

INTRODUCTION

This manual is compiled from various sources, along with input from amateur football officials with experience working NCAFA Midget games in 5-Official crews. A good deal of this information is from *Positioning and Mechanics for the 5-Official System and 4-Official System* by Bill Glendinning, Officials Technical Committee August 2005. It was updated by John Kachuik for the EOTFOA in 2015; and by an EOTFOA Committee in 2022.

The intent is to improve the quality of officiating at the Midget level and other levels which might also utilize the 5-Official system, and serve as sound basis for officiating development at higher levels. The material is for use by on-field Officials as well as evaluators to ensure a consistent approach to the development of officiating within the EOTFOA.

We are fortunate to have a viable Midget league the EOTFOA can serve. Midget-level football does present challenges as there is a wide range of talent among the players. There are players getting ready to step into USports-level football, or junior-level football, while other players may be closing out their playing careers. Competition for players' time (school, work, other pursuits) sometimes makes getting a commitment for the season challenging for the clubs and depending on the management structure of each club can have some trickle-down effect on the field.

From an officiating perspective, you can expect a quicker game than at Bantam and most High School games, more emotional players and wide variation in how these energies are managed and/or controlled by each club.

Officials need to be constantly vigilant throughout the game, especially away from the ball and during dead-ball periods.

It provides Officials an excellent venue for developing better crew mechanics and gives good grounding in how to utilize partners while officiating.

This manual is designed for 5-Official crew assignments with all-EOTFOA crews. There could be some variations from these mechanics if an Official is in a mixed crew for cross-jurisdictional 5-Official assignments.

POSITIONING & MECHANICS

PREGAME CONFERENCE FOR THE CREW

5-Official crews should be considered elite-level assignments. The expectations from Officials at these levels is higher, and thus a formal pregame meeting is expected as part of the assignment.

All Officials should arrive at the venue at least one hour prior to the start of the game to take an active part in the pregame conference. The Referee is to set up the meeting, lead the discussions and should provide for ample discussion by the crew.

The pregame should NOT be a lecture. It is more productive if discussion is held and all take part – with each Official focusing on their duties and responsibilities to mentally prepare to take the field. The pregame is a must for every game – never assume everyone on the crew is on the same page. This meeting allows for the “teams within the team” to review play situations with their partner(s).

It is incumbent upon the Referee to review the makeup of crew (assignments are normally 5 to 7 days in advance) and prepare a pregame meeting catering to that given crew. If the Referee is unsure of the 5-Official experience of a crew member, they should contact the Official or the Referee-in-Chief ahead of time to get background information and plan the pregame accordingly.

Remember the 7 P’s, **Proper Prior Planning Prevents Piss-Poor Performance**.

Following the pregame meeting, the crew should go to the field as a team. The following sections outline the pregame duties for all members of the crew.

REFEREE - PREGAME MEETING WITH THE TIMEKEEPER

The Referee should meet with the timer either at the timer’s table, if at field level, or have the timer meet the Referee between the team benches at the 55-yard line. The instructions offered will differ slightly depending on whether timer is using a visible scoreboard, or a hand-held device.

The timer for Midget games is normally an EOTFOA-assigned Official. This should allow for a dialogue vs. a lecture on the following points:

1. Starting and stopping the clock: As per the timing rules for the league (who to watch and when);
2. Giving time warnings: One Minute remaining in each quarter and Three Minutes in the second and fourth quarters;
3. Procedure for correcting a timing error;
4. Instruct the timer their responsibility is for timing only. Midget timers are EOTFOA-assigned officials. It is prudent to remind timers their observations on situations during the game should only be shared with on-field officials discretely at either half time or the end of the game when there are no team officials or spectators within hearing distance.
5. Instruct the timer to immediately inform the Referee, through the LJ, if there is anything impairing the timer’s ability to do their job. This is most likely to arise with a timer at field level, between the team benches.

PREGAME MEETING WITH THE COACHES - WITH THE UMPIRE

Approximately 20 or 30 minutes prior to game time (depending on league and situation), the Referee and Umpire shall proceed to the field to meet with the head coaches. The Referee conducts the meeting and the Umpire should only respond to questions directed to them by the Referee. Meet with the coaches at their respective 45-yard lines. An equal amount of time should be spent with each head coach. Meet the home team first to ascertain if there are field irregularities, pregame activities/announcements, player introduction, national anthem, etc., then meet the visiting team.

The following format is suggested:

1. The Referee shall introduce themselves and the Umpire to the coach. The Referee shall lead the discussion with the coaches;
2. Ask the coach if they have items they would like to discuss – special plays, numbering of players, etc. DO NOT discuss tactics used by the opponents – this type of discussion should only be held with the other coach present;
3. Ask the coach to identify the trainers who will be coming onto the field in case of an injury;
4. Have the coach identify who will be allowed to call time outs from the bench. NOTE: If a coach does not want players on the field to call time outs, it is the responsibility of the coach to communicate that to their players. Officials should accept a time out request from a player on the field as per Time Out Management below.
5. Advise the coach of any ground rules that apply – short field, short end zone, etc;
6. It can be prudent, at this point, for the Referee to check with the Umpire before closing the meeting, to ask if anything has been missed.
7. Wish the coach “Good Game”.

BACK UMPIRE (BU) - PREGAME DUTIES

1. While the Referee and Umpire are meeting with the head coaches the other crew members shall walk the perimeter of the field to look for any hazards, irregularities, etc;
2. The BU should inspect the half of the field used by the home team to look for any player safety equipment problems such as missing pads, illegal footwear, etc. This should be corrected during the pregame, not during the game;
3. Most teams do not give away playing formations to the opposition during warm ups, but notable points such as a left-handed quarterback, weak, moderate or strong throwing arm, left-footed punter, punting/kicking distances and/or tendencies can be observed;
4. Any problems noted that cannot be remedied in discussion with the players, trainers and assistant coaches should be brought to the Referee’s attention for follow-up. No player in violation of safety equipment rules is to take part in the game;
5. The BU should get at least two appropriate game balls from the home team, or check the game balls to be used by each team (depending on the league procedures), and insure they

are legal and inflated properly. Also have a kicking tee (check with the visiting team to see if they will use the same kicking tee, or will bring in their own tee). If there is rain or potential for rain, obtain a number of towels from the home team for use by the Umpire.

LINE JUDGE (LJ) - PREGAME DUTIES

1. While the Referee and Umpire are meeting with the head coaches the other crew members shall walk the perimeter of the field to look for any hazards, irregularities, etc;
2. The LJ should inspect the half of the field used by the visiting team to look for any player safety equipment problems such as missing pads, illegal footwear, etc. This should be corrected during the pregame, not during the game;
3. Most teams do not give away playing formations to the opposition during warmups, but differences such as a left-handed quarterback, weak, moderate or strong throwing arm, left-footed punter, punting/kicking distances and/or tendencies can be observed;
4. Any problems noted that cannot be remedied in discussion with the players, trainers and assistant coaches should be brought to the Referee's attention for follow-up. No player in violation of safety equipment is to take part in the game.

DOWNS JUDGE (DJ) - MEETING WITH THE STICKS CREW

1. For NCAFA Midget games, the home team is responsible for providing the sticks crew. As the crew starts its on-field pregame duties, the DJ needs to find the sticks crew or approach the home team convener to get assistance in identifying the sticks crew;
2. Once the sticks crew has been identified, the DJ should introduce themselves. Learn their names – especially their first names, rather than calling out “Hey You”;
3. The DJ is to instruct the sticks crew how to operate the sticks and downs box. Emphasize NOT to move until they receive instruction and let them know who will move the sticks, the Referee, the DJ or a combination (review this during the pregame);
4. Emphasize their safety, player safety and Officials' safety and review when they should drop the sticks and get out of the way. It is suggested you should demonstrate, and then have the sticks crew show you, how they will throw the sticks down and let them go rather than have the sticks leaning on their shoulders.
5. Go over plays involving penalties. Instruct the downs box person that when a penalty is applied, DJ will mimic the Umpire's signals for the number of yards and the direction and have the downs box person mark off the appropriate distance while the DJ independently does the same. Once the DJ and downs box person arrive at the same position, check the spotting of the ball and correct as required; (correct yards by getting the ball moved, correct inches by adjusting the downs box);
6. If the forward stick is in the end zone, the DJ should ask the sticks person to move the stick back from the sideline and drop it to the ground. This will make it more safe for the DJ to get to the goal line, and use the out of bounds area for safety.
7. Review measurement procedures;

8. Organize with the sticks crew, how they will handle sending one member behind the end zone on convert attempts to assist in retrieving the ball on kicked converts;
9. If you have completed your pregame instructions to the sticks crew, do a double check on your sideline for obstacles. If sideline yard markers might hinder safety for the sticks crew or yourself, move the markers back. Yard markers should be at least 5 yards off the field.

ON-FIELD CREW – FINAL PREGAME REVIEW

After completing their pregame duties (this should be roughly 10 or 15 minutes prior to kick off), the crew should meet. The Referee should report any special plays, concerns from the coaches. The Referee should ask if there is anything to report from the remainder of the crew, who can report on observed tendencies and/or anomalies everyone should be aware of.

NOTE: This meeting with the crew may be held after the meeting with the Team Captains, depending upon the time frames being utilized.

PREGAME MEETING WITH THE CAPTAINS

If there are no pregame activities (player introduction's, anthem, etc) the crew will meet with the team captains 5 minutes prior to game time. The following format is suggested:

1. The Referee and Umpire proceed to centre field and indicate to the teams they wish to meet with the captains. The DJ gets the home captains and the LJ gets the visiting captains (if DJ is still briefing the stick crew, BU gets the home captains). The captains are escorted to the Referee. Speaking captains should stand closest to the Referee. Note: LJ and DJ/BU should not whistle or use a loud voice call for captains; they are to jog to the respective team areas and ask for the captains to come to the captains' meeting;
2. The Referee shall introduce themselves and the Umpire (and any other member of the on-field crew participating in the captains' meeting) to the team captains. The Referee shall lead a very brief discussion.
3. Review with the captains any ground rules, special field markings, or special concerns. This should be a discussion, NOT a lecture;
4. Ask the appropriate team speaking captain (as designated by league rules, or coin toss winner) to choose:
 - a. First-half choice; or
 - b. defer to the second half;
5. If the team with first choice defers, the Referee should tap the shoulder of the speaking captain of that team, and use the incomplete pass signal to signify they declined first-half choice;
6. The team with first-half choice then has the choice of one of the following options:
 - a. choice to kick off or receive;
 - b. choice to defend an end.

7. The other team then has choice of the remaining option;
8. Position the captains with their backs to the end they will defend (facing their opponents' end zone). Signal the choice of the captains by standing by the captain whose team will receive the kick and simulate receiving the ball;
9. Wish the captains a "Good game";
10. Ensure all Officials record who will have second-half choice and which team is kicking from which end for the first half. The crew should break the huddle together and go to their positions with the LJ placing the ball and tee on the corresponding centre of the kick-off line.

GENERAL PRE-PLAY AND POST-PLAY MECHANICS/CONCERNS

5-Official crews are effective as the number of areas with little to no coverage on any given play are greatly reduced from a 4-Official crew. To maximize the effectiveness of coverage, each crew member needs to be aware of their duties, know their partner on certain plays/coverage, perform their duties and provide assistance when possible.

NCAFA Midget football has a history of occasional emotionally charged games. It is incumbent upon Officials to be vigilant throughout the game and practise sound preventative and dead-ball officiating from the time they step on the field until the game is over.

Upon the completion of each play, there should be no Official who is a great distance from players. How close Officials are to players at the completion of the play is dependent upon many factors, such as Official's role in the crew, type of play, flow of the play, movement of the Official during the play, the Official's conditioning and ability to move, etc.

The primary factor in the Official's positioning is to be able to rule on a play or action in that Official's zone. But, just as important is the safety of the Official: **DO NOT GET SO CLOSE THAT YOU GET ROLLED ON OR HIT BY TACKLERS OR POTENTIAL TACKLERS.**

You need to be close enough to rule on a play in your zone. You need to be close enough, or move quickly enough, to conduct dead-ball and preventative officiating by letting players know you are there. The Official's presence and movement after the play can greatly minimize emotional dead-ball fouls.

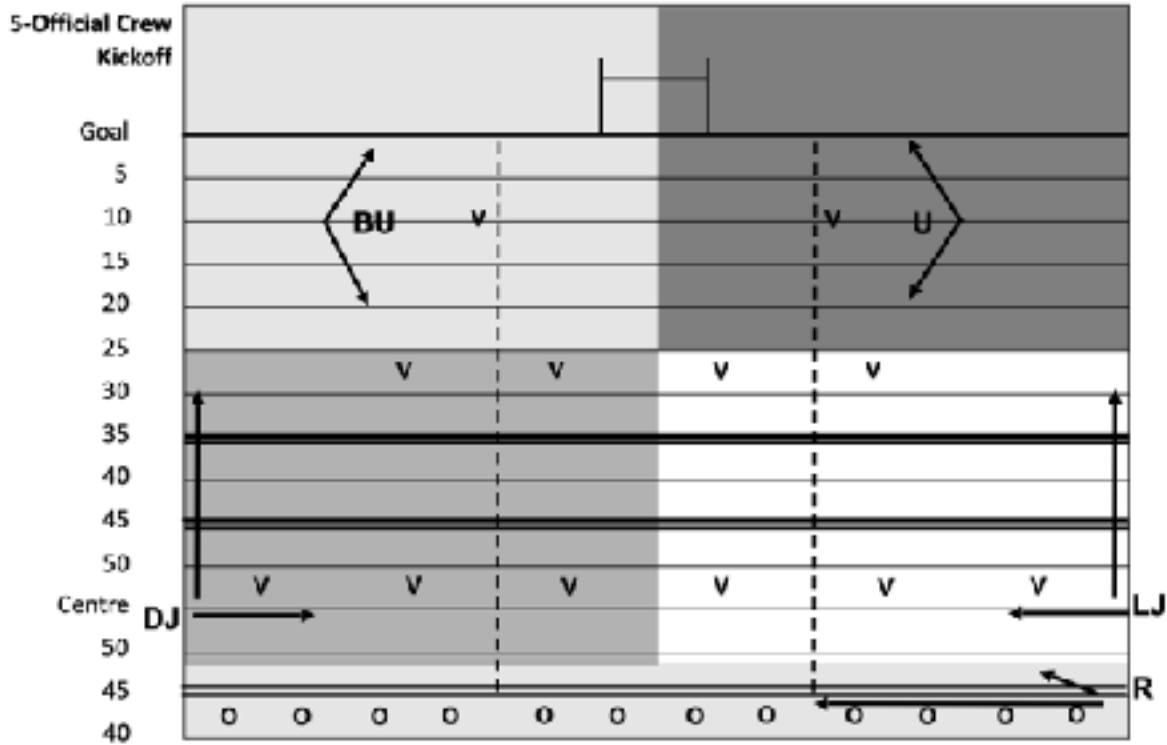
As the play develops, Officials have zones of responsibility. Know whether you should be watching the ball carrier, actions around the ball carrier, or actions away from the ball. Be aware of when you should transition between these various responsibilities. Know and be prepared to assist in your secondary zones of responsibility when feasible.

When the play is over, move closer to players so your presence minimizes or stops after-play actions. Once the players are going back to their huddles, assist in ball relays, recovering flags thrown by other officials, reporting your own penalties or moving into position to prepare for the next play.

On every play know who else is responsible for counting each team, and check with the appropriate Official(s) to verify the proper number of players are on the field for each play.

Remember, for kick offs only, Officials assist the teams by ensuring the correct number of players are on the field. If there is a discrepancy, inform the Referee with a washout signal that all can see,

indicating there are an incorrect number of players on the kicking or receiving team, and do your best to communicate the nature of the problem (too many, too few).



KICK-OFF POSITIONING AND MECHANICS

After a convert, it is the DJ's responsibility to get the ball from the convert (BU and Umpire assist in relaying the ball from a convert to the DJ) and place it at the correct kick-off point. Be aware of penalties on scoring plays if the yardage is deferred to the kick off and place the ball at the correct yard line, near the tee, in conjunction with the Referee who will signal the appropriate infraction(s). Unless there is inclement weather, there is no need to stay with the ball. In case of inclement weather, hold the ball to keep it as dry as possible and hand to the kicker.

It is the LJ's responsibility to get the tee and have it at the appropriate kick-off point.

After a convert, ensure the teams are separated and going to their benches, then have the DJ and LJ get the ball and tee ready for the kick off. In high-emotion games, it may be necessary to have the LJ remain between the teams as they change. If the LJ and Referee need to keep between the teams for preventive officiating, the DJ can get the tee as well as the ball in order to keep a consistent flow to the game by preventing avoidable delays.

REFEREE

INITIAL KICK-OFF POSITION AND DUTIES

1. After the ball is placed at the point of the kick off, caution the kicker to wait for your whistle;
2. Hustle to your position at the sideline on the kick-off line on the side opposite to the DJ. This

- will be on the Benches Side if both teams are located on the same side of the field;
3. Count the kicking team players to ensure the proper number of players are on the field;
 4. Raise your arm and check each Official for their ready signals. Also check the timer;
 5. Check with the respective captains to ensure the teams are ready;
 6. Raise your arm and keep it aloft until you sound your whistle. Drop your arm and point downfield as a signal for the kicker to proceed. Note: do not turn your head and eyes downfield when pointing as you are the only Official ruling on onside/offside kicking team players at the moment of the kick off.

DUTIES AND MECHANICS DURING THE KICK OFF

1. Watch for offside by the kicking team;
2. Watch for short kicks and be ready to rule on illegal blocking. DJ and LJ should be ruling on whether or not the ball travelled the required distance;
3. After the ball has been kicked and cleared the neutral zone, move inside toward the hash marks. Be careful not to move inside or downfield too quickly or too far, too soon. Move at a controlled pace – a jog, NOT a leisurely walk;
4. Pick up and repeat the time-in signal from the other Officials if timer is at field level and/or it is deemed necessary to assist the timer. (Should be discussed as part of the pregame)
5. Follow the play from inside – there will be other Officials covering the sideline;
6. Watch for the blocking in the second and third waves of players and other action in your zone. The Official(s) in the area of the kick-off reception are responsible for the ball carrier and downfield action, and the first wave of blocking;
7. Be prepared for give-and-take coverage if the ball carrier comes into your zone;
8. Be prepared to rule on any kick-off Infractions – before/after possession; before/after a change of possession; before/after the ball is dead, etc;
9. Once the ball is declared dead, hustle to the area to get ready for the next play;
10. Apply any penalty yardage applicable and set up for the ensuing play.

UMPIRE

INITIAL KICK-OFF POSITIONING AND DUTIES

1. Take up an initial position near or at the sideline even with or slightly ahead of the deep receiver(s). You will be on the same side of the field as the Referee and the LJ.
2. Count the players of the receiving team. Ensure the proper number of players are on the field of play. If there is an incorrect number, let the Referee know by giving the incomplete pass signal and let them know how many additional players are required. In the case of too many players, again inform the Referee and the appropriate team bench;
3. Ensure the sideline and end zone are clear before giving a ready signal. Check with players in

your area to ensure they are ready for the kick off. When ready, face the Referee and raise your arm aloft. When the Referee points to you, signal you are ready by dropping your arm.

DUTIES AND MECHANICS DURING THE KICK OFF

1. Once the ball is kicked, read the flight of the ball and watch for the BU's signal as to who will cover the receiver and who will cover the blocking. If it is your responsibility to cover the receiver (ball carrier) raise your arm and hold it aloft until the ball is touched or caught by a receiver. Give the time-in signal by circling your arm;
2. If the ball is kicked to your area cover the return from an outside position. Avoid moving inside too far, too soon, too quickly. Officiate from the outside to the inside. If the play goes dead in your area be sure to kill the play, stop the clock and mark forward progress. Hold the spot until released then proceed to the point where the ball will next be put into play;
3. If the play moves across the field, turn over the ball carrier to the Official(s) on the other side of the field. Slide inside using the hash marks as your limit. Watch for blocking and other action by the players. Officiate from a periphery and controlled distance – avoid crowding toward the ball;
4. If the ball is kicked to the part of the field outside your zone, follow the play from the outside and watch the blocking and other player action. Your primary responsibility is to observe the first wave of blocking and illegal acts by either team;
5. Always be ready to follow give-and-take responsibilities if the ball carrier leaves or enters your zone;
6. Be alert for:
 - a) illegal blocking, blindside blocks, illegal wedge blocks, holding, etc. on the return;
 - b) ball kicked out of bounds;
 - c) fumbles – who last touched the ball, who last had possession, etc;
 - d) hand offs – lateral vs. forward;
 - e) ball striking the goal post assembly – in flight or first strikes the ground or a player.
7. Be ready to assist the Referee re: penalty application (if and when required).

BACK UMPIRE

INITIAL KICK-OFF POSITIONING AND DUTIES

1. Take up an initial position near or at the sideline even with, or slightly ahead, of the deep receiver(s). You will be on the same side of the field as the DJ and approximately parallel with the Umpire;
2. Count the players of the receiving team. Ensure they have the proper number of players on the field of play. If there is an incorrect number, let the Referee know by giving the incomplete pass signal and let them know how many additional players are required. In the case of too many players, again inform the Referee;

3. Ensure the sideline and end zone are clear before giving a ready signal. Check with the players in your area to ensure they are ready. When ready, face the Referee and raise your arm aloft. When the Referee points to you, signal you are ready by dropping your arm.

DUTIES AND MECHANICS DURING THE KICK OFF

1. As quickly as possible after the ball is kicked, determine and signal which Official is to cover the ball (i.e. the receiver) and who will cover the blocking. If the ball is kicked to the middle or your side, raise your arm aloft to signal you have ball and receiver coverage. If the ball is to the other side, signal to the Umpire they are to cover the ball and the Receiver by pointing upfield toward the kicking team; (Umpire will acknowledge by raising one arm aloft.)
2. When the ball is touched or caught by a receiver in your zone, give the time-in signal. You may want to mirror the time-in signal given by another Official(s) in the deep zone;
3. If the ball is kicked to your area cover the return from an outside position. Avoid moving inside too far, too soon, too quickly. Officiate from the outside to the inside. If the play goes dead in your area kill the play, stop the clock and mark forward progress. Hold the spot until released and then hustle to your position for the ensuing play;
4. If the play moves across the field, turn over the ball carrier to the Official(s) on the other side of the field. Slide inside using the hash marks as your limit. Watch for blocking and other action by the players. Officiate from a periphery and controlled distance – avoid crowding toward the ball;
5. If the ball is kicked to a part of the field outside your zone, follow the play from the outside and watch the blocking and other player action. Always be ready to follow give-and-take responsibilities if the ball carrier leaves or enters your zone. Your primary responsibility is to observe the first wave of blocking and illegal acts by either team;
6. Be alert for:
 - a) illegal blocking, blindside blocks, illegal wedge blocks, holding, etc. on the return;
 - b) ball kicked out of bounds;
 - c) fumbles – who last touched the ball, who last had possession, etc;
 - d) hand offs – lateral vs. forward;
 - e) ball striking the goal post assembly – in flight or first strikes the ground or a player.

DOWNS JUDGE

INITIAL KICK-OFF POSITIONING AND DUTIES

1. After placing the ball and tee at the centre of the kick-off line (there is no need to stand at centre field and await the kicker: if the kicking team is not on the field and weather permitting, place the ball and tee on the ground and take up your position to avoid delays), take up an initial position at the sideline on the restraining line on the side of the field opposite to the Referee. Line up so your back foot is on the restraining line and you are in the neutral zone. Have sticks set for the kick off. Count the players on the home team and be

sure there is the proper complement of players on the field of play;

2. Ensure the sideline is clear before giving a ready signal. Check with the players in your area to ensure they are ready. When ready, face the Referee and raise your arm aloft. When the Referee points to you, signal you are ready by dropping your arm.

DUTIES AND MECHANICS DURING THE KICK OFF

1. You must be ready to rule on offside by the receiving team and also if the ball travels the necessary 10 yards. Be ready to rule on who first touched the ball on a kick that did not travel the required 10 yards;
2. You are only concerned with the time-in signal on a short kick off. Part of your pregame discussion should be with the BU to ascertain how a kick landing between the BU and the DJ outside the hash marks is to be covered, i.e. who has the ball carrier, who covers the first wave of blocking, who starts the clock, etc. Avoid following the flight of the ball on a long kick off - the Deep Officials have the deep kick under control;
3. Once the ball crosses the restraining line, move downfield at a controlled pace. Maintain a cushion between yourself and the BU – avoid crowding the BU. Your primary responsibilities are to cover the second wave of players and assist with the actions in front of the ball carrier;
4. Cover the play from the outside to the inside. The sideline is your responsibility;
5. If the play moves into your zone, be ready for give-and-take coverage. If the play moves close to your sideline, move to out of bounds, and officiate from out of bounds;
6. If the play becomes dead in your zone, be prepared to kill the play, stop the clock and mark the point of forward progress. Avoid moving in too quickly, mark the spot from a safe distance and move in after the player(s) move from the immediate area;
7. If the play moves across the field, turn over the ball carrier to the Official(s) on the other side of the field. Slide inside using the hash marks as your limit. Watch for blocking and other action by the players. Officiate from a periphery and controlled distance – avoid crowding toward the ball;
8. As the play moves away from you and upfield, you now are responsible for observing and ruling on illegal actions of the players behind the play;
9. If the ball is kicked to a part of the field outside your zone, follow the play from the outside and watch the blocking and other player action. Always be ready to follow give-and-take responsibilities if the ball carrier leaves or enters your zone;
10. Be alert for:
 - a) legal vs illegal actions – blocking from the rear, blindside blocks, face mask, etc;
 - b) fumbles, turnovers, last touched or last possession.

LINE JUDGE

INITIAL KICK OFF POSITIONING AND DUTIES

1. After getting the tee, take up an initial position at the sideline on the restraining line on the same side of the field as the Referee. Line up so your back foot is on the restraining line and you are in the neutral zone. You will be opposite to the DJ. Count the players of the home team. Ensure the proper number of players are on the field of play;
2. Ensure the sideline is clear before giving a ready signal. Check with the players in your area to ensure they are ready. When ready, face the Referee and raise your arm aloft. When the Referee points to you, signal you are ready by dropping your arm;

DUTIES AND MECHANICS DURING THE KICK OFF (SAME AS THE DJ)

1. You must be ready to rule on offside by the receiving team and also if the ball travels the necessary 10 yards. Be ready to rule on who first touched the ball on a kick off that did not travel the required 10 yards. Part of your pregame discussions should be with the Umpire to ascertain how a kick landing part-way between the Umpire and the LJ outside the hash marks is to be covered, i.e. who has the ball carrier, coverage of the first wave of blocking, who starts the clock, etc;
2. You are only concerned with the time-in signal on a short kick off. Avoid following the flight of the ball on a long kick off – the Deep Officials have the deep kick under control. There is no need to repeat their time-in signal unless you want to assist for the timer's sake;
3. Once the ball crosses the restraining line, move downfield at a controlled pace. Maintain a cushion between yourself and the Deep Official – avoid crowding the Deep Official;
4. Cover the play from the outside to the inside. The sideline is your responsibility;
5. If the play moves into your zone, be ready for give-and-take coverage. If the play moves close to your sideline, move to out of bounds and officiate from out of bounds;
6. If the play becomes dead in your zone, be prepared to kill the play, stop the clock and mark the point of forward progress. Avoid moving in too quickly, mark the spot from a safe distance and move in after the player(s) move from the immediate area;
7. If the play moves across the field, turn over the ball carrier to the Official(s) on the other side of the field. Slide inside using the hash marks as your limit. Watch for blocking and other action by the players. Officiate from a periphery and controlled distance – avoid crowding toward the ball;
8. As the play moves away from you and upfield, you now are responsible for observing and ruling on illegal actions of the players behind the play;
9. If the ball is kicked to a part of the field outside your zone, follow the play from the outside and watch the blocking and other player action. Always be ready to follow give-and-take responsibilities if the ball carrier leaves or enters your zone;
10. Be alert for:

- a) Legal vs Illegal actions - blocking from the rear, blindside blocks, face mask etc;
- b) Fumbles, turnovers, last touched or last possession.

SCRIMMAGE PLAYS - POSITIONING AND MECHANICS

REFEREE

INITIAL SCRIMMAGE PLAY POSITIONING AND DUTIES

1. Always positioned on the offensive side of the Line of Scrimmage (LoS) or where the ball is placed. This is for down announcements, penalty announcements, etc. Carry out administrative duties several yards away from the ball – the “Office”. Ensure when you are in the “Office” the coaches and/or announcers can see you;
2. Prior to each scrimmage play, go to the “Office” and announce the down and distance. Check for substitutions – give suitable time. You set the pace, not the teams. Do not linger at the ball – keep the game moving. Allow reasonable time for substitutions and focus on setting and maintaining a good pace to the game;
3. Be clock conscious and practice time awareness. Know when to start the clock. Give appropriate signal that the ball is ready for play, and to start the 20-second time count:
 - if the clock is running, blow whistle for time in;
 - if the clock is stopped blow whistle and wind your arm in a circular motion to start the clock; OR
 - if the clock will start on the snap then blow whistle and hold your arm in the air, before winding-in the clock with your arm when the ball is snapped;
 - this procedure would be slightly different if a visible 20-second clock is in use. (At present no leagues EOTFOA officiates with 5 officials uses a visible 20-second clock).
4. Hustle to your position. Take up your position behind the offensive team about 15 yards from LoS on the outside shoulder of the TE position on the wide side of the field. This allows Referee a visible reference for the blocking below the waist zone.
5. Prior to snap, count offence and check off with Umpire and appropriate Sideline Official.

DUTIES AND MECHANICS DURING SCRIMMAGE PLAYS

1. Note the 20-second rule re: putting the ball into play;
2. Count the offence – note 7 on the line, 5 interior line players, note eligible receivers but know ineligible receivers in the event of a pass attempt caught by ineligible receiver;
3. Be in position to watch your side of the line – from the centre out on your side of the line. Watch for early movement and see the exchange between the centre and QB;
4. Know where the blocking below the waist zone is for each play. Ensure blocking behind the LoS is legal - use of hands, blocks below waist/knees, etc.

RUNNING PLAYS

1. Avoid following the play too closely – maintain a safe and constant cushion with the ball carrier and especially the QB while the ball is in the backfield. Move laterally to track plays in the backfield;
2. Allow the DJ, LJ and the Umpire to mark forward progress unless the ball is dead in your immediate area;
3. If the QB rolls out or carries the ball to the outside, follow them, but keep your cushion via lateral movement, rather than moving up too quickly;
4. Always turn over the ball carrier to the DJ/LJ once they cross the LoS. Practise give-and-take officiating procedures. If the ball carrier goes out of bounds prior to crossing the LoS, the Referee must follow the play right to the sideline as the trailing Official;
5. Follow the play from the inside – avoid trying to go to the outside except as in #4 above where the play goes out of bounds;
6. Signal to the timer to stop the clock on plays where required;
7. Go to the point of next scrimmage and follow the required sequence.

PASSING PLAYS

1. Know all the eligible players by number and position;
2. Mirror the QB's movement (path) as they leave the centre following the exchange;
3. Maintain a safe cushion as the QB moves back or rolls out via lateral movement, rather than moving up. Stay with the QB as long as there are opponents in the area;
4. Avoid watching the pass - keep attention on the QB - stayed glued to the QB;
5. If pass is incomplete in an area remote from eligible receivers, and the QB was under pressure, be aware of the possibility of intentional grounding. Look to other officials for assistance;
6. Passes and laterals in the backfield need to be covered in the pregame. In most cases, on quick drops, the held Official has a better position to rule on a forward pass or lateral. Who will make the call and how close calls will be communicated between the appropriate Officials should be fully covered in the pregame. Be patient before signalling. Use of a second set of eyes is preferable, but more important is to ensure there are not two conflicting signals on a given play such as one Official points backwards while a second Official blows the whistle and indicates an incomplete forward pass.

SHORT YARDAGE AND GOAL-LINE PLAYS (4D or 3D as appropriate & less than 2 yards; inside the Team B 10-yard line)

1. Since the Umpire will have moved to the wide side of the field, take up your initial position on the short side and watch the centre and line players on the short side;
2. Allow the Umpire and sideline officials to rule on forward progress;

3. After the ball is dead give the appropriate signals, etc.

KICKS FROM SCRIMMAGE (PUNT)

1. Line up in the backfield on the wide side of the kicker, with the Umpire roughly across from you on the other side of the kicker;
2. Set up approximately 5 - 8 yards outside of, and even with or slightly ahead of the kicker. As the kicker catches the ball and steps forward to kick, move forward with them and attempt to be even with the foot when they contact the ball to rule on a deflected kick, or roughing the kicker;
3. Note any onside player(s) and be ready to rule on them as the ball is kicked. Communicate with Umpire in backfield to determine who is making the ruling(s) on onside players;
4. See the ball being put into play and watch for all actions in the backfield;
5. On a snap over the kicker's head, stay with the ball/kicker but move to an area remote from the play to have wide view of the action. Unless the ball crosses the Umpire on the short side, the Referee has primary responsibility for the ball and Umpire has secondary responsibility;
6. Discuss with Umpire during pregame who will cover the kicker if punt breaks down and/or kicker runs with the ball past Umpire to short side of field. Who has kicker, who has blocking?
7. After the punt, stay with the kicker until the area clears – follow the kicker downfield;
8. Be prepared to rule on contact, roughing or illegal interference on the kicker;
9. Note the flight of the ball. If the trajectory is taking the ball out of bounds, stay in position to assist the sideline official in ruling on the point the ball goes out of bounds;
10. Be alert for fakes and react accordingly;
11. Proceed downfield and after the ball is dead follow the proper sequence for the next play.

FIELD-GOAL ATTEMPTS

SCRIMMAGE OUTSIDE THE 10-YARD LINE

1. Similar positioning and responsibilities as for a kick from scrimmage, though the Referee should be looking in at the holder's face to give protection to the kicker and holder (NOTE the umpire is not in the backfield on a field goal);
2. Check for a legal kicking tee;

SCRIMMAGE INSIDE THE 10-YARD LINE

1. Take up a position behind the kicker;
2. Watch the ball being put into play – the snap from the centre to the holder;
3. Watch the flight of the ball and rule if FG good or not good. If good sound your whistle and signal. Keep eyes on players while giving the signal to note any late action(s);

4. If not good the ball remains in play as per a punt. Be prepared for reverse mechanics if the returning team advances the ball up the field toward the kicking team's goal line.

CONVERTS

1. Take up a position behind the kicker;
2. Watch the ball being put into play – the snap from the centre to the holder;
3. Watch the flight of the ball and rule if good or not good;
4. On a convert, sound your whistle immediately after the ball is kicked;
5. Be alert for a fake kick, and cover the ensuing running or passing play;
6. Keep eyes on players while giving convert signals – watch for late action.

UMPIRE

INITIAL SCRIMMAGE PLAYS POSITIONING AND DUTIES

1. The Umpire is responsible for placing the ball at the point of next scrimmage for all plays;
2. Once the ball has been placed and is ready for play take up a position about 8 to 10 yards deep on the defensive side of the ball, outside the offensive tackle. Always hustle to your position. Shift from side to side with the play. Be sure not to be static in taking up your position so as to avoid being used as a target by the offensive receivers in the short zone. Vary position to where you are comfortable and safe.

DUTIES AND MECHANICS DURING SCRIMMAGE PLAYS

1. Count the players of the offensive team (for a 5-Official crew) and confirm with Referee and appropriate Sideline Official. Check and watch the centre and players on your side (the short side) of the line for early motion. Relay verbally any signals or warnings from the Side Officials re. Offsides, alignments, etc.;
2. Once the ball is put into play, watch the players of both teams for any illegal tactics. Be aware of the block below the waist zone. Be aware of holding, high-low blocks, illegal blindsides, crack backs, etc;
3. Be conscious of the point of attack and note any illegal tactics. Discretion must be used in regards to certain action away from the point of attack; Ex: When is holding not holding?
4. Look through the play to assist other Officials.

RUNNING PLAYS

1. Pick up the ball carrier on short plays through the line. If blocked out, look to the Side Officials for assistance in marking forward progress (discussing who will be responsible for the spot of forward progress, and in what situations, should be done during the pregame);
2. If the play goes to the outside, turn and follow from a safe distance. Avoid crowding the side Official. Assist with the spot if needed. As the play progresses downfield, observe players

behind the play for any illegal acts and rule accordingly;

3. After the play and players have moved past you, follow at a distance and at a controlled pace (jog not walk). Officiate from the periphery, watching action away from the ball;
4. Once the play is dead and the area begins to clear, move to the point of next scrimmage and be in position to receive and place the ball on the ground;
5. Once the ball is placed, hustle to your position;
6. For hurry-up offence or no-huddle offence, remain at the ball until the Referee signals for you to go to your position;
7. Always be available to assist the Referee re: downs, timing, and penalty application.

PASSING PLAYS

1. A key to a passing play is that tackles don't lie. They will retreat block on a forward passing play;
2. Note the interior offensive line players and ensure ineligible receivers do not proceed illegally downfield until the pass has been thrown;
3. As the offensive line players drop back to pass block, step up into the pocket. Use caution so as not to get caught in a draw play or counter;
4. Watch for illegal tactics by line players and backs prior to the ball being thrown;
5. Once the ball has gone past you, turn to assist with rulings to the side or downfield;
6. Assist but do not race to spot the ball. Allow the Official in the area to rule – help if needed;
7. Be prepared to assist in marking forward progress on short pass plays;
8. On long pass plays, move downfield at a controlled pace and cover action in the periphery away from the ball;
9. Once the ball is ruled dead move toward the point of next scrimmage to be in place to receive and place the ball for the next play. Inform Referee is pass complete/incomplete.

SHORT-YARDAGE PLAYS (4D or 3D as appropriate, and less than 2 yards to go)

1. Take up a position on the wide side of the defence. Set up close to the widest down line player or outside linebacker, whichever option offers the best protection;
2. Primary responsibility after the snap is to mark forward progress;
3. Focus on ball carrier if in your primary or secondary zone but also watch line players for any illegal tactics – holding, etc. in the area around the ball carrier.

GOAL-LINE PLAYS (*from the 10-yard line or less*)

1. Set up near or at the goal post for protection;
2. Following the snap, concentrate on ball carrier and actions immediately around ball carrier;

3. Be alert for fumbles and changes of possession. Mark the spot of forward progress;
4. If score is made and it is your call to make, blow your whistle and signal TD. Co-ordinate with Side Official if necessary;
5. Avoid giving the TD signal on infractions that would nullify the TD.

KICKS FROM SCRIMMAGE (PUNTS)

1. Take up position about 15 yards deep in the offensive backfield on the short side of the field (opposite Referee). Remember you have responsibility on all kicking plays to ensure centre is protected during the snap and the time to take up a normal blocking position;
2. After the snap focus on the line players, but be aware of the actions of the punter;
3. Be ready for a broken play or a fake kick. The short side of the field is open at the sideline as the Side Official has moved downfield to cover the kick and return;
4. Discuss with Referee during pregame who will cover the kicker if punt breaks down and/or kicker runs with the ball past you to short side of field. Who has kicker, who has blocking?
5. After the snap, move forward a few yards as the players proceed downfield. As the area clears, turn and follow the play. Move at a controlled pace downfield to assist in covering the return. Move toward the short side to assist in sideline coverage;
6. Watch for the normal open-field action – legal vs. illegal blocking, etc;
7. Once the ball is dead, move toward the hash marks and be ready to receive and place the ball for the next series of plays;
8. On a snap over the kicker's head, stay with the blocking but move to an area remote from the play to have wide view of the action. This should be part of the pregame discussion with the Referee, however unless the ball crosses you to the short side, the Referee normally has primary responsibility for the ball and you have secondary responsibility;
9. Be ready to assist in the event of a penalty.

FIELD GOALS

OUTSIDE THE 10-YARD LINE

1. Take up a normal scrimmage play position;
2. At the snap, provide protection to the centre;
3. Be ready to cover missed FG as a punt play;
4. Be ready to spot the ball for the next play.

INSIDE THE 10-YARD LINE

1. Take up a normal scrimmage play position;
2. At the snap, provide protection to the centre;
3. Be alert for the ball striking the goal post assembly in flight;

4. Be ready to cover missed FG as a punt play and watch the restraining zone.
5. Be ready to spot the ball for the next play;

CONVERTS

1. Place the ball in the proper location – note special requests for location of the ball;
2. Set up as per a normal scrimmage play;
3. At the snap, provide protection to the centre;
4. Be ready for passes or runs from a fake kick.

BACK UMPIRE

INITIAL SCRIMMAGE PLAYS POSITIONING AND DUTIES

1. The Back Umpire (BU) takes up a position behind the deepest defender – usually between 18 - 22 yards from the LoS and a few steps off the centre of the field toward the wide side. It is a shifting/roving position;
2. Take up position as soon as possible after the ball is placed to signal whether DJ or LJ is the held Official, and to indicate wide side of field for Referee. Be sure to receive Side Official's acknowledgement;
3. Know the down and distance to go;
4. Count the defensive team on every play and confirm with your “partner” if feasible;
5. Take a step or two backward as the ball is put into play. This gets you into motion. Read the play for pass or run and react accordingly.

RUNNING PLAYS

1. Avoid moving up too tight – let the Officials in the short zone handle the play. Supervise from a periphery position. Watch for illegal blocking, watch for receivers coming back to make blindside blocks, etc. Move up to assist if there is a problem and for ball handling – moving the ball in to the Umpire (Triangle System);
2. Assist in ruling on crack-back blocks;
3. On long runs, be prepared to take over the ball carrier. Practise give-and-take mechanics;
4. If the ball goes dead in your zone, be prepared to rule on forward progress;
5. Remember to assist at the sideline if the play goes out of bounds;
6. Be ready to release a fellow Official who may have called a penalty. Also if not otherwise occupied be ready to retrieve the Referee's penalty flag;
7. Take up position for the next play.

FORWARD PASS PLAYS

1. Know eligible players by number and position. Primary zone is the deep area;
2. Check for interference and contact as receivers move downfield. Initially, you have primary responsibility for the outside receivers on both sides of the LoS. You may need assistance from the Sideline Official on the weak side of the field;
3. Rule on passes into your zone and be prepared to assist on passes to the outside;
4. Look through the play to assist or to seek assistance;
5. On completed passes, and/or interceptions, follow up on the ensuing play;
6. On an interception be prepared to assist in ruling on legality of blindside blocks if they occur in the area of the ball;
7. Incomplete pass signals should be at the shoulders, sharp and crisp. Then ensure (verbally) umpire knows whether pass complete/incomplete;
8. Take up position for the next play.

SHORT-YARDAGE PLAYS

1. Stay in original position;
2. Responsibilities are as per any other scrimmage play.
3. However, be alert if a pass play develops, or a breakaway run happens.

GOAL-LINE PLAYS & 2-POINT CONVERTS

1. Same as above short yardage;
2. Assist the Umpire with line-play coverage, but only if possible. You still have primary responsibility for actions in the defensive backfield;
3. Be alert for fumbles and changes of possession.

KICK FROM SCRIMMAGE (PUNT)

1. Take up a position at or near the sideline and 5 yards ahead of the receiver(s) on your side of the field, the wide side. The Free Official (short-side Official) will have a similar position on the opposite side of the field;
2. As per a kick-off, signal in regard to coverage responsibilities to the other Deep Official;
3. Restraining zone (No Yards) coverage is a primary responsibility if the ball is coming down in your zone. If the ball is in the other Deep Official's zone, watch for blocking, etc;
4. If ball lands on the field of play and bounces out of bounds in your zone, be prepared to mark the spot, kill the play and inform the rest of the crew.
5. If the ball is kicked out of bounds in flight, kill the play when it lands and co-ordinate with Referee to mark the spot. Proceed to sideline, walk upfield toward Referee making eye contact, await Referee's signal for out-of-bounds spot. Hold spot until relieved.
6. Other coverage responsibilities and mechanics are the same as on a kick off.

FIELD GOALS

OUTSIDE THE 10-YARD LINE

1. Position yourself 2 - 3 yards behind the goal post assembly on the wide side to cover the FG attempt. The Free Official (short side) will have the other goal post to cover;
2. If the FG is good, sound your whistle and give the appropriate signal;
3. If the FG attempt is wide to your side – hold your position and cover blocking in the area of the ball, and the goal line in the event of a runback;
4. If wide to the other side – drop straight back into the end zone to cover the play – restraining zone, runback, etc. Remain on the inside and give inside-to-outside coverage;
5. If the attempt falls short of the goal line, the coverage is the same as for a punt play, except that the official not covering the ball and ball carrier will hold the goal line.

FROM INSIDE THE 10-YARD LINE

1. Position yourself in the end zone about 15 to 20 yards deep and slightly favouring the wide side of the field;
2. Be ready to assist the Referee on ruling good or not good on low kicks;
3. If the attempt is wide, coverage is as per a punt play.

CONVERTS

1. Set up at about 15 to 20 yards deep in the end zone, toward the centre of the field;
2. Be alert for a run or pass play;
4. Be ready to assist the Referee on ruling good or not good on low kicks;
3. Avoid going for the ball until the players begin to vacate the area. Be alert for any action after the play is dead.

GENERAL

1. The BU is mainly responsible for the deep zone(s);
2. Be careful not to pursue the ball too closely. Avoid getting trapped by moving in too close to the ball or the ball carrier;
3. Keep the play boxed in and cover periphery action;
4. Avoid sounding your whistle on plays not in your immediate area. Only sound your whistle if you are killing the play and marking forward progress;
5. Assist the Side Official in giving the 3-minute warning to the coaches.

DOWNNS JUDGE AND LINE JUDGE

INITIAL SCRIMMAGE PLAYS POSITIONING AND DUTIES:

1. The DJ is responsible for controlling the sticks crew. Ensure the sticks are properly set and the proper down is displayed on the downs box for every play. The DJ should announce and signal to the Referee the upcoming down prior to the downs box being moved or number changed;
2. Both DJ and LJ should set up at or near the sideline, minimum of 5 - 8 yards outside the wide receiver on your side of the field;
3. The LJ is responsible for control of the benches area, ensuring all personnel remain in the designated areas, and back off the sidelines.
4. The Held Official will be on the wide side of the field and the Free Official will be on the short side of the field.
5. EOTFOA has adopted the practice of having the gates “mirrored”. When the second player leaves the huddle, the LJ checks the sideline to ensure everyone is legally on or off the field, and raises the gates to signify no more substitution on the play. At this time, the DJ also puts up gates. Once the offensive line is set, the LJ lowers the gates and the DJ does likewise. This mechanic improves communications with the benches as the DJ is often more visible to the benches as the LoS moves up and down the field. For this communication to be effective, the DJ, when on the LoS, needs to mirror the gates every time.

HELD OFFICIAL

1. Acknowledge the BU’s signal you are held by pointing to the ground;
2. Signal to the Free Official in the same manner. Can be done as you lower the gates;
3. Check your sideline to ensure it is clear;
4. Count the appropriate team – DJ counts home team and LJ counts visitors;
5. Check for the eligible receivers on your side of the field;
6. Raise gates as the huddle breaks or when the Referee signals time in when a team is using a no-huddle offence. This ends all substitution;
7. Drop the gates once the line players are up to their positions;
8. Communicate with the end and other players as appropriate to ensure they are lined up properly;
9. Responsible for observing the action while the ball is being put into play.
10. On all plays from scrimmage hold your position on the line of scrimmage until the ball crosses the LoS.

FREE OFFICIAL

1. Acknowledge you are the Free Official by pointing downfield;
2. Follow steps #3 - #9 above as per the Held Official;
3. The Free Official will be ready to move off the line on the snap. Read the play, run or pass,

then react accordingly to the play.

RUNNING PLAYS

1. If a running play comes to your side, be prepared to cover the ball carrier all the way to the goal line;
2. If the ball goes dead in your area mark the point of forward progress. If ball goes dead near the Umpire, provide a soft spot until you determine who is ruling on forward progress. If you have the spot, hold the spot until the Umpire places the ball for the next play and then go to your position;
3. If the play moves to the far side, move off the sideline and float inside – maintain a good cushion and cover from the periphery. Use the hash marks as your limit of moving inside;
4. Avoid moving inside too far, too quickly or too soon;
5. Note: Held Official should stay at LoS until ball crosses the LoS. Free Official may have to come back to cover the ball carrier – avoid going too deep until the play goes deep.

PASSING PLAYS

1. Held Official will hold the LoS until the pass is thrown, then move downfield to cover the receiver(s) on your side of the field. The BU will have deep coverage responsibilities, however you have deep sideline responsibilities;
2. Both Held and Free Officials have coverage on the inside receiver(s) for the first 5 - 8 yards downfield to ensure there is no illegal interference by either team. Note in the case of triple or quad receivers to opposite side of the field, you will have responsibility for all receivers on your side of the line for the first 5 - 8 yards;
3. Free Official will avoid giving deep coverage until they read pass. Judge how deep the Free Official should go based on the actions of the receivers. Once the ball is thrown go deep to cover the receiver(s) on your side of the field;
4. Note: Once the ball is in the area, watch the target zone, not the ball;
5. Side Officials cover the play from the outside. Avoid moving inside too far;
6. Rule on passes into your zone and be prepared to assist on passes to the outside, looking through the play to assist or to seek assistance;
7. Be prepared for completions, incomplete passes and interceptions;
8. Note if, incomplete pass, turnover, out of bounds in order to stop the clock;
9. Incomplete pass signals should be at the shoulders, sharp and crisp. Then ensure (verbally) Umpire knows whether pass complete/incomplete;
10. On completed passes, and/or interceptions, follow up on the ensuing play;
11. On an interception be prepared to assist in ruling on legality of blindside blocks if they occur in the area of the ball;

12. If marking forward progress, hold the spot until the Umpire places the ball for the next play;
13. If the BU has the spot, release them as soon as possible so they can proceed to their position for the next play.

LATERAL "PASS" IN BACKFIELD

1. If you are in position to rule on a close lateral/forward pass in the backfield communication is crucial. You and the Referee must work together. How these will be covered should be part of your pregame discussion;
2. Side officials must be prepared to recognize and rule on close lateral/forward pass plays in the backfield. On a quick drop, the Held Official would usually be in the best position to rule on a close lateral/forward pass in the backfield. This is primarily your responsibility, however . . .
3. On a close play, look quickly at the Referee. If Referee is in good position to make the call, wait a split second so you can communicate with the Referee;
4. If Referee is not in position, not looking, or it will obviously be your call, then immediately make a decision and make your call. If in doubt as to forward pass or lateral, consider it a forward pass and kill the play.

GOAL-LINE PLAYS

1. Take up a normal position on the LoS;
2. Held official will remain on the LoS until the play develops;
3. Free official will move to the goal line on the snap.

KICK FROM SCRIMMAGE (PUNT)

HELD OFFICIAL

1. Take up normal scrimmage play position at the LoS;
2. Hold your position until the ball crosses the LoS;
3. DO NOT move into the backfield if the ball is snapped over punter's head, or if the play breaks down. The Referee and Umpire will bracket action in the backfield. You must continue to cover the LoS.
4. Once ball crosses the LoS, move off the line at a controlled pace to cover the return. Avoid crowding the BU who is deep on your side of the field;
5. Remain outside and avoid moving inside past your hash marks if the play goes to the far side;
6. Be ready for give-and-take mechanics if there is a long return.

FREE OFFICIAL

1. Set up at or near the sideline and 5 yards ahead of the receiver(s) on your side of the field. Set up opposite to the BU;

2. Be ready to cover the punt – note the signal from the BU in regard to who covers the ball carrier or receiver, and who covers the blocking;
3. Be prepared to rule on the restraining zone (No Yards) if the ball comes down in your zone, or if the ball lands on the field of play and is subsequently touched/fielded;
4. Be prepared for give-and-take mechanics in the event of a long return;
5. Cover the play from the outside – avoid moving inside.
6. If ball lands on the field of play and bounces out of bounds in your zone, be prepared to mark the spot, kill the play and inform the rest of the crew.
7. If the ball is kicked out of bounds in flight, kill the play when it lands and co-ordinate with Referee to mark the spot. Proceed to sideline, walk upfield toward Referee making eye contact, await Referee's signal for out-of-bounds spot. Hold spot until relieved.

BOTH OFFICIALS

1. If the ball become dead in your area mark forward progress and hold the spot until the Umpire relieves you, or places the ball for the next play;
2. Avoid crowding toward the ball – maintain a cushion with your fellow Official(s);
3. Once the flight of the ball is determined, watch the receivers, not the ball;
4. On short kicks – note the Umpire is no longer in the defensive backfield. Kill the play if the ball is coming down short and in the vicinity of a group of players outside the hash marks, beyond the LoS;
5. Be ready to assist on ruling where the ball goes out of bounds if in your zone;
6. Release the BU if they have the spot so BU can proceed to position for the next play.

SIDE OFFICIALS – FIELD GOALS

FREE OFFICIAL – OUTSIDE THE 10-YARD LINE

1. Move back to the goal post area with the BU to cover the field goal attempt. Take up a position on your side of the goal post assembly about 2 - 3 yards deep in the end zone;
2. Follow the mechanics for the field goal as noted under the BU's coverage of FG attempts that are good or wide.

HELD OFFICIAL – OUTSIDE THE 10-YARD LINE

1. Set up on the LoS;
2. Hold the line until the ball crosses the LoS;
3. Move downfield at a controlled pace to assist in coverage if the FG attempt goes wide – as per punt play. Remember to stay outside to cover your sideline.

INSIDE THE 10-YARD LINE

BOTH SIDE OFFICIALS

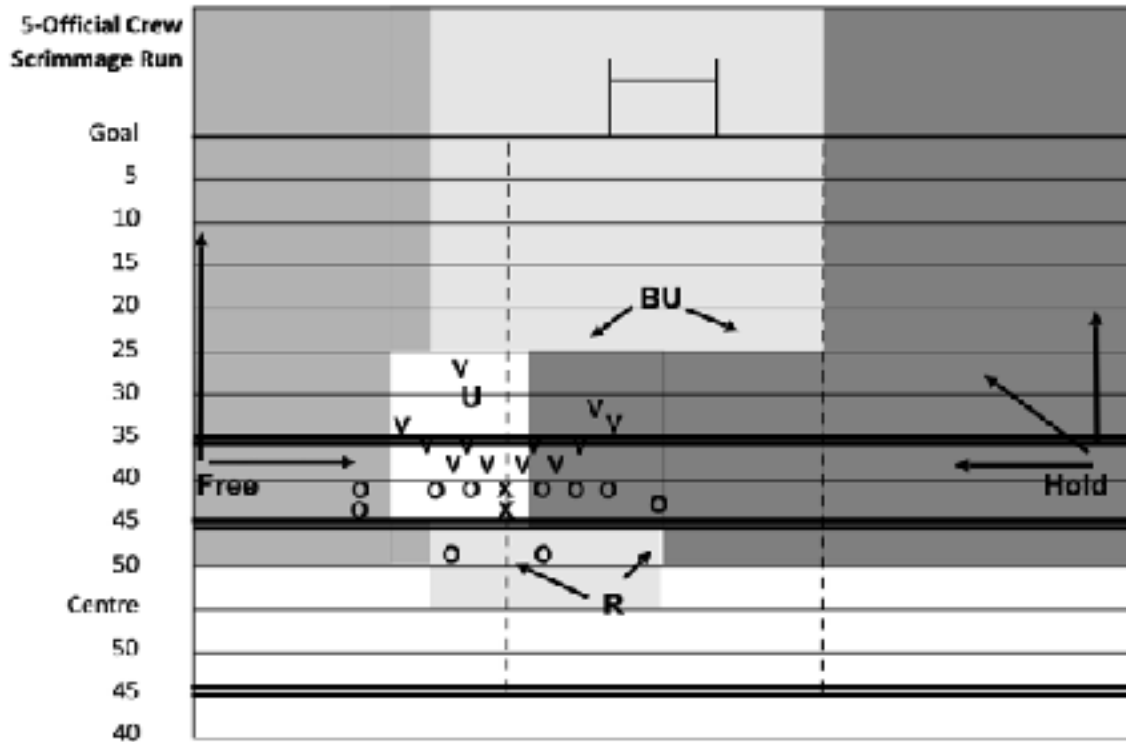
1. Set up as per a normal scrum play;
2. The side Official looking at the holder's face shall cover action against the holder and kicker, as the Referee will be watching the flight of the ball;
3. Be ready for a miss, a blocked kick, or a fake.

CONVERTS

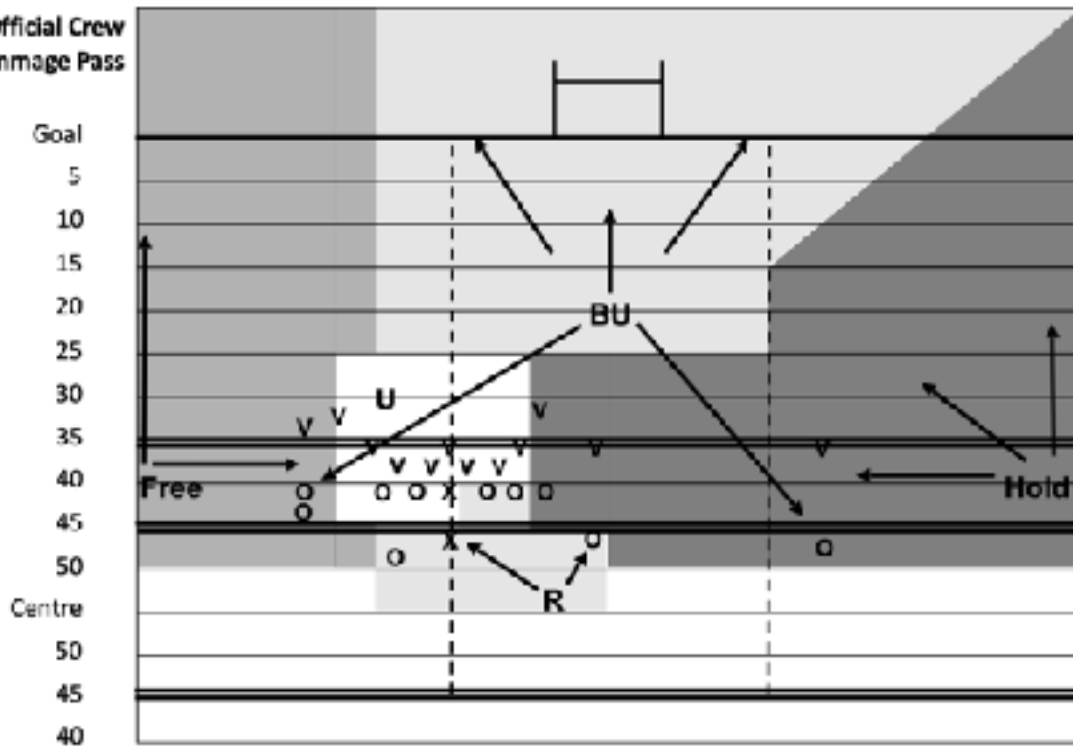
BOTH SIDE OFFICIALS

1. Line up as per a normal play from scrumage;
2. Coverage as per a FG from Inside the 10-yard line – note above;
3. Be ready for a fake kick that may result in a pass or run.

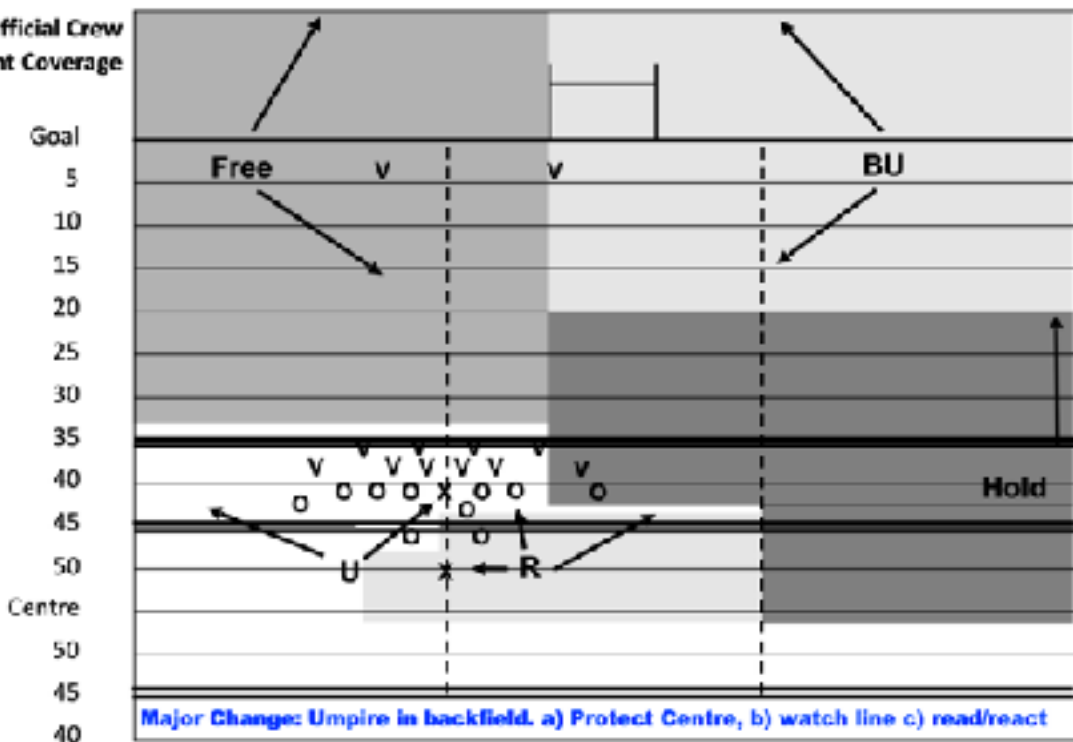
POSITIONING CHARTS TO SUPPORT 5-OFFICIAL MECHANICS



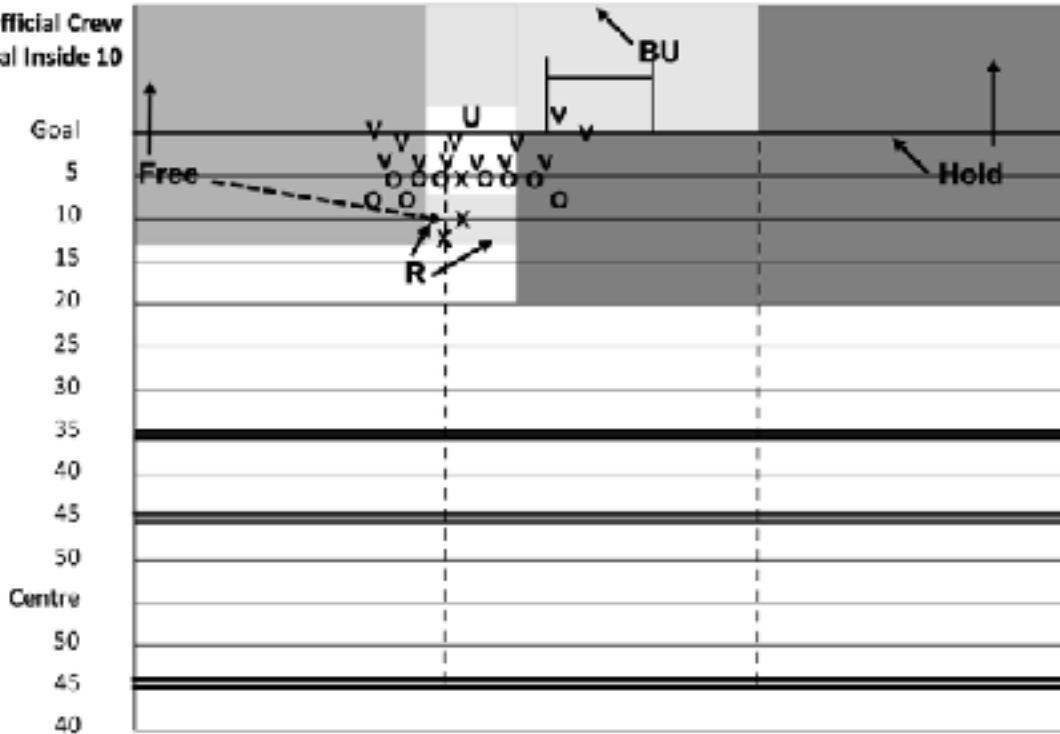
5-Official Crew
Scrimmage Pass



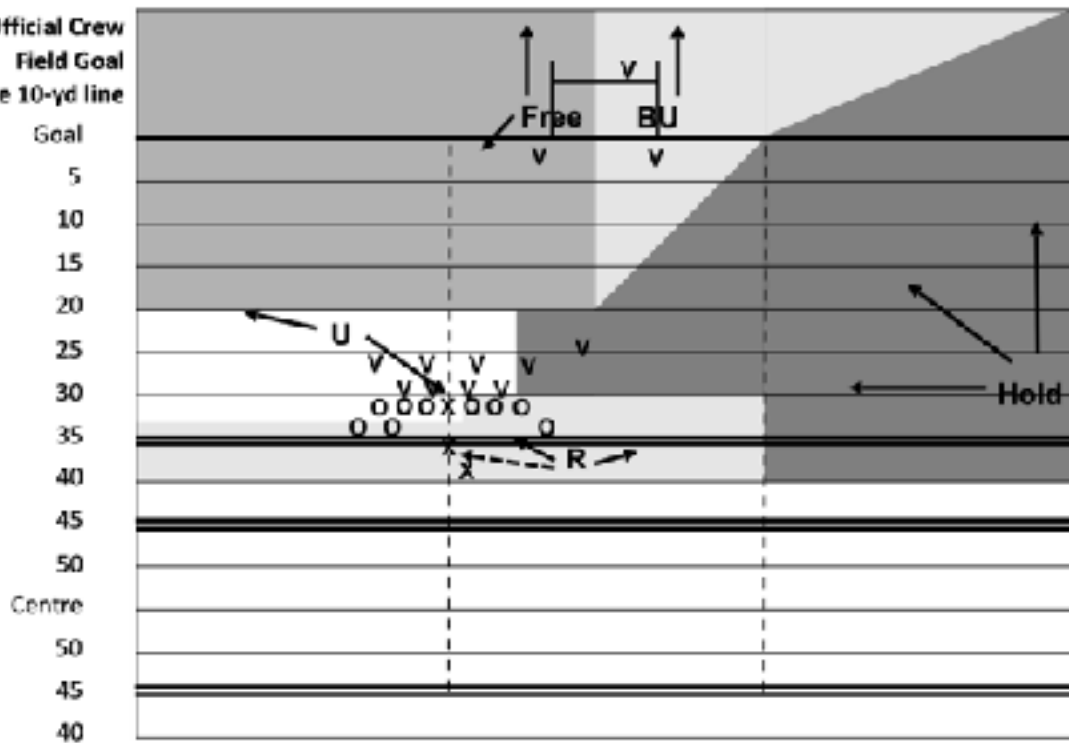
5-Official Crew
Punt Coverage



**5-Official Crew
Field Goal Inside 10**



**5-Official Crew
Field Goal Outside 10-yd line**



MEASUREMENTS

REFEREE

1. Will call for the measurement - ensure the ball remains exactly where ruled dead until after the measurement is completed;
2. Will stand beside the forward post or stick for the measurement;
3. Will announce the ensuing down – if yards gained or not;
4. If very close, pick up the chain at the forward point of the ball and then move the chain or sticks to the point of next scrimmage;

UMPIRE

1. Will hold the forward post or stick at the ball;
2. Will carry the forward stick to the point of next scrimmage in the case of a close measurement as per #4 above.

BACK UMPIRE

1. Is responsible to place the clip on the back edge of the appropriate line for the measurement.
2. Take note of position of forward stick in case clip falls off chains during measurement and DJ loses position for some reason.

DOWNS JUDGE

1. Upon a request for a measurement, DJ shall place the clip on the back edge of the field stripe closest to the back stick;
2. The DJ shall instruct the downs box person not to move;
3. The DJ shall then proceed to the forward stick and mark the spot of the stick with their foot;
4. The DJ shall instruct the sticks person closest to the clip to pick up the chain at the clip and then have the sticks taken in to the Umpire and BU;
5. The DJ shall set the sticks in the proper location upon being returned to the sideline.

LINE JUDGE

1. Act as a traffic controller – only one captain from each team is to be in the immediate area of the measurement;
2. If the ball has to be moved – hold the original spot until the ball is ready for the next play.

PENALTY APPLICATION

OFFICIAL CALLING THE FOUL

1. Continue to officiate until the play has been completed and the ball is ruled dead;
2. If marking forward progress, HOLD the SPOT until released by another official;
3. Report to the Referee - CINS/TINS.

ALL OFFICIALS

1. If you have information which might affect the call, approach the Official who threw the flag. Offer your information and allow the Official to process it. It will be up to the Official who threw the flag whether or not to rescind, or adjust, their ruling;
2. All Officials are responsible for ensuring penalties are correctly applied.

REFEREE

1. Receive and repeat the penalty information;
2. Call for the captains – the Umpire will assist here;
3. Step out into the open to give the preliminary signals;
4. Give options to the non-offending captain, captain(s) as appropriate;
5. Instruct the Umpire to apply the yardage distance from the appropriate spot;
6. Move out into the open and toward the point of next play, give the signals and announce the down to follow. (Use a triangle technique);
7. Sound your whistle and hustle to your position. NOTE: Timing rules as to when to start the clock.

UMPIRE

1. Have the captain(s) ready for the Referee;
2. Obtain the ball;
3. Listen to the option(s) being given – only interject if an error has been made;
4. Follow the Referee's instructions re: yardage application;
5. Communicate with the DJ re. the penalty application;
6. Apply the distance by crossing lines, not by stepping off the yardage (unless the field is not marked);
7. Before placing the ball, check with the DJ re. the distance

DOWNS JUDGE

1. Once available to do so, proceed toward the sideline near the downs box;
2. Upon instructions from the Umpire, walk off the yardage at the sideline area;

3. Check with the Umpire for distance and set the sticks.

HALF-TIME MANAGEMENT

EOTFOA has adopted a procedure to eliminate captains' meetings with the Referee and Umpire at the start of the second half.

At the end of the first half, the Referee and Umpire should immediately approach the head coach of the team with second-half choice. They should discern whether the coach wants to receive the ball, kick the ball or choose an end.

They should then immediately approach the other head coach to make their choice of the remaining options, and ensure both head coaches and all Officials are made aware of all the choices.

TIME OUT MANAGEMENT

Each team is permitted two time outs per half. Team time outs are one minute in duration. Time outs may NOT be carried over from one half to the next. There are NO time outs in Overtime (Shoot Out). A time out called by an Official due to a "blood" issue, is NOT considered a team time out.

1. Any player who is on the field of play may request a time out. Part of the Referee's talk; (SEE note above in Referee's Meeting with Coaches)
2. The Official who recognizes a request for a time out should sound their whistle and give the signal for the timer to stop the clock if it is not already stopped. Communicate to the Referee that a time out has been requested, and which team called for the time out;
3. The Referee shall then give the time out signal (not stop-the-clock signal) and point toward the team making the request. The Referee shall inform the captain as to the team's time out status – i.e. one time out left; no time outs left, etc. This information should be relayed to the head coach;
4. During the time out, the Officials should "huddle" to plan strategy for the next play(s). However, team benches and team huddles must always be observed for proper time out procedures vis-a-vis coaches' interactions with players;
5. The Umpire shall time the time out and inform the Referee when there are 10 seconds left in the time out;
6. The Referee shall sound a couple of short whistle blasts and announce to both teams 10 seconds remain in the time out. Officials near the benches may relay this message if needed.
7. Except for the Referee, the Officials shall take up their positions for the next play;
8. Once the 10 seconds has elapsed the Referee shall sound their whistle to signal the 20-second count has commenced, go to their position and keep one hand aloft until the snap.

DEAD BALL

Dead ball time can be one of the major causes of disturbances during Midget Ball. All members of the crew need to dead-ball officiate at all times. Use your presence and voice to have players

separate when the play is over and go to their respective huddles/benches.

Once the play ends and players are returning to their respective benches or huddles, the crew then needs to work together to relay the ball to the Umpire for the next play. Unlike 7-Official ball where Sideline Officials stay on their sidelines, all 5-Official crew members must be involved in getting the ball relayed back to the Umpire – especially on long plays that need to go back to the initial LoS, such as an incomplete pass or long run with a foul by Team A before yards are gained.

There is a wide range of abilities among crew members with respect to throwing and catching the ball. Do not attempt to throw the ball much more than 10 to 15 yards. Use an underhand throw and lots of hustle. Be aware most Midget games are played at night so the ball cannot go too high in the air, or you will blind fellow Officials forced to look into the lights to find the ball.

There are sufficient Officials that you can go around players with the ball relays. Attempting to throw the ball over players runs the risk of hitting a player, getting it up into the lights, or making an errant throw.

The crew's goal should be to ensure there are no illegal acts after the play, and then get the ball set for the next play before Team A can get back to their huddle. This allows the Referee maximum flexibility in clock and game management to keep a good flow going.