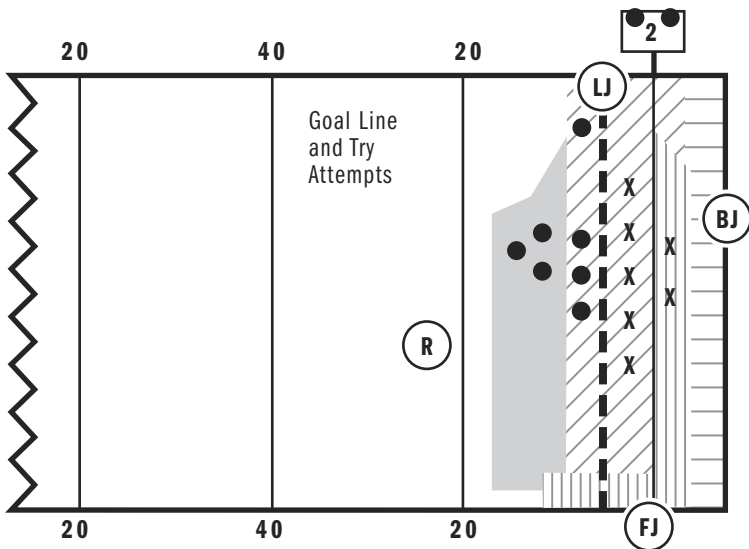
have responsibility for the A player who goes out-of-bounds and returns to participate. Throw your hat and say the player's number. Take responsibility for your respective sideline-end line to end line. Be ready to move quickly downfield on a long pass.

- FJ E. Unless it is 3rd or 4th down, do not be overly concerned with the zone line-to-gain. Your 1st few steps are backward, giving ground to keep the players in front of you. Your objective is to "lead" the runner or receivers to the zone line-to-gain or the goal line. By backpedaling ahead of the runner, you will have an excellent view of the sideline and any flag guarding foul on the runner's inside arm near the sideline.
- BJ F. Divide the receiver and defender coverage with the FJ as players move downfield. Coordinate sideline coverage with the L J as you have secondary responsibility. The basic look is "inside-outside." Move from sideline to sideline cleaning up similar to a "windshield wiper" helping the FJ and L J as needed.

SECTION 2. GOAL LINE AND TRY PLAYS – POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Article 1. Initial Positions.

- R A. Your initial position is the same as on other run/pass plays.
- LJ B. Whenever the ball is snapped on or inside the 10 yard line, take 2 steps backward and out-of-bounds.
- FJ C. Whenever the ball is snapped on or inside the 15 yard line, straddle the goal line and stand 2 steps outside the pylon.
- BJ D. Whenever the ball is snapped on or inside the 10 yard line, stand on the end line. The end line is your responsibility.













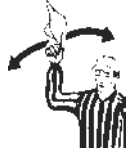







Article 2. Responsibilities Before the Ball is Snapped.



















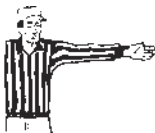

- R A. Responsibilities are the same as 3 Person.
- LJ B. Count K players.
- FJ C. Count R players.
- BJ D. Count R players.

Article 3. Responsibilities After the Ball is Snapped.

- R A. Responsibilities are the same as 3 Person. If the punt goes out-of-bounds in flight, line up the LJ or FJ only by chopping your arm (S1) as he/she reaches the out-of-bounds spot.
- LJ B. Move downfield with the players and observe any illegal contact after the punt has crossed the A scrimmage line, concentrating primarily on your half of the field.
- FJ C. Communicate verbally with the BJ once the punt is in flight. The BJ has responsibility for two-thirds of the field. Unless the punt is near your sideline, concentrate primarily on the screen blocking.
- LJ-FJ D. If punted out-of-bounds on the ground, mark the spot. If punted out-of-bounds in the air, jog to the "approximate" area, then begin walking slowly until the R chops his/her arm (S1) to mark the spot. By walking slowly, you are indicating to the R this is where "I think the punt went out-of-bounds."
- BJ E. In most cases, the ball and the receivers are your responsibility. Observe the catch, and follow the runner up the field, observing action ahead. If the ball is punted toward the opposite sideline, communicate verbally to the FJ by yelling "Ball, ball." This means the FJ takes the ball and action around it while you move forward and observe play in front of the catch.

PART V. CODE OF OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <p>1</p>  <p>Ball ready for play *Untimed down</p> | <p>2</p>  <p>Start clock</p> | <p>3</p>  <p>Time-out; Discretionary or injury time-out (follow by tapping hands on chest)</p> | <p>4</p>  <p>TV/Radio time-out</p> |
| <p>5</p>  <p>Touchdown Point(s) after touchdown</p> | <p>6</p>  <p>Safety</p> | <p>7</p>  <p>Dead ball foul; Touchback (move side to side)</p> | <p>8</p>  <p>First down</p> |
| <p>9</p>  <p>Loss of down</p> | <p>10</p>  <p>Incomplete forward pass; Penalty declined; No play, No score; Toss option delayed</p> | <p>11</p>  <p>Legal touching of forward pass or punt</p> | <p>12</p>  <p>Inadvertent whistle (face press box)</p> |
| <p>13</p>  <p>Disregard flag</p> | <p>14</p>  <p>End of period</p> | <p>15</p>  <p>Sideline warning</p> | <p>16</p>  <p>First touching</p> |
| <p>17</p>  <p>Backward Pass</p> | <p>18</p>  <p>Encroachment</p> | <p>19</p>  <p>Illegal advancement/formation/ procedure/snap; False start</p> | <p>20</p>  <p>Illegal shift - 2 hands; Illegal motion - 1 hand</p> |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>21</p>  <p>Delay of game</p> | <p>22</p>  <p>Illegal substitution</p> | <p>23</p>  <p>Failure to wear required equipment</p> | <p>24</p>  <p>Flag guarding</p> |
| <p>27</p>  <p>Unsportsmanlike conduct; Noncontact foul</p> | <p>28</p>  <p>Illegal participation</p> | <p>29</p>  <p>Sideline interference</p> | <p>31</p>  <p>Illegal batting/kicking (followed by pointing toward toe for kicking)</p> |
| <p>33</p>  <p>Forward pass interference; Kick catching interference</p> | <p>34</p>  <p>Roughing the passer</p> | <p>35</p>  <p>Illegal pass</p> | <p>36</p>  <p>Intentional grounding</p> |
| <p>38</p>  <p>Personal foul</p> | <p>40</p>  <p>Open (Corec only)</p> | <p>41</p>  <p>Closed (Corec only)</p> | <p>42</p>  <p>Holding/obstructing</p> |
| <p>43</p>  <p>Declared punt</p> | <p>44</p>  <p>Help the runner</p> | <p>45</p>  <p>Forward pass</p> | <p>47</p>  <p>Player disqualification</p> |

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