

# *Officials' Certification Program*



## **Officials Certification Program**



## **Level I Tackle Student Manual**

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# Section 1

## Structure of Football Officiating in Canada

## Football Canada Officials' Certification Program

## Certification Levels





# Structure of Football Officiating in Canada

## **Football Canada (NSO – National Sport Organization)**

Football Canada is the governing body for amateur football in Canada. The National Office is located in Ottawa and provides programs for Coaches, Players and Officials.

## **Canadian Football Officials' Association (CFOA)**

Chartered in 1969, the Canadian Football Officials' Association (CFOA) was created to establish officiating standards in Canadian amateur tackle football. In addition to developing and facilitating education, mentorship and evaluation, CFOA is working tirelessly to ensure the officiating community is recognized as an equal stakeholder in the game.

## **Provincial Football Association (PSO – Provincial Sport Organization)**

Each province has a provincial body that administers football in their respective province.

These bodies oversee the overall football program for their areas.

They offer services to their membership in the form of Coaches' clinics, Player development programs, administrative assistance and in some cases financial assistance for training programs.

## **Provincial FOA**

The provincial FOAs serve as an administrative body for amateur football officials in their respective province. They are responsible for supporting their local FOAs in training based on the FCOCF guidelines and work with PSO for game assignments and other football-related matters.

## **Local FOA**

Local officials' associations administer matters such as recruitment, training and game assignments, etc.





# Officials' Certification Program (FCOCP)

The FCOCP provides a system, which will allow the amateur football Official in Canada to progress through a standard program from a novice to a level completely consistent with the level of football played in their locale.

## Aims of the FCOCP

### **Standardization**

To develop and implement standard methods and procedures of officiating in Canada.

### **Standardization of Positioning and Mechanics**

To develop standardized positioning and mechanics across Canada. With the exchange program for Officials for national playoffs.

### **Standardization of Rules**

To develop standardized interpretation and application of rules.

### **Motivation**

A higher level of certification opens officiating 'doors' for being assigned to work higher levels of play in various locales or for provincial, regional and/or national playoff games.

### **National Recognition**

Officials are registered with the Football Canada national database upon successful completion of each level of certification. An Official who transfers from one region to another will have their level of certification recognized. However, local associations may require some reassessment when an Official transfers from one area to another.

### **Improvement in Confidence**

To assist participants to develop more confidence in their ability to perform their duties at a higher level of excellence.





# Certification Levels

## Level I

To prepare the new Official for assignment on the sideline (Down Judge and/or Line Judge) in minor leagues and high school football. To begin the familiarization process with instructional techniques, training aids, and training manuals.

## Level II

To improve the understanding of the sideline positions and refine sideline officiating mechanics. To prepare Sideline Officials for assignments in the Umpire positions in a 3, 4 and/or 5-official system in community and high school levels of football.

## Level III

To deepen understanding of the Umpire positioning in the 3, 4 and 5-official system. To prepare officials for referee and deep positions in the 5 and 6-official system in community and high school levels of football.

## Level IV

To prepare officials for assignment to any position in 6 and 7-official system at the USports, CJFL and CGEP levels of football. Officials will progress from position to position with experience at higher levels of play.

## Notes

With the exception of Level 1, certification at all levels is a two-part process, combining a Theory Clinic and a Practical On Field Evaluation. Written examinations have been prepared for each level. The content of the examination will be based partially on rules and partially on officiating techniques and theory (Rules 25%, Theory 75%)

Standard passing marks have been set as follows:

- LEVEL I: take home exam to be used as a teaching and reference aid
- LEVEL II: 75%
- LEVEL III: 80%
- LEVEL IV: 85%

The On Field Evaluation is to be carried out on the work of an Official on the playing field under actual game conditions. Evaluators must be entirely familiar with all aspects of the FCOCP in order to provide consistency in the evaluation process.

In addition to the Level Theory Clinic, an Official must be given On Field Evaluation for **each position** at which he/she wishes to be certified. One does not have to be certified at each and every position but may wish to specialize in one or more positions. In order to retain a certain level of certification the Official must be active at the level of play for which that level of certification is required.





# Section 2

## The Job of Officials

## The Role of the Official





# The Job of Officials

## 1. A Smooth Flow to the Game

Officials are present to administer the game and to assist in having the game proceed in as smooth a fashion as possible.

It is the Officials' job to set a pace that allows the game to move quickly and smoothly.

## 2. Game Played Within the Rules

A main function of an Official is to enforce the rules – to see that the game is played within the rules and within the spirit of the rules.

Officials are there to ensure that no Player takes an “unfair advantage” of an opponent.

Where possible, Officials may prevent fouls and injuries by their presence.

Officials must always be concerned for “Player Safety” as part of “Rules Enforcement”.

## 3. Little Interference

Officials should NOT take the game away from the Players. The game is for the Players and people go to games to watch the play and Players, not the Officials.

One of the greatest compliments for an Official is to go unnoticed because of their efficient handling of a game.

## 4. Preventing Fouls

Preventive officiating is the watchword for today's successful Official.

Positive action can often prevent Players from committing fouls/infractions.

Field presence can often be a deterrent to infractions being committed.

Using your voice to give warnings and being in position to make rulings are great assets towards successful “preventive officiating”.

## 5. Making the Call

Learning to recognize what is “legal” and what is “illegal”.

Recognize fouls/infractions and “make the call”.

Don't back away from the “close calls”, act with courage.

Sometimes the best call is a “no call”.

A rule of thumb to follow, “no harm, no foul”.

## Notes

Learn the basics of officiating first, details and refinements will come with experience.

Development as an Official is a type of apprentice program where there is an ongoing learning program.





# The Role of the Official

## Why have Officials?

## Who must Officials deal with?

## Roles that must be served

Your primary concerns should be: **“The safety & well-being of the Players”** and **“The game is for the Players”**.

Officials should work at developing positive relationships with:

- Coaches
- Players
- League administrators
- Fellow Officials
- Fans

### 1. Game Official

- Influence fair play and good sportsmanship.
- Present and sell yourself as a competent Official to others.
- Always display honesty and integrity in all aspects of the game.
- Make your calls/no calls to the best of your ability.
- Try Do not to be influenced by the score, time of game, position on the field, the fans, etc.

### 2. Educator

- Give assistance to Players, Coaches, league administrators and fellow Officials (i.e. rules clinics, officiating clinics, on the field assistance and guidance).
- Help with a better understanding of the playing rules and their interpretation.

### 3. Psychologist

- Be humanistic in your dealings/relationship with others.
- Be businesslike in your approach to each game towards the Players, Coaches, administrators, fans, etc. You're there to do a job, not to be a “friend” Does this belong here?
- Don't take criticism from biased participants and spectators personally – they see the stripes and not you as an individual.
- Work to resolve conflict.
- Develop self awareness and self control.

### 4. Diplomat

- Present yourself as a competent and professional Official to others.
- Limit your contact with the above persons to the affairs of the day and matters concerning the game. This is not a social gathering. Replace with: • Be professional in your approach to each game towards the Players, Coaches, administrators, fans, etc. You're there for business, not to socialize.

**“Actions speak louder than words”**



# Section 3

**Qualities of a Competent  
Official**

**Getting Ahead as an Official**





# Qualities of a Competent Official

## Understanding and Applying the Rules

### 1. Consistency

- Consistency is the Official's greatest asset.
- Inconsistency is the Coach's major complaint.
- Know the intent of the rules and apply them in a consistent manner.
- Time, place, and score should have no bearing on your "calls".

### 2. Rule Knowledge

- Learn the rules and their intent.
- This is an ongoing experience – constant review is essential.

### 3. Duties & Mechanics

- Being in position is the biggest part of being able to make the correct call.

### 4. Know where to be and what to do.

- Develop "Teamwork" – you are not responsible for the entire field of play.

### 5. Judgement

- This is related to your knowledge of the game and rules – what to call and what not to call.
- Know the rules and the intent of the rules – know the "spirit of the rules".

## Pace

### 1. Hustle

- There is no substitute for hustle on the field.
- Hustle creates a positive impression – it shows that you are interested.
- Coaches, Players, fans and other Officials are all aware of your hustle or lack of it.
- Hustle does not mean "running at full speed all the time" but moving in a sharp and efficient manner.

### 2. Reaction Time

- See the action, then react/respond.
- Speed of decision leads to game control while hesitation creates doubt.
- Anticipation of infractions will lead to errors being made.



## Decision making

### 1. Decisiveness

- This is related to reaction time – make your decision and make the call/no call.
- Rules knowledge and a feel for the game are valuable assets towards making proper decisions without hesitation.

### 2. Courage

- Don't back away from the difficult calls.
- Avoid being influenced by Players, Coaches, fans, etc.
- React to the play, not to the reaction of crowd noise, etc.

### 3. Be objective

- Judge each play on its own merits.
- Avoid doing what is popular – you must make an objective judgement on every play.
- "No Harm, No Foul".

## Self awareness

### 1. Confidence

- Display self-control. Be in control of your emotions.
- Be positive in your approach to dealing with situations.
- Act with confidence; but don't be arrogant.

### 2. Rapport

- Display courtesy and respect at all times. Be mindful of your "Body Language".
- Be businesslike yet be approachable.
- Be humanistic in your approach to the game.
- Be aware of the image that you are presenting to others.
- Display a positive attitude towards the game and those in it.

### 3. Look the Part

- Be in condition to do the job required for your position for the entire game. Be able to give the same effort in all four quarters.
- Appearance is a big part of "looking the part". A sloppy appearance can be interpreted as lack of caring on your part.
- "Look Sharp – Be Sharp".





# Getting Ahead as an Official

## “Reach for the top”

### 1. Set Goals with Deadlines

- Set long term and short term goals with deadlines.
- What do you wish to achieve as an Official?
- At what positions, levels, etc. do you wish to officiate?
- Primary goals – what do you wish to accomplish over the next year or so?
- Intermediate goals – where do you want to be in 3-5 years?
- Long-term goals – lifetime/career goals in officiating.

### 2. Develop and maintain a positive attitude

- Build a positive attitude towards the game.
- Relate professionally with Players, Coaches, league administrators, fans, and other Officials.
- Create a culture of positivity around yourself.
- Give back to the game – share knowledge with others.

### 3. Hard Work

- Give 100% for every assignment, at all levels.
- Work at self-improvement.
- Show interest and work towards achieving your goals.

### 4. Look the Part

- Work on conditioning – develop stamina.
- Work at perfecting positioning and mechanics.
- Know the rules and their applications.
- Look sharp on the field – hustle, hustle, hustle.

### 5. Develop your support network

- Support is required:
  - a) At home (family support).
  - b) At work (employer and fellow employees).
  - c) From fellow Officials (work together as a Team).



## 6. Learn from Others

- Observe other Officials – observe high caliber/quality Officials.
- Attend games to observe officiating mechanics.
- Work with experienced Officials.
- Attend clinics, conferences, weekly study sessions, etc.
- Upgrade your qualification level

## 7. Learn from Mistakes

- Turn mistakes into learning opportunities.
- Avoid dwelling on the negative – move ahead.
- Try not to repeat mistakes – dwell on how to correct the error.
- Reflect on each game with the goal of being better the next time out.

## 8. Accept Challenges

- Take advantage of opportunities that present themselves.
- Take chances that lead to self-improvement.
- Accept challenges (i.e. assignments, working on projects, etc.).





# Section 4

## Dress and Appearance





# Dress and Appearance

The Officials who report to the field in a clean, neat, proper-fitting uniform, regardless of weather conditions, have started the assignment in the right way – they look the part.

## Look Sharp — Be Sharp.

### 1. Uniform

Item (top down):

1. Hat – black with white piping (white with black piping for Referee)
2. Jersey – check for local / provincial requirements
3. Undershirt – black (optional) or Black turtle-neck under a regulation jersey (optional)
4. Pants – black with white stripe
5. Belt – black
6. Socks – black
7. Shoes and laces – black (shoes may have white logos but should be predominantly black)
8. Gloves – black (optional for foul weather)

### 2. Check with Local Association

Item:

1. Toque – black (white for Referee)
2. Crest
3. Number
4. Shorts
5. Regulation striped lined foul weather jacket

### 3. Equipment

Item:

1. Flag – orange, weighted
2. Whistle – Finger-grip or Lanyard type
3. Penalty tracker – note pad and pencil

### 4. Optional

Item:

1. Downs Counter
2. Clip



## Points to Consider

The entire officiating crew is judged by its appearance on first sight. Don't you be the one to let the crew down.

- All parts of your uniform must be clean.
- Shoes must always be freshly polished.

## Acceptable Variations

### 1. Winter/Fall (extreme cold)

- Black turtle-neck under a regulation jersey
- Plain black toques (White for Referee)
- Regulation striped lined jacket
- Neutral-coloured hand wear

### 2. Rainwear

- Clear plastic or regulation striped apparel.

## Required Accessories

### 1. Whistle

- Finger-grip type
- Lanyard type

### 2. Flag

- Regulation type
- Rectangular (approximately 16" x 16")
- Weighted

### ***Points to Consider***

- Shoes should always be freshly polished.
- Hats should be clean and blocked.
- Jerseys should have regulation-width stripes.
- The entire officiating crew is judged by its appearance on first sight. Don't you be the one to let the crew down.
- In wet and/or cold weather, a cleaner's plastic bag, or green plastic bag, with holes cut for head and arms, and worn under the jersey, helps to keep dry and warm. Likewise, a plastic bread bag or shirt bag worn on the feet will keep the feet dry and warm.



# Section 5

## Fundamental Skills





# Fundamental Skills

## 1. Use of the Whistle

The whistle should be quick, loud and sharp. Sometimes consecutive short blasts must be given when attention is not readily gained. Whistles should be sounded to protect the ball carrier who is clearly stopped. Sound the whistle **ONLY** when you see the ball become dead, otherwise you could be sounding the whistle on plays on the other side of the field.

Remember that the sounding of a whistle terminates all the action. An inadvertent whistle can result in the play having to be rerun. In the event of a fumble, the officiating crew may experience difficulty if a whistle is sounded by an Official who does not clearly see the ball become dead.

New Officials must guard against the temptation of blowing a “back-up” whistle merely to become an active Official.

## 2. Use of Penalty Flag (Calling Fouls)

When a foul is detected, note the number of the offending Player, toss your penalty flag into the air, or to the ground for spot fouls, near to the approximate spot where the ball was held at that time, and mentally note the spot of the foul.

**Continue to Officiate.** Do **not** sound your whistle until the ball becomes dead. Do not start to run towards the Referee to report the foul until the ball becomes dead.

When the ball is dead, signal Time Out. If you are covering the dead ball spot, hold it until a fellow Official comes and takes it over, and then go to the Referee to give the details of the penalty.

Stay with the Referee until he/she has given the details to the Captains. They might want a further explanation.

## 3. Use of Signals

Penalty and timing signals should be given in a deliberate and precise manner to assist the orderly progress of the game. For example, when a Pass Receiver catches a pass out of bounds, give the incomplete pass signal. If a Receiver catches a pass inbounds in the End Zone and then runs out of bounds, signal only the touchdown. Confusion must be curtailed through deliberate, decisive signals.

The following is given so that you can anticipate what the Referee will do in administering the penalty.

The Referee will first signal the penalty at the point of enforcement. After applying the appropriate yardage, he/she will repeat the signal to both sides of the field. These latter signals will be given from a spot in the clear and away from the ball.

## 4. Relaying the Ball

Officials should work as a unit to quickly retrieve the ball after each play. When retrieving the ball, a chain or “shuttle system” should be used and the ball relayed to the new progress spot by short, underhand passes. Generally, the Umpire will spot the ball with the assistance of the Referee.



## 5. Counting of Downs

The Rule Book places the prime responsibility on the Referee with assistance from the Down Judge. This does not remove the responsibility from the other field Officials to ensure that the down is correct, and that the chains are placed correctly.

The following procedures will be used in moving the chains, the downsbox and for the changing of the number displayed on the downsbox.

### Referee:

After each play, the Referee will signal the number of the next down and they shall visually check to ensure that the downsbox number indicates the correct number. Each time the chains are to be moved, the Referee will signal the move and shall check to ensure that they are positioned in the proper location before they signal that the ball is now ready for play.

### Down Judge:

After each play, he/she shall signal the upcoming down to the Referee, and then he/she shall repeat the Referee's signal of the number of the next down to the support crew and shall check to ensure the downsbox is placed in the proper location and that the downsbox number is correct. If the Down Judge does not agree with the down number as signalled by the Referee, they must immediately check with the Referee to ensure that any disagreement is solved before the ball is put into play. Only on the signal from the Referee shall the Down Judge direct the chains to be moved and they shall then check to ensure that they are stationed in the proper location.

### All Field Officials:

Prior to every down, check to ensure that the downsbox is displaying the correct number of the next down. If you are in disagreement, immediately check with the Referee before the ball is again put into play.

If you have a flag down for an infraction, make certain that the chains and downsbox are not being moved. This can be done while you are signalling "Time Out" for your penalty call.

### Support Crew:

Only on the signal from the Referee and the Down Judge will the Down Box change the location and/or the number of the next down. The support crew must be aware if a penalty is assessed on the previous play and do not move until the penalty is adjudicated.

## 6. Calling Infractions

When you see an infraction, instantly indicate that you are calling it by throwing your flag. DO NOT blow your whistle until the ball becomes dead. Continue to follow the play.

In throwing your flag:

- a) If Point where Ball was Held is required, try to throw it toward the spot where the ball was held.
- b) If Point where Ball was Held is not required, throw your flag high so that it can be seen.

You must make every effort to get the number (or position) of the offending Player, and also note whether the ball was in possession of either Team. In the case of a kick, you must know if the ball was in possession or in flight.



When the ball is finally declared dead by you or a fellow Official:

- a) Signal "Time Out" demonstratively.
- b) Make certain that the support crew does not move immediately.
- c) Make certain that one Official is holding the "dead-ball spot".
- d) The ball should be left at the dead-ball spot until called for by the Referee or Umpire.
- e) Report immediately to the Referee.
- f) Remain calm and cover the following points: TINS or CINS
  - (i) "C" Colour of offending Team's jersey, or "T" – Team name
  - (ii) "I" Infraction called
  - (iii) "N" Number of the offending Player
  - (iv) "S" Stay with Referee to give the following if needed:
    - (A) Point of infraction
    - (B) Point where the ball was held when infraction occurred
    - (C) Who was in possession
    - (D) Was the ball in possession
    - (E) Whether 1st Down had been made prior to the infraction

In describing the infraction, it is also helpful to the Referee to add whether it was offence, defence, kicking or receiving Team.

*Example:*

[Offending Team] is on defence and linebacker #28 grabs and throws [Non-offending team] player out of the way to get to the ball carrier. Green Team gained two yards on the play.

- Report as follows: "[Offending Team]: defensive illegal use of hands, #28".

*Example:*

Westiders are on defence and Northerners are on offence. After yards had been gained, #15 of the Northerners blocks Westiders' #77 from the rear at the 55-yard line. The ball carrier was at their own 50-yard line at the time of the infraction.

- Report as follows: "Northerners, blocking from the rear, #15, ball was held at Northerners 50 yard line, where my flag is: 1st Down was made before the foul".

## 7. Retrieving the Ball

The ball should be returned to the next line of scrimmage by a relay system of short underhand passes, NOT by long passes.

If the ball is dead more than 10 yards from the line of scrimmage, the nearest Official relays it on to the next closest Official by an underhand pass. He/she will then relay it to the Umpire, also by an underhand pass, who will be at the point of next scrimmage.

In most cases, the Umpire will be at the hash marks for the placing of the ball for the next scrimmage. However, where there are long retrievals, the Umpire will move downfield and then relay it to the Held Official who has moved into the point of the next scrimmage with the Referee. The Referee should mark the spot by placing their foot where the ball will be placed, allowing the Held Official to move in their



part of the retrieval of the ball.

The important thing is to move the ball by a relay system. Do not attempt long passes to other Officials. A neat, orderly return of the ball (triangle system) looks professional and gets the play started again with minimal delay.

## 8. Time Outs:

Upon recognizing a request for a "Time Out" by a Player on the field or the head coach from the bench area, an Official will immediately signal "Time Out."

Each crew member should record the Time Out on their game card.

### Umpire:

- Time the one-minute "Time Out" on their own watch and alert the Referee when there is 10 seconds remain.

### Referee:

- Announce it by blowing their whistle and asking players to return to the playing field. The Referee should allow the full minute unless both Teams agree to resume play earlier.
- Make certain that the attacking Team goes into a huddle before the play, or at least have all Players move well into the field away from their bench area, if they are not using a huddle (preventive officiating).
- Announce the down and yardage, signal the ball ready for play by sounding their whistle, and hold their arm in the air to hold the game clock until the snap. *Mechanics of Football Officiating (General)*

## 9. Injury Time Outs

If you see an injured Player, signal "Time Out" AFTER the play is dead and go to the injured player.

If another Official is with the injured Player, or the trainer has the situation under control, carry out your normal duties for the next play. One Official should stay with the injured Player and trainer.

If there is a delay in getting the injured Player off the field of play, the Referee checks if additional help is needed.

See that other Players go to their respective huddles.

Do not huddle with other Officials.

After the injured Player has left the field, the Referee checks with the Captain if a substitute has come in.

The Line of Scrimmage Official should remind the head coach the injured player must sit out for at least 3 plays.

Referee announces the down and yardage, sounds their whistle and signals ball ready for play and/or time in.





## 10. Between Quarters

When the ball is dead on the last play of a quarter, the Referee announces the next down and then signal the end of the quarter by waving their flag above their head.

The Down Judge checks the down and distance with the Referee.

With assistance from the Umpire, the Referee locates the position of the ball as to distance from the inbounds line and the yardage line. The Umpire then picks up the ball and takes it to the corresponding spot at the other end of the field and remains with the ball until Referee signals "Ball ready for play."

The Down Judge puts their clip on the chain at the back of the yardage stripe closest to the stick and has the Support Crew reverse the chains. They then move to the opposite end of the field, to the same yardage stripe where the Down Judge places the clip at the appropriate spot. The Support Crew then tightens the chain.

## 11. End of Game

As soon as the Referee has signalled the end of the game, move directly off the field to the dressing room as quickly as possible. Bring the ball (if possible) to the dressing room.

The ball (or balls) and towels should be returned, as instructed prior to the game.

The Down Judge should thank the Support Crew.

Post-Game Debrief – As a crew member, be prepared to actively participate in open and positive discussion with the crew, and supervisor if available. Be ready to offer observations and ask questions as a way for development and improvement. Accept constructive criticism without being defensive or countering and justifying every suggestion made.

Concerns – Should you, for any reason, feel a complaint is justified as to the conduct of a Player, Coach or Team Official, or that conditions were unsatisfactory, please address your complaint IN WRITING to the President of your local FOA.

Comments – No Official shall make any comment publicly, on any platforms, concerning any game, participating teams, team personnel and fellow officials.



# Section 6

## Mechanics of Football Officiating (General)





## Mechanics of Football Officiating (General)

As a preface to the mechanics and duties of all Officials, the following points are noted:

1. All Officials have equal jurisdiction in calling penalties.
2. Only the whistle kills the play.
3. Ensure that you see the ball before killing the play (i.e. sounding your whistle).

### Three Officials

Referee (R)  
Umpire (U)  
Downs Judge (DJ)

### Four Officials

Referee (R)  
Umpire (U)  
Downs Judge (DJ)

### Five Officials

Referee (R)  
Umpire (U)  
Downs Judge (DJ)  
Line Judge (LJ)  
Back Umpire (BU)

The positions taken permit the Officials to surround the play and at the same time cover all possible play situations which may occur.

### a) Positioning

Know the positions for which you and each of the other Officials are responsible. Be aware of how all positioning is designed to box in all Players among 3 and 4 Officials, and how Pass Receivers should always be covered between at least two Officials.

Always review your positioning and duties before each game.

### b) Counting

Make certain you know which Team you are to count:

	3-Official	4-Official
Referee	Offence	Offence
Umpire	Defence	Defence
Down Judge	Home Team	Home Team
Line Judge		Visitors

### c) Held/Free Official Signals

The acknowledging signal to the Umpire by the Held Official is the pointing to the ground in front of you, and that of the Free Official is pointing downfield. It is generally the Sideline Official to the wide side of the field that stays at or near the line of scrimmage.

### d) Short Punt Responsibility

Primary responsibility to whistle the play dead is that of the Umpire, with secondary responsibility to the Held Official and the Referee. On blocked or deflected kicks, it is the responsibility of the Held Official.



**e) Signals**

It is the duty of every Official to know the signals and to give them properly as required. Remember that signals are the only means of communication between the Officials and the PA announcer and the fans.

Don't forget that you may be required to use the following signals during the game:

- i) Time out (CRITICAL – Always give first)
- ii) Incomplete pass
- iii) Direction of the ball, in case of a change in possession, after the ball is dead
- iv) Signal so the Referee can see

**f) Measurements**

Remember to make measurement at point ball dead, and not to move the ball in to the hash marks in close measure situations. Clip is placed on the back of the back line. Down Judge is responsible for the spot of the forward chain.

**g) 3-Minute Warning**

The Official closest to the Team benches (usually the Line Judge) shall advise the Coaches of both Teams. The Head Coach of each Team is to be advised of the number of Time Outs left in the half for each Team.

**h) Signals After 3-Minute Warning**

Remember in the last 3 minutes of each half that time stops after every play. All Officials assist the Referee in making sure he/she knows that the time should not start until the snap of the ball because there was:

- i) An incomplete forward pass
- ii) Ball was carried out of bounds
- iii) An application of a penalty
- iv) A change of possession
- v) A requested time-out
- vi) On the play following a kick off, kick from scrimmage, return kick, or open field kick



**Review instructions with the Support Crew before the game:**

1. On first down, go to sideline and set the spot for Downsbox and the rear stick at same spot.
2. For each down change, turn and signal new down to Downsbox, and from the field, indicate the correct point. Ensure that down is changed.
3. For measurement:
  - Go to sideline and make sure the clip is placed correctly on back of the yard stripe closest to the rear stick – back of the back line.
    - Take position marking the front stick spot.
    - Ensure Downsbox remains at previous line of scrimmage.
    - Once ready, send the sticks onto the field of play and reminds the back Support Crew member to move with the clip in hand.
    - Ensure clip is replaced at same point if down is unchanged.
    - Set new spot if first down is made.
4. At the end of first and third quarters:
  - Check correct down, and approximate distance to go.
  - Check the yard stripe on which the clip is placed.
  - Ensure clip is at the back edge of the line.
  - Reverse the position of the Sticks.
  - Move to the identical yard stripe at the opposite end of the field.
  - Place clip on the back of the correct yard stripe.
  - Reset the sticks and ensure the down and distance are accurate.



# Section 7

**What is the Line of Scrimmage?**

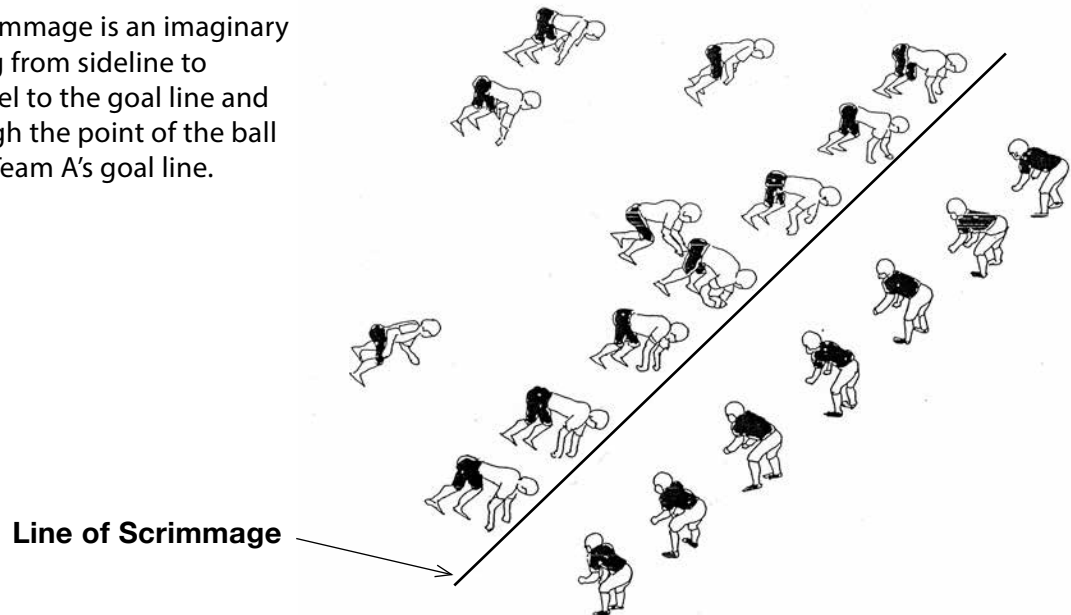




## What is the Line of Scrimmage?

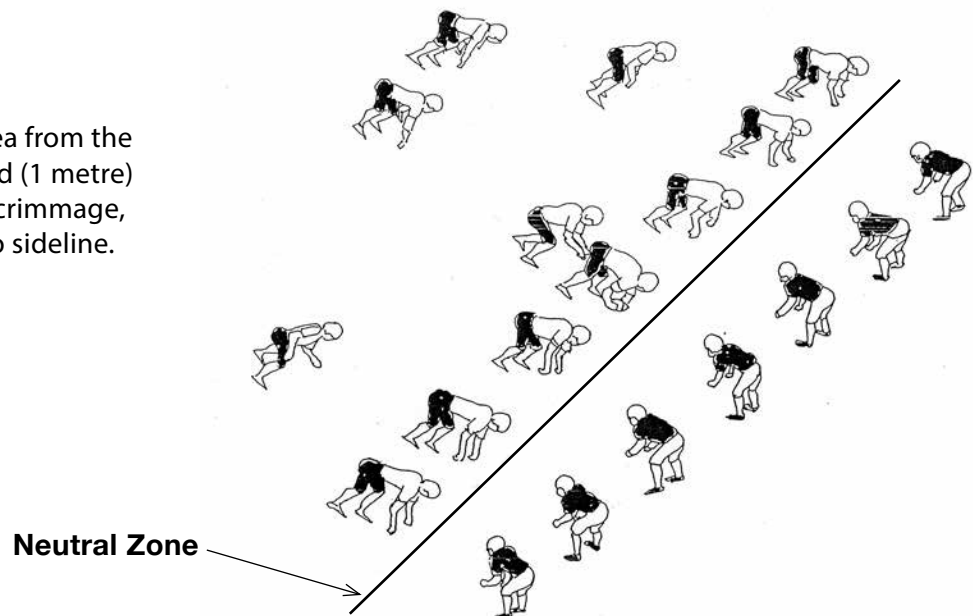
### What is the Line of Scrimmage?

The line of scrimmage is an imaginary line, extending from sideline to sideline, parallel to the goal line and passing through the point of the ball farthest from Team A's goal line.



### Neutral Zone

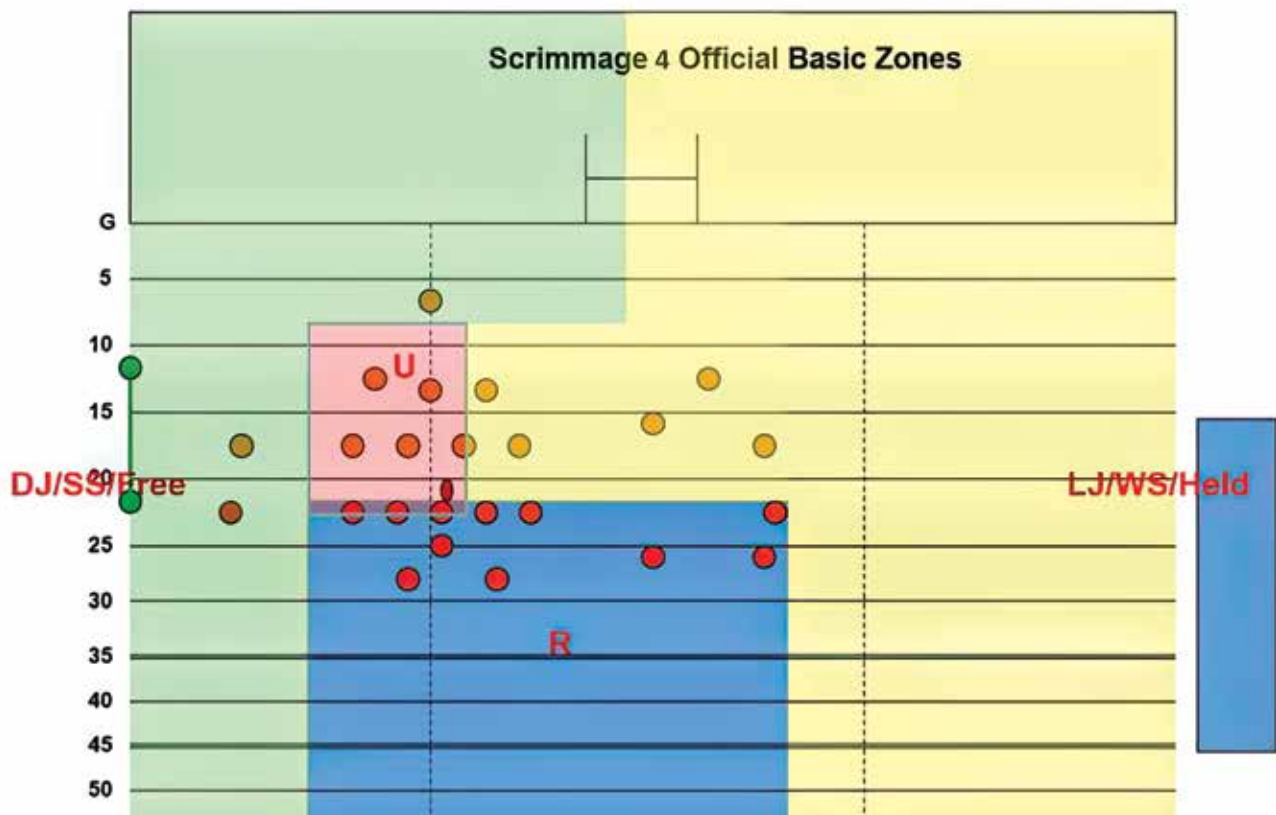
The neutral zone is the area from the line of scrimmage to 1 yard (1 metre) in advance of the line of scrimmage, extending from sideline to sideline.



### Positioning to Make LOS Calls



### Scrimmage Initial Positioning – 4 Officials





## Offside

No player of either team shall encroach on the neutral zone until the ball is snapped, except that the head, arms and hands of the centre may be in advance of the line of scrimmage.

### Line Up Offside

We try our best to prevent fouls from occurring. In this situation here are the steps we would take:

- Setting the ball. If possible, set the ball at a hash mark or major line. Sometimes this is not possible – e.g short yardage or ball was clearly dead between the lines.
- Our stance – indicates where the Neutral Zone is.
- Our voice – we would be yelling at the player to get back (if we can see the number use it otherwise “defense get back!”)

Once we yell – the offender needs to move back. If no movement occurs – you must throw your flag at the snap.

If it is close and/ or the field is not well marked, it is OK to provide a warning to the defense, but be ready to follow through



## Illegal Procedure

### Stance and Motion (Rule 4 Section 3 Article 4)

Team A Line Players after having assumed a three-point or four-point stance may not break their stance by lifting a hand. However, they may point, signal, shift or move slightly in a manner that does not draw the defense offside. All Team A Line Players, including the Centre, must become stationary and remain motionless for at least one second immediately prior to the snap of the ball.

### Player Requirements (Rule 4 Section 3 Article 2)

- At the instant the ball is put into play, at least seven Team A players must be within 1 yard (1 metre) and on their own side of the line of scrimmage, not including the player in the position usually occupied by the quarterback.
- The player who, at the snap of the ball is occupying a position at either end of the line of scrimmage may be in motion while within 1 yard of the line of scrimmage but must not be moving towards the opponents' goal line when the ball is put into play.



## Mechanics – Making the Call

### “Kill Plays”

- Illegal Procedure (movement by Offensive line)
  - Offside Defense
    - cross the LoS (may or may not have contact)
    - cause Offense movement
  - Offside Offense – beyond the Neutral zone
1. Whistle
  2. Flag
  3. Wave time-out



### Play Continues

- Illegal Procedure – no end or fewer than 7 players on LoS
  - Offside Defense
    - does not cross the LoS
    - does not cause Offense movement
  - Offside Offense – within the Neutral zone
1. Flag
  2. Officiate!!!!
  3. Wave time-out at end of play



### Possession

On a scrimmage play:

- Team A (Offense) has possession unless a fumble, interception, or a kick occurs.

On a kick from scrimmage:

- Team A has possession until the ball is kicked across the LOS. Team B gains possession officially only once it gains control of the ball.



**Is it a Catch or Not?**

- Complete Control
- At least one foot (or contact in bounds)
- Must survive contact with opponent or the ground
- When in doubt; it is NOT a catch
- Take your time



**Out of Bounds**

When the ball or the ball carrier touches the white out of bounds line or any area ground beyond the out of bounds line.

- Whistle
- Clock stops (signal).
- Identify spot. (mental note... no need to stare at it).  
\*\*Where the ball is when player steps OB\*\*
- Dead ball officiate

**Timing (When does the clock stop?)**

**Regular Time (Outside the last 3 min.)**

The clock will be stopped after the ball is dead during a play if there was:

- a change of possession
- a score
- a kick
- a penalty
- a long incomplete pass
- a ball carrier going out of bounds



The clock will be stopped if the ball is not in play

- for an injury; or
- at an official's discretion



### Last 3 minutes of each half

- After every play  
Out of bounds (additional signal)

### Touchdown

- The goal line
- The “plane”: Glass wall pylon to pylon at the “front of the white line”.
- Pylon?
- Take your time
- See the ball before making a call
- Don’t let yourself be influenced
- Communicate with your partner
- Clear and Clean signal



# Section 8

## The Kicking Game







# The Kicking Game

## Pre-Kickoff

### Routine – Go through a mental checklist:

- Who is kicking? Who can block?
- From where does the KO take place?
- Wind and other weather factors?
- Situation – score and time remaining?
- Kick into Endzone... in flight? Bounces out of bounce?
- Count
- Sidelines – clear
- Players ready
- Arm Up – look at ref – once acknowledged – point



## Kickoff Mechanics

### Position

- DJ always on restraining line = 10 yards ahead of kicking line (often the 55-yard line)

### Responsibilities

- Count kicking team and confirm with Referee
- Ensure all are ready to play
- All players on receiving team are behind restraining line
- Check sideline
- Give Ref the READY signal

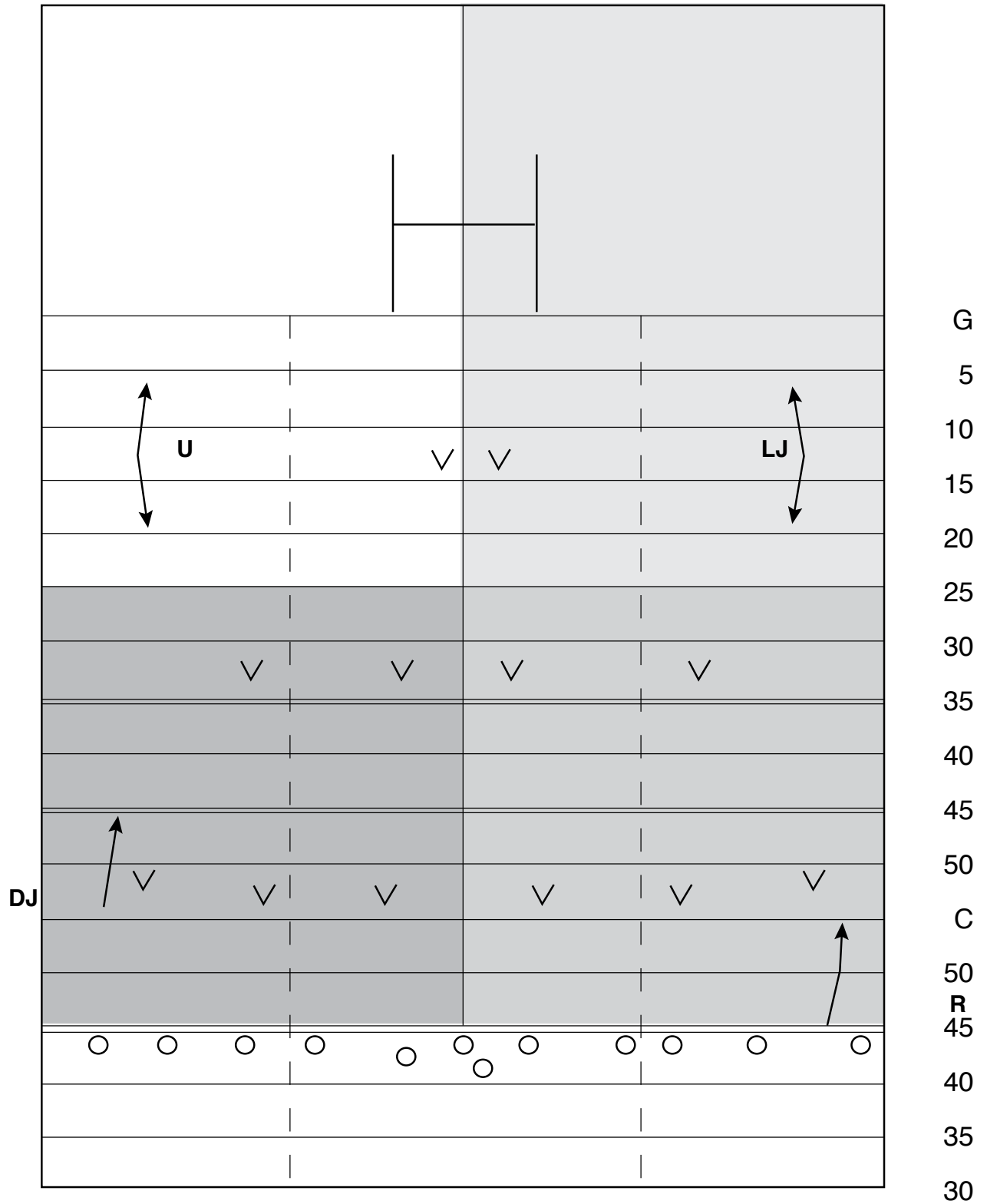
### Position (4 Officials)

- LJ downfield opposite side of DJ about 10 yards in from sidelines and even with returner

### Responsibilities

- Count receiving team and confirm with Umpire
- Ensure all are ready to play
- Give Ref the READY signal





**F - Free Official**

**H - Held Official**

Fig Off001



## Kickoff Responsibilities

### Down Judge

- Ensure receiving team is at least 10 yards away from the ball when it is kicked
- Ensure the ball travels 10 yards before kicking team can touch it
- Manage your sideline for kick OB and players OB
- Short vs. deep
- Time in signal after the ball is touched in your zone
- Cover return (ball or blocking)
  - blocking (legal vs. illegal)
  - fumbles, lateral, offside passes

### Line Judge

- Assist with your sideline for kick OB and players OB
- Short vs. deep
- Quickly determine if you have possession – then watch blocking
- Do not watch ball in the air!
- Time in signal after the ball is touched in your zone
- Cover return (ball or blocking)
  - blocking (legal vs. illegal)
  - fumbles, lateral, offside passes

### After the ball is dead in your zone:

- Whistle and signal to stop clock if ball dead
- Officiate until players move out of area
- Mark spot (choose closest yard line)
- Set up sticks and downs box (DJ)

### After the ball is dead outside your zone:

- Officiate until players move out of your area
- Relieve referee if has spot or
  - Assist with ball retrieval
- Set up sticks and downs box (DJ)





## Kick Off – Short Kick

(from Rule 5 Section 2 Article 5)

On a kick off, Team A players may use their hands and arms to ward off blockers and may use their bodies in blocking against players protecting the ball carrier, provided that the initial contact is made at or above the waist. Any other form of blocking by Team A players is illegal interference.

Penalty: Ball in flight:

1. Foul in area of PP, or which affects the gaining of possession by B – Possession to Team B at PF.

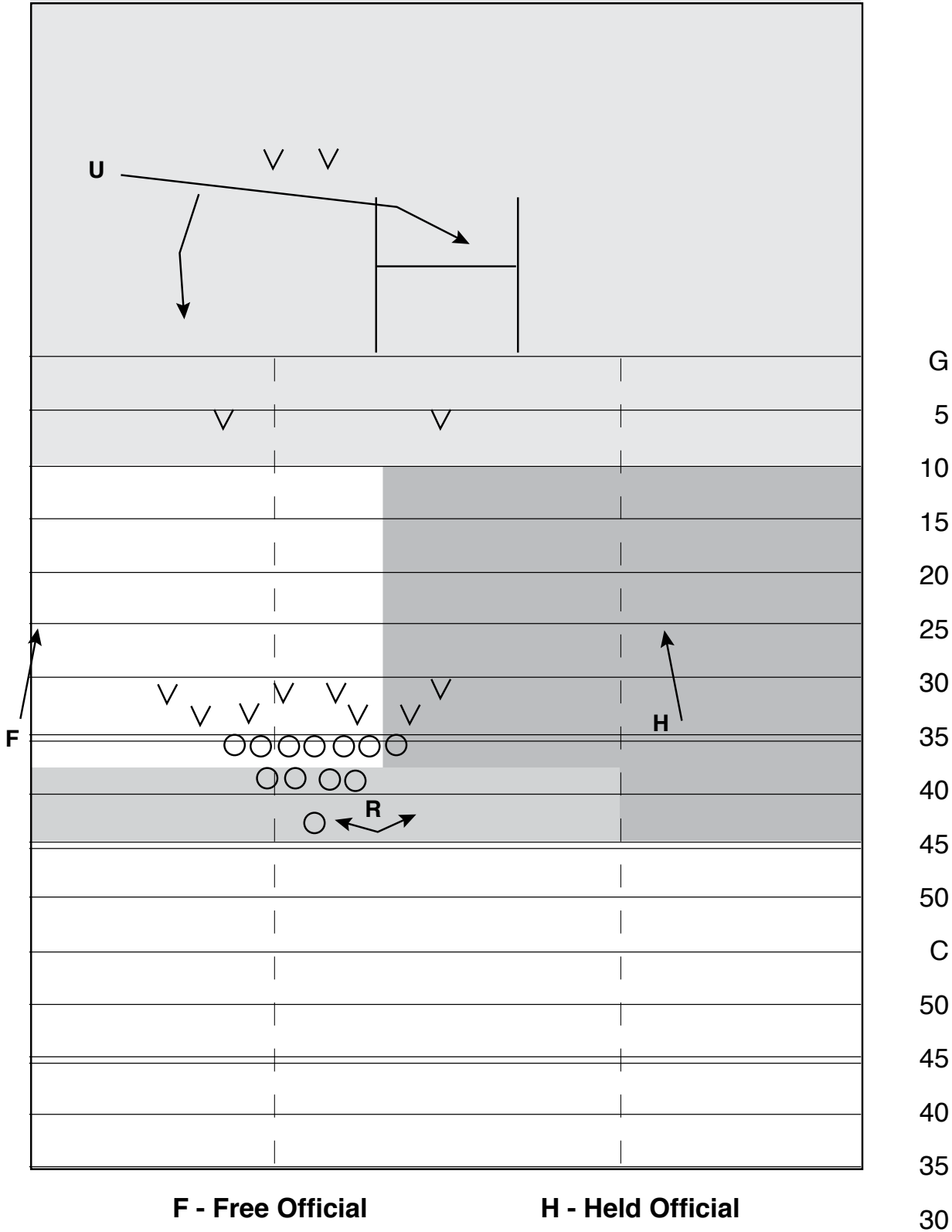
### Punting

Much can happen in the kicking game so again routine, hustle, and awareness are key to an official's effectiveness.

Possession, Points and Penalties all have variations after the ball is kicked.



Punt Mechanics



F - Free Official

H - Held Official

Fig Off005



## Punt Responsibilities – LOS Official

### Line of Scrimmage Official(s)

- Remain at Line of Scrimmage
- Count Players
  - 3-Official – Home Team
  - 4-Officials – DJ – Home, LJ – Visitor
- Watch for blocked/deflected kick
- Be alert for “fake” or broken plays
- Move after ball crosses Line of Scrimmage
- Watch blocking in front of or beyond ball carrier
- Be prepared to help at Goal line if play remains in EZ
- Be prepared to help with sideline with ball kicked out of bounds
  - Be ready to rule on Offsides and Illegal Procedure beyond the Centre.

### Short Kick Into Group

*(from Rule 5 Section 4 Article 2 – Miscellaneous)*

A scrimmage kick which travels only a short distance across the line of scrimmage, or a return kick (not including a dribbled ball) which is short, and thereby prevents players of the kicker’s team from giving the required distance, shall be whistled dead as soon as the ball touches a player or the ground, with possession awarded to the receiving team.

In obvious situations where the kick will clearly fall short into a group of players, the play may be whistled dead as soon as the ball begins to descend.

No distance penalty will be assessed, but if the ball is whistled dead in this manner on the final play of a half, the receiving team shall be entitled to 1 play from scrimmage if they so elect.

There are exceptions to whistling the ball dead:

- Ball is kicked into the endzone
- Ball is kicked from the endzone and is not leaving the endzone

The Line of Scrimmage official may have the best view of where the ball is in relation to the players thus making this decision.



### Punt Responsibilities – No Yards

As stated earlier proper positioning to:

- a) See the ball being touched; and
- b) Identify if any opposing players are within 5 yards

If Opposing players are within a 5 yard radius, the flag is thrown to the spot (or yard line of where the ball is initially touched). The official throwing the flag is also responsible for noting the jersey number(s) of the player(s) in the zone. This is *because the player could have been onside*.

Allow the play to continue until ball becomes dead. Report to the referee the following:

- Penalty you have: No Yards
- Number of the player(s) in the restraining zone.
- Where the ball was when initially touched.
- Is it a 5 yard or 15 yard penalty. If unsure, describe what happened – eg. Ball was caught in the air.



## Field Goal / Convert

In many ways we treat field goals the same as a punt with added responsibility of determining if the ball crosses the goalpost through the upright posts. Punts and Field Goals are both "Kicks from Scrimmage" so the rules regarding no yards and blocking are the same.

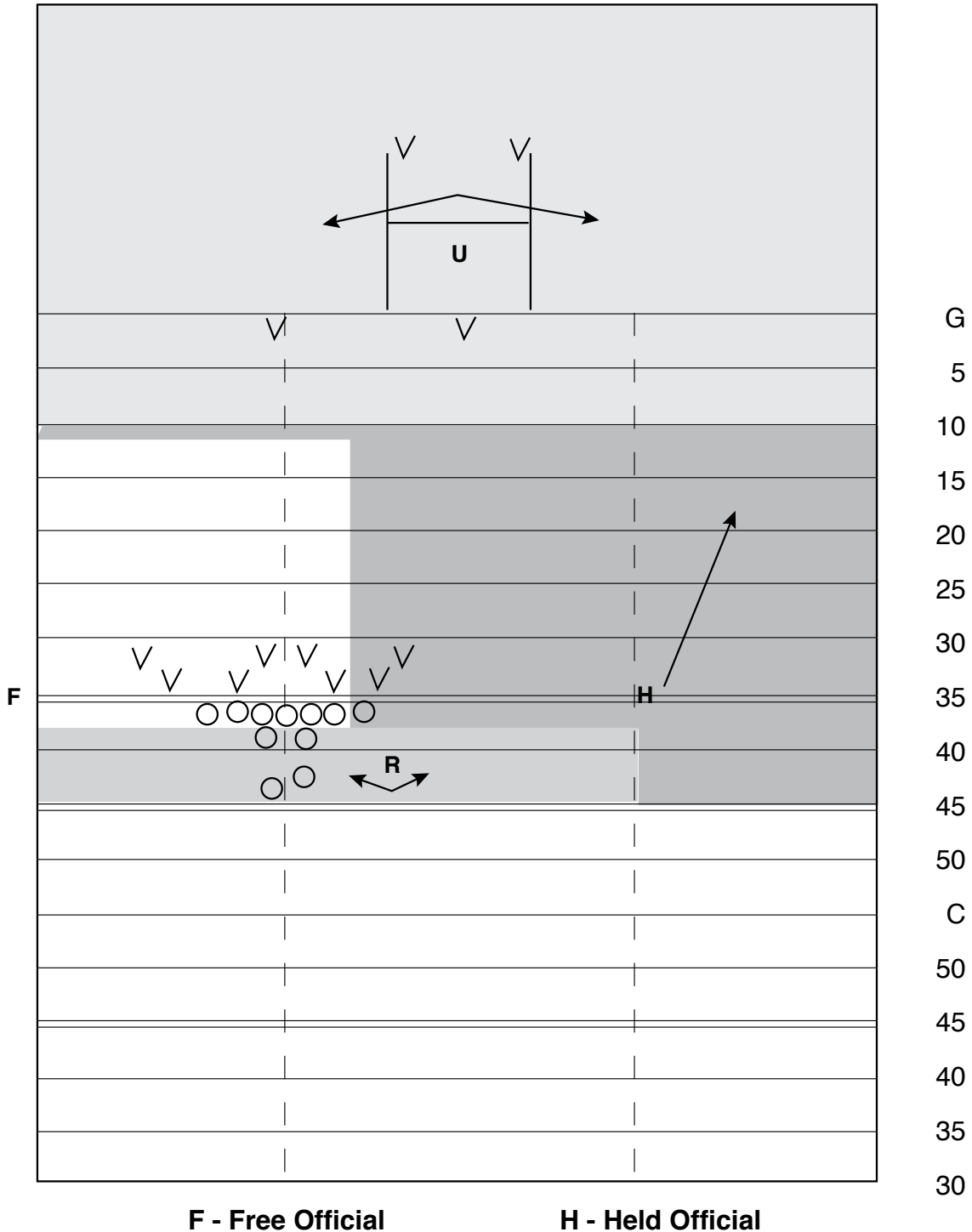


Fig Off006



## Field Goal Outside 10 Yards

### Line of Scrimmage Official(s)

- Remain at LoS
- Count the team Players
  - 3-Official – Home Team
  - 4-Officials – DJ – Home, LJ – Visitor
- Watch for blocked kick...may need to move towards backfield to box in play with Referee
- Be alert for “fake” or broken plays
- Move downfield after the ball crosses LoS
- Watch blocking in front of or near ball carrier
- Be prepared to help at Goal line and with ball kicked out of bounds



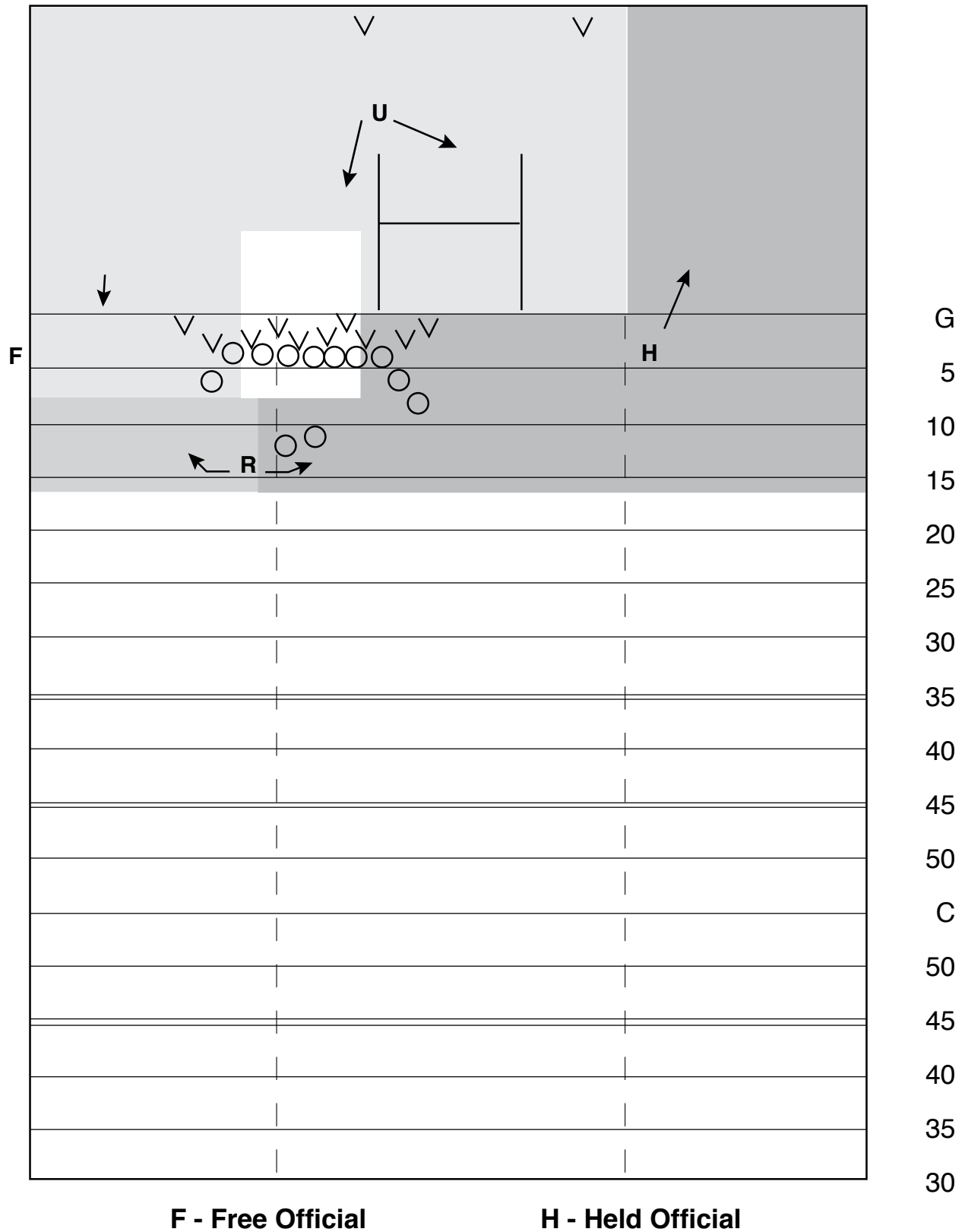


Fig 007



## Field Goal Inside 10 Yards

The referee will make the decision on short Field Goals and Converts. This means that the Line of Scrimmage officials remain at the line. Since the referee will be looking to see if the ball passes through the uprights, actions against the kicker and holder become a priority of one of the LoS officials.

### Line of Scrimmage Official(s)

- 3-Official: initially focus on line play at the snap and kicker if the player is threatened
- 4-Official: Signal to LOS partner on HOLDER/KICKER responsibility (the official who can see the holder's face has responsibility for calling any fouls with respect to roughing the kicker or holder.)
- Once ball is kicked, stay put unless the goal line near your side is threatened.





# Section 9

## Rules for Line of Scrimmage Officials





# Rules for Line of Scrimmage Officials

Developing a deep understanding of the rules takes time and experience. Each year new rules are provided and old rules rewritten so officials need to be able to unlearn and relearn parts of their jobs.

Level 1 is provided for new officials working in the line of scrimmage positions. The rules study in this part is focused on relevant rules. Penalty application is not a required component. As you work games and discuss situations with your official colleagues you will learn more about options and application of penalties.

Some of the content in this section is review and reinforcement of previous information.

## The Penalty Flag

The penalty flag functions:

- Indicate foul occurred
- Potential point of application for a foul (PBH)

### Throwing your flag:

- Throw to be clearly visible
- Technical Foul – flag thrown high in the air
  - e.g. illegal procedure, offside
- Point of foul – if foul occurs during a play the flag is thrown toward the location of the ball at time of foul
  - e.g. holding, illegal block, no yards, unnecessary roughness
- Get offending player's number
- Continue to officiate until end of play

### Stopping the Play

- Wait until the play is over.
- If you stop the play
  - blow your whistle
  - signal time out
  - mark the spot ball goes dead
  - wait until an official relieves you of the spot



## Reporting Infractions

### TINS or CINS

- T Team
- I Infraction
- N Number of the player
- S Stay near referee

### Reporting to the Referee

- If more than one official has a flag don't assume:
  - check to see if you have the same call (e.g. DJ and LJ)
  - Make sure both agree if it is offside or illegal procedure.
- Ensure the penalty is applied correctly

## Rules

### Penalties and their Application

#### Guidelines not Hard Lines

Officials are required to use judgement on every play. Player safety and fair play are the 2 criteria to use when enforcing rules. Any illegal action that puts player safety at risk such as any Unnecessary Roughness must be penalized. Offside or illegal procedure provide an advantage to a player and have impact on the result of the play and thus must be penalized.

There are situations where a foul has occurred by rule book definition, but the action has no impact on the result of the play or player safety. In such situations, the official can address the illegal action with the player to prevent a foul on subsequent plays. There are many ways officials can prevent penalties including being present, dead ball officiating, and using your voice.

#### Prevention of Penalties

- Voice and proximity
- Gates up – Player comes on
- Player goes off field on wrong side
- Lining up offside
- Extra player(s) running off field before play starts
- Kickoff – go when ready
- Potential infraction – talk to player(s) after play



## Learn the Rules of the Game

### **First**

- Learn basics
- Learn to recognize legal vs. illegal

### **Then:**

- Rules in detail
- Intelligent enforcement
- Penalty application

## What are the basics?

### **Points of emphasis for the starting official in learning the rules:**

Rule 1 – Conduct of the game

Rule 4 – Scrimmage

Rule 5 – Kicking

Rule 6 – Passing

Rule 7 – Fouls and Penalties

Rule 9 – Miscellaneous

### **Improving Rules Knowledge**

- Regular organized method of reading and study
  - Rule by rule
  - Theme method
  - Cover to Cover method
- Study sessions – other officials
- Study rules related to the position being worked
- Exams as a learning tool

### **Learn Intent of Rules**

### **Not Just “Black and White”**



## Rules Study

The following slides contain scenarios with common questions, misunderstanding or examples to clarify specific rules.

The intent is to encourage discussion so ask questions and make comments.

### Use of Hands and Arms

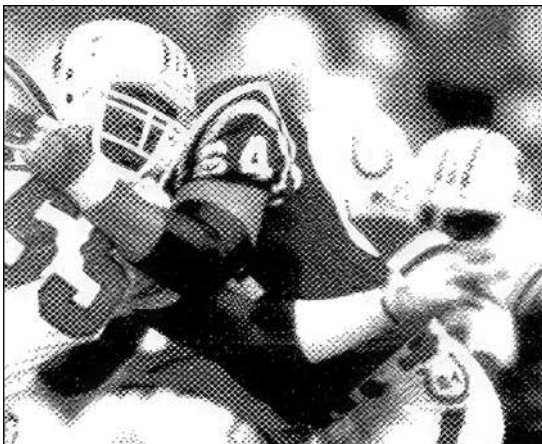
#### Legal Use

1. May be used to tackle the ball carrier
2. In blocking for run and pass plays provided:
  - hands are slightly behind the elbows, even with the elbows, or in advance of the elbows.
  - the arms may be fully extended
  - the hands shall be open, with the palms facing an opponent, or cupped or closed with the palms not facing an opponent

#### Illegal Use

1. The hands and arms are not to be used :
  - in a striking or punching manner
  - to grasp , pull, encircle, lift and opponent
  - to lock, hook or clamp an opponent
2. The hands may not be clasped or locked.

### Illegal use of Hands and Arms



## Dead Ball

1. a) When a Player, with the ball in their possession, goes O.B., touching the line is O.B.

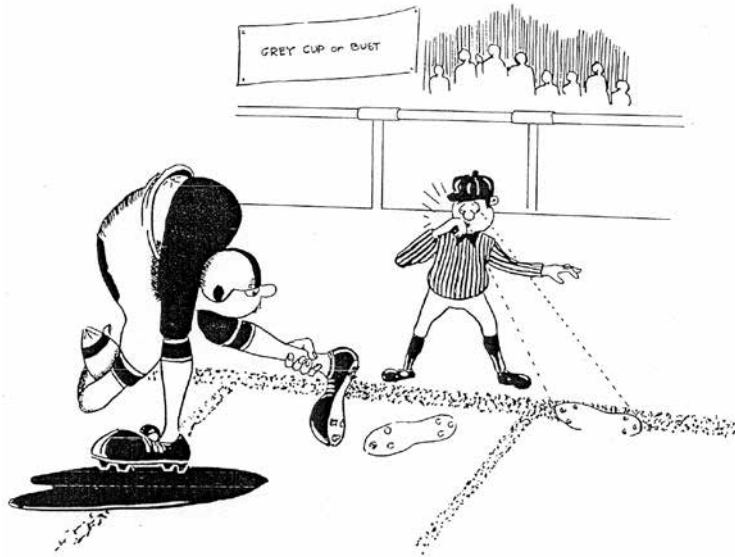


Fig Off020

- b) When ball carrier A80 touches the ground. Possession to A at the point where it was held at that time. The dead ball going O.B. has no bearing on the play.

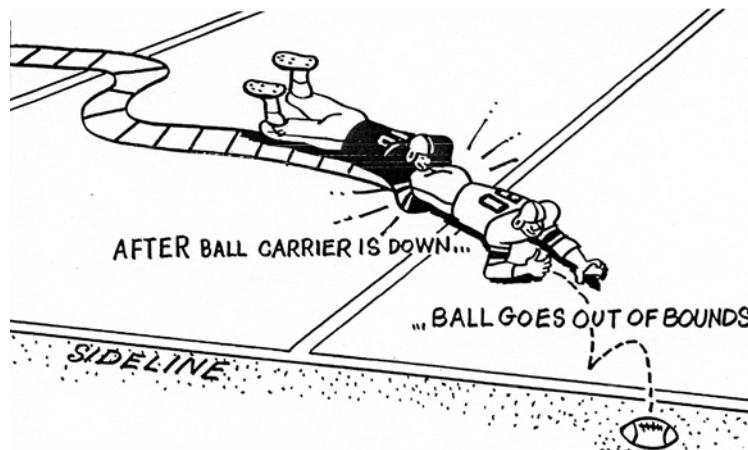


Fig Off021



2. a) When ball carrier A5 touches the ground. The ball is dead, even if afterwards A5 carries the ball O.B., the clock does not stop unless yards are gained. In the last 3 minutes of each half, the clock will stop on the whistle and the Referee should be notified that the ball was dead, inbounds, so he/she will start the clock on their signal as he/she leaves the ball.

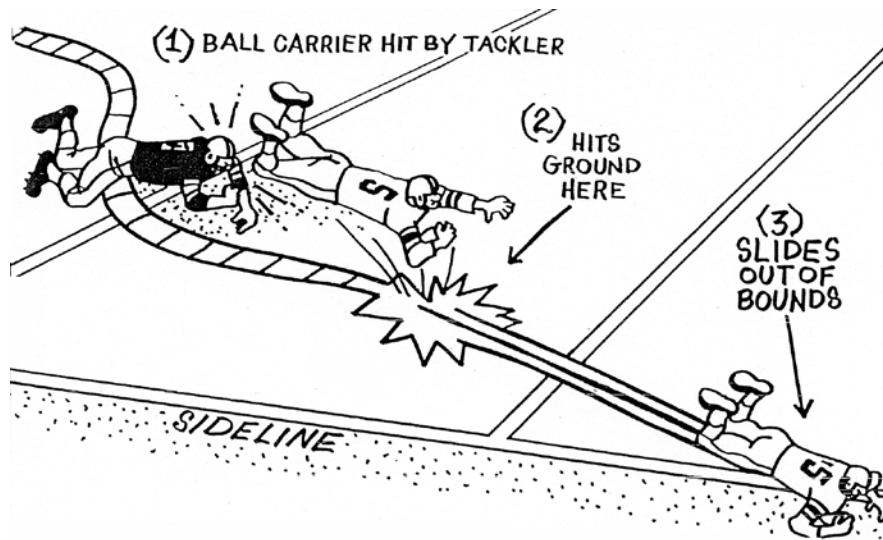


Fig Off022

- (b) When any part of the ball carrier, except their hands or feet, touches the ground, even without contact by an opponent. This is a very important factor for Player safety and is a major difference to the CFL rule.

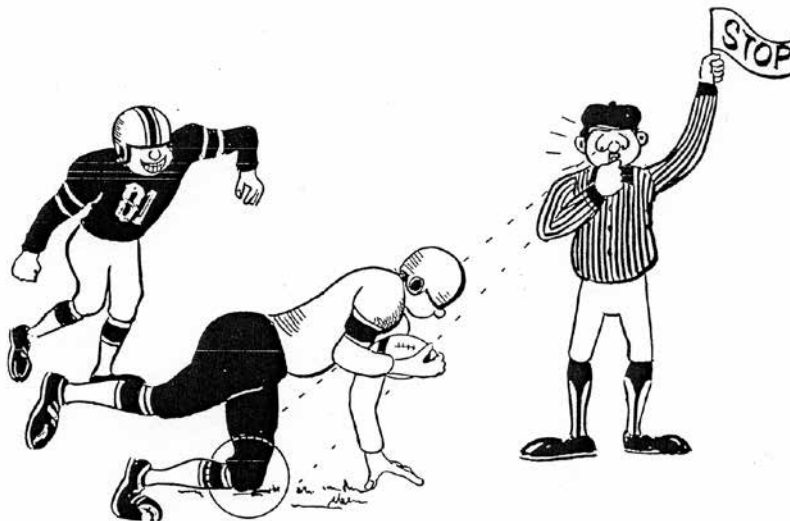


Fig Off023



3. (a) When the ball hits the goal post in flight (i.e. before it has touched the ground, any Player, or an Official) on (i) punt from the field of play (not from the End Zone); (ii) kick or missed field goal or convert attempt.



Fig Off025

- (b) When the ball touches an Official who is O.B., the ball is O.B. and is dead. The O.B. spot is the point where the ball touched the Official.

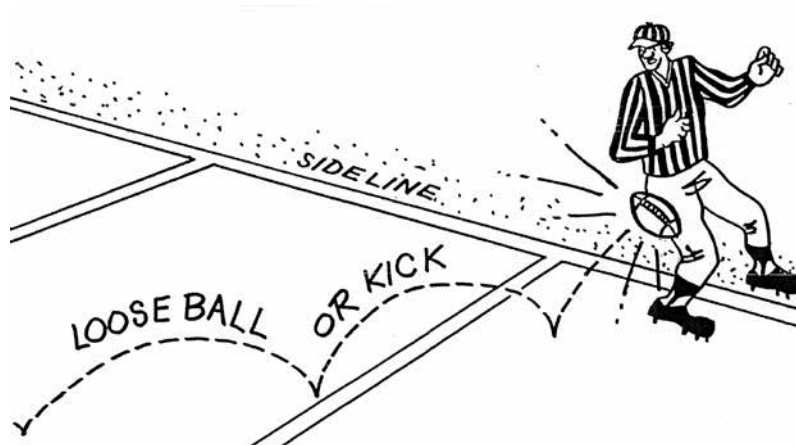


Fig Off026





4. (a) The ball crossed the sideline before it crossed the Goal Line, so no score. The O.B. point is the point where the ball crossed the sideline in a possession prior to A touching/going O.B.

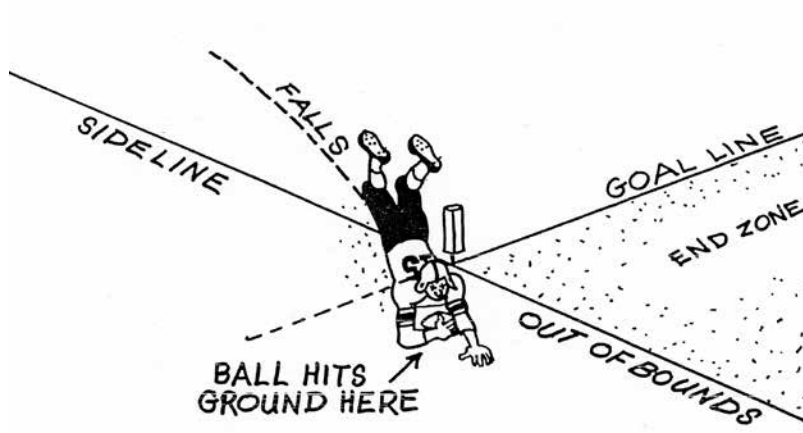


Fig Off027

- (b) The ball is dead at point where B75 touched the ball as he/she touched the sideline.

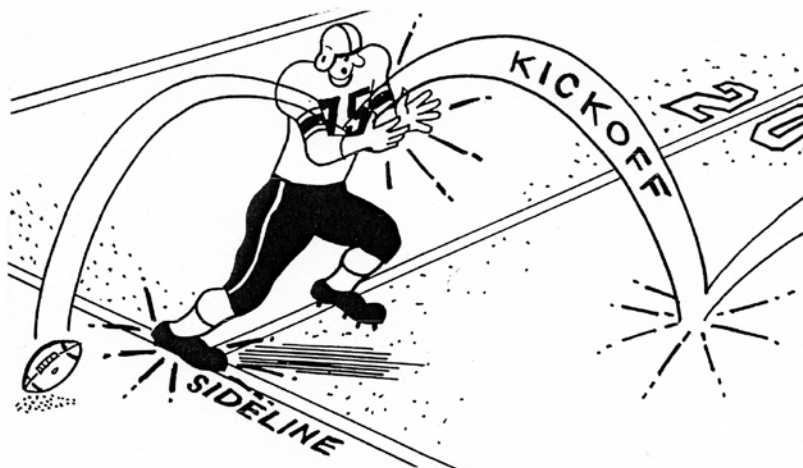


Fig Off028



5. Ball is dead at point where it crossed the sideline. A ball kicked O.B. belongs to the opponent, unless a Player is attempting to gain possession of a loose ball, and in the opinion of the Official, the ball strikes their foot or leg, below the knee. This should be ruled as a fumble out of bounds. A kick is an intentional act.

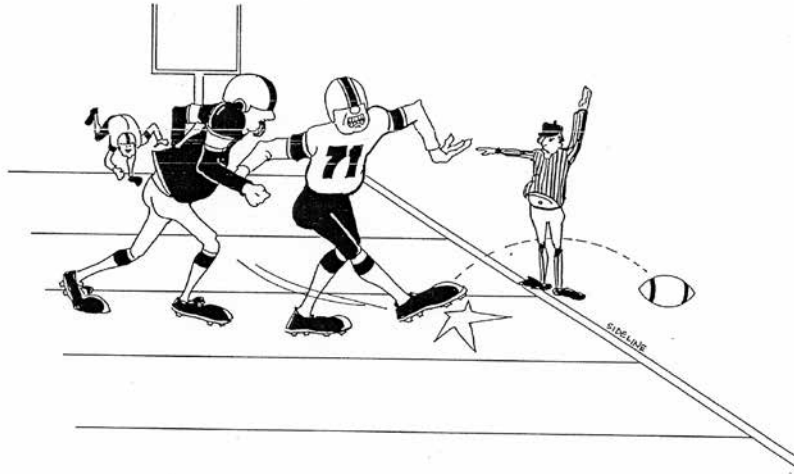


Fig Off029

6. Mandatory equipment that must be worn by each Player. Must be addressed when discovered – do NOT wait for a complaint from opponents. Use preventive officiating where possible.

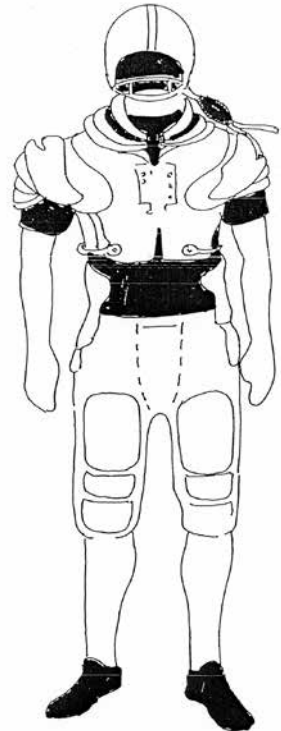


Fig Off030



7. Every Player must wear a mouthguard for safety from mouth and tooth injury, and from concussion. The guard must be worn during the play unless it is jolted loose by contact. A Player who is seen without a mouthguard before a play should be warned to get their mouthguard in to prevent the need of calling a penalty. Use preventative officiating where possible.

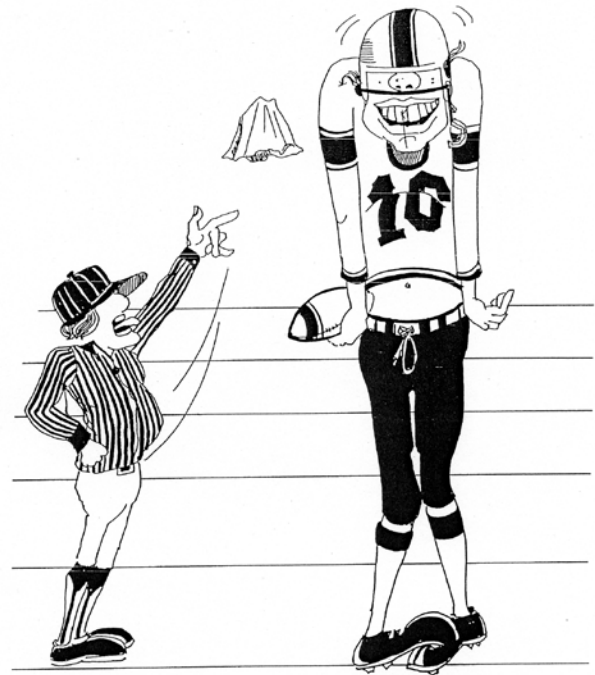


Fig Off031

8. The Side Officials control substitutes. When Team A breaks the huddle, the Sideline Officials raise their arms "Put up the Gates" and keep them up until the line Players are in position. No substitution is permitted by either Team regardless of the number of Players on the field. Some Teams send the Center and/or two ends out, while the other 9 Players stay in the huddle. The gates should go up when 2 or more Players break the huddle.

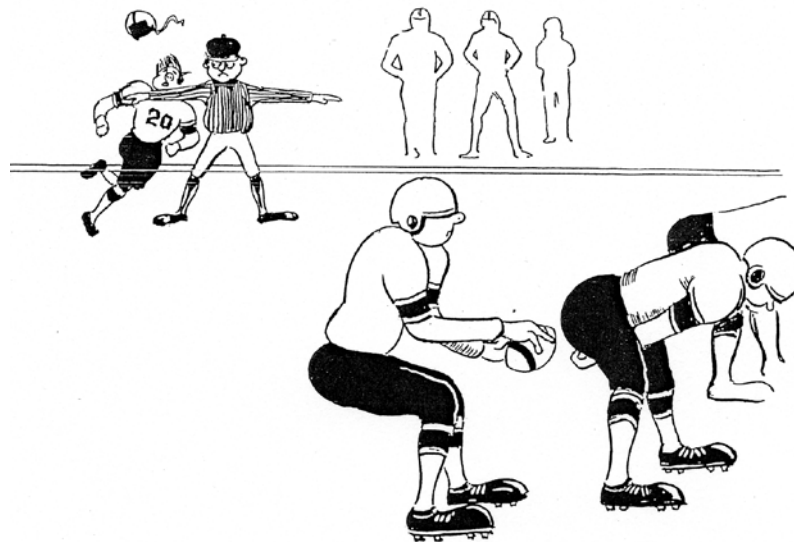


Fig Off032



9. By definition, a touchdown is scored when the ball is in the opponent's End Zone, in possession of a Player, or the ball touches or crosses the Goal Line, or the plane of the Goal Line, in a Player's possession.

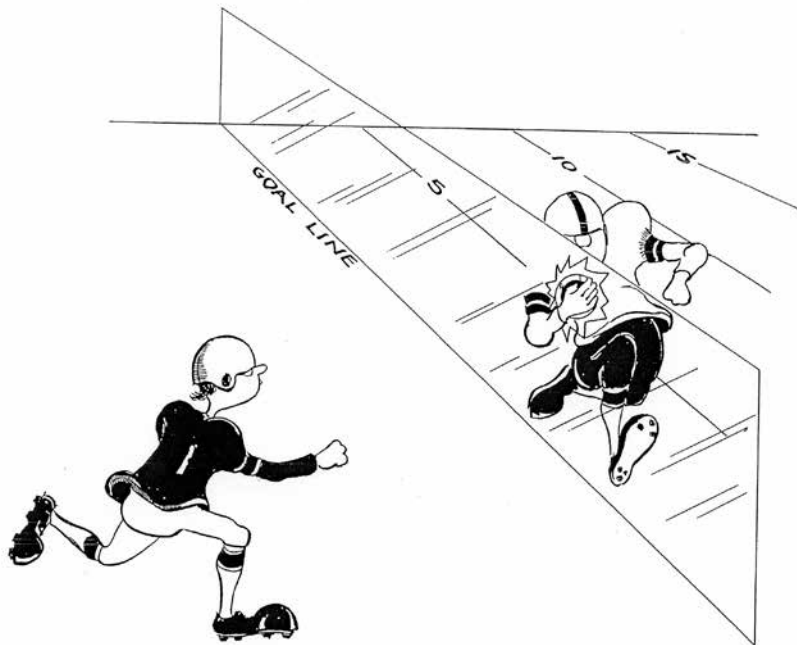


Fig Off033

10. The ball is touching the Goal Line in A possession when A touches the ground. Touchdown.

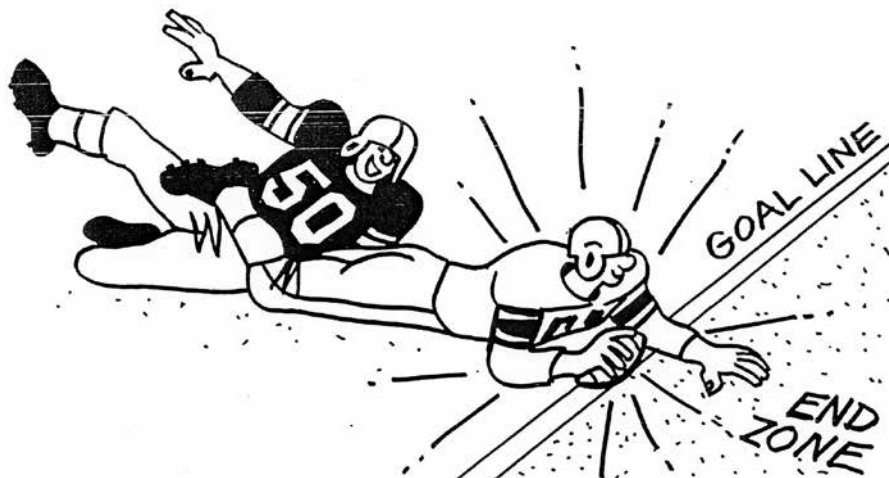


Fig Off034



11. (a) A11 has possession of the ball, with at least one foot on the ground in the End Zone, before he/she goes out of bounds. Touchdown.

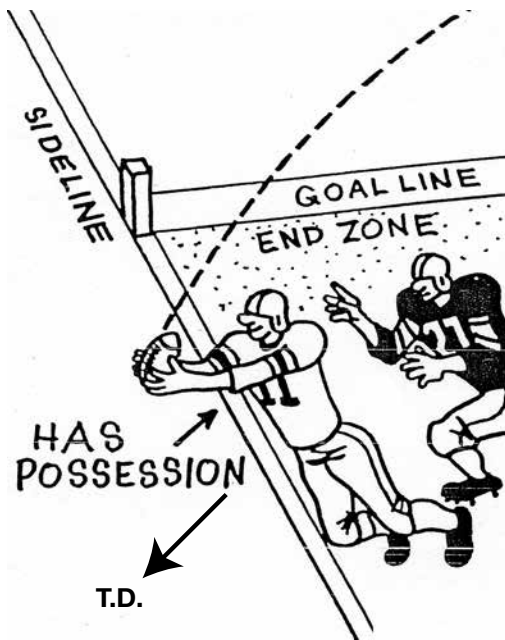


Fig Off035a

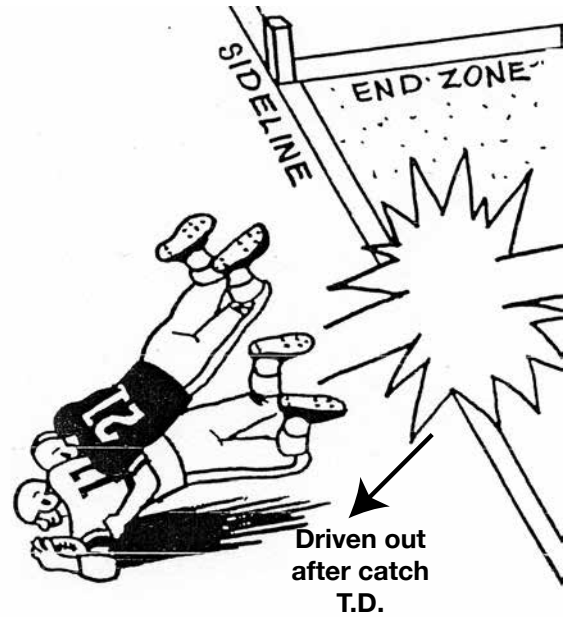


Fig Off035b

- (b) A80 is in possession, the ball has broken the plane and a TD is scored, even though A80 is knocked back into the field of play before he/she comes down. The important thing is that A80 has possession and the ball has touched the plane of the Goal Line. A80 must retain possession when he/she lands.

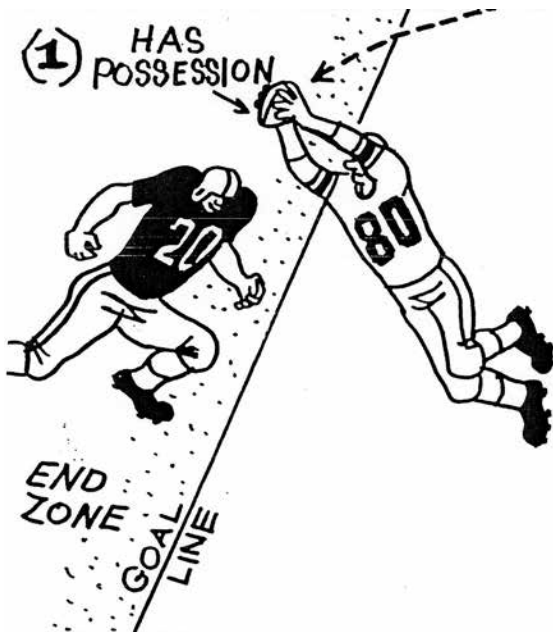


Fig Off036a



Fig Off036b





12. (a) B intercepts the A pass outside the End Zone, but their momentum carries their into the End Zone. No safety touch. Rule as Interception in End Zone – B ball.

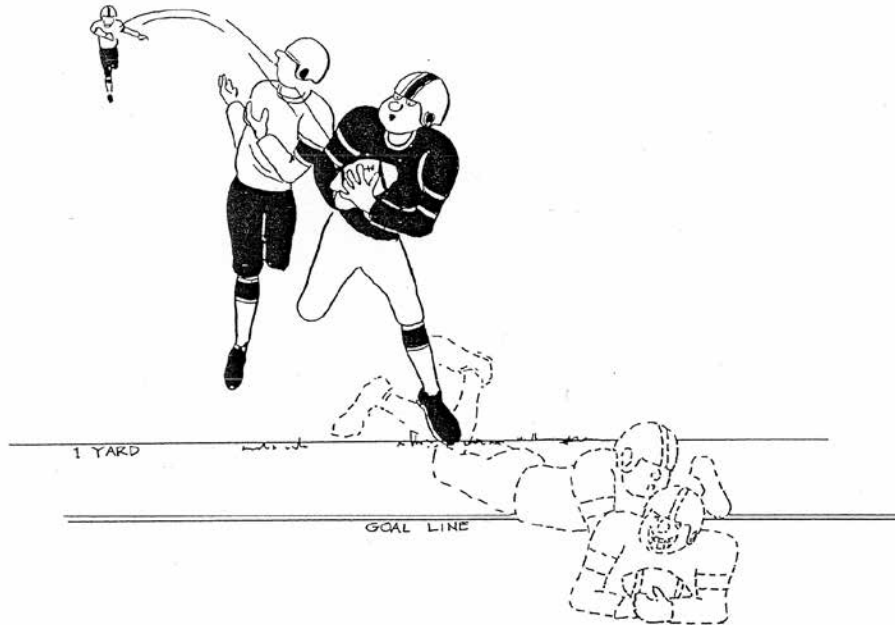


Fig Off037

- (b) B30 intercepts the A pass, runs parallel to the Goal Line, and turns into the End Zone to avoid a tackle but is tackled in the End Zone. Safety touch. It was not the momentum of B30 that took their into the End Zone.

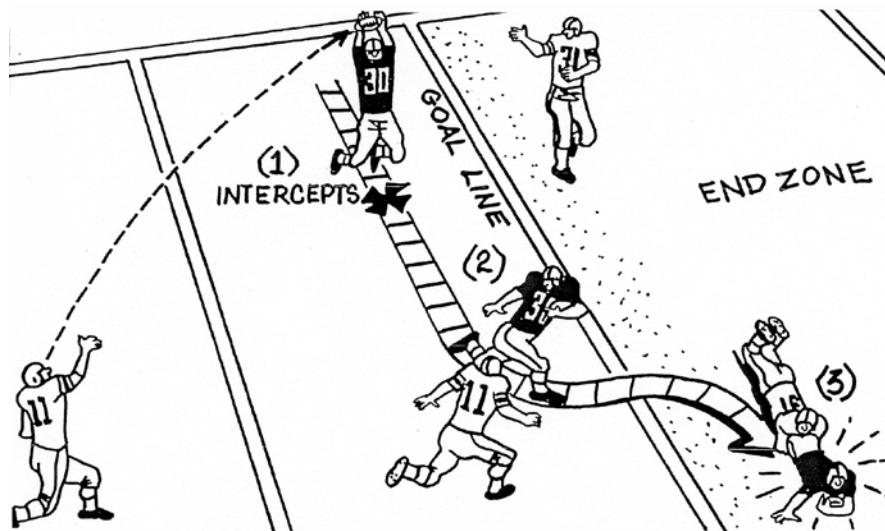


Fig Off038



13. Rouge – If the ball is kicked into the End Zone and the receiving Team does not get the ball out. Rouge. Here a kick off goes into the End Zone and O.B. – 1 point scored.

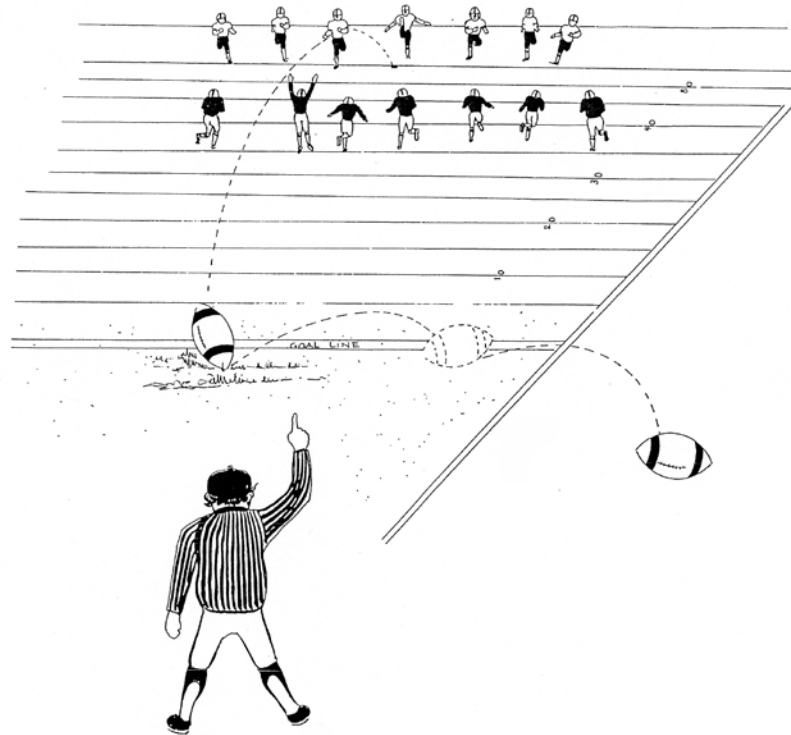


Fig Off039



## Scrimmage

14. The Line of the Attacking Team – those Players within 1 yard of line of scrimmage, formed in a single line. The Backfield are those Players clearly back of the line – no part within 1 yard. The QB is also considered as a backfielder.

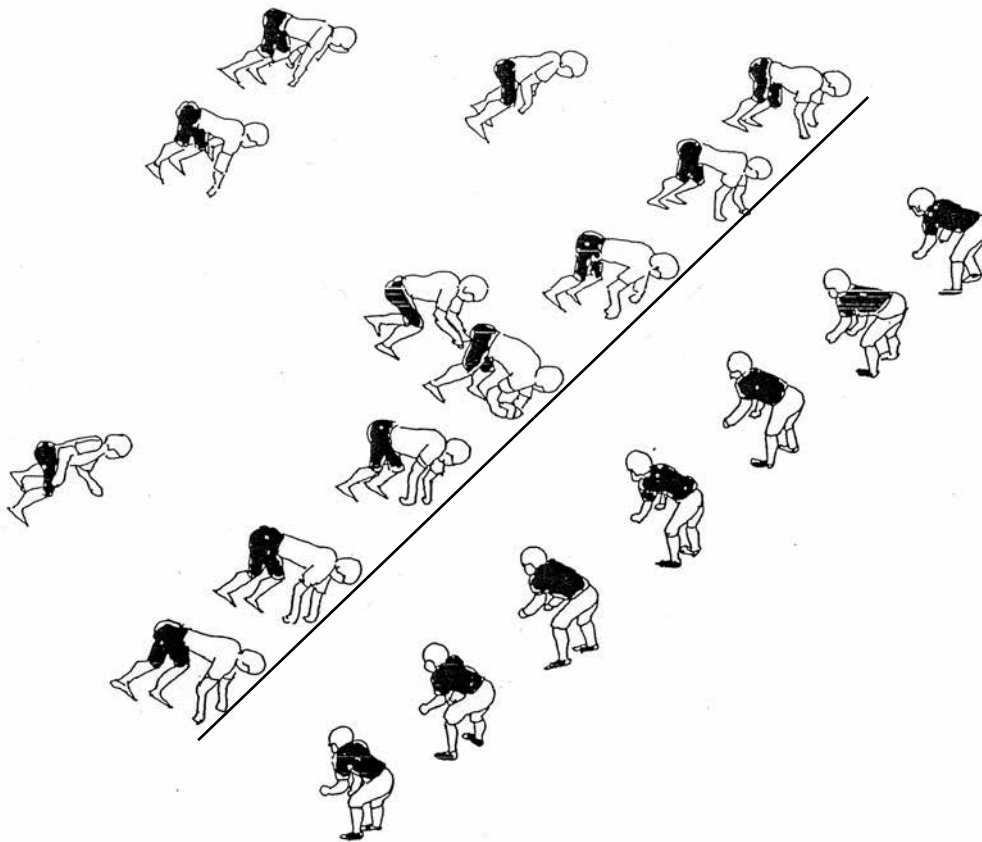


Fig Off040





## Offside

15. The neutral zone is from the forward point of the ball, 1 yard in advance toward the opponent's Goal Line.

No Player shall encroach on the neutral zone when the ball is put into play. If a Player encroaches and makes contact, an offside call is automatic (whistle play & flag).

If a B Player goes offside, and breaks the plane of the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped, even without contact with an opponent, an offside call is automatic (whistle play & flag).

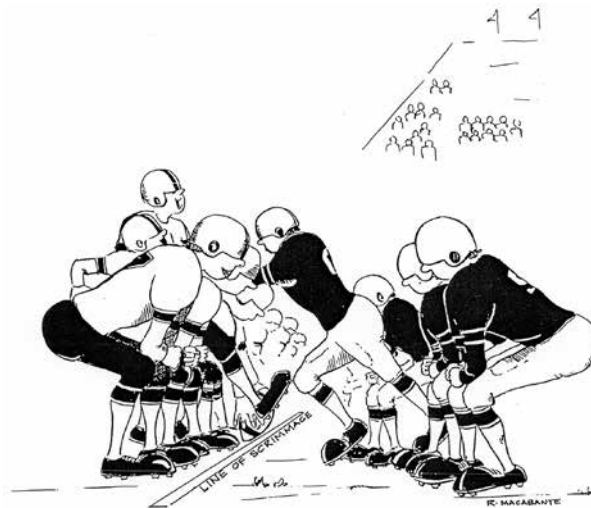


Fig Off041

16. Here B55 encroaches on the neutral zone, without contact and without breaking the plane of the line of scrimmage and gets back before the snap. No penalty for offside.

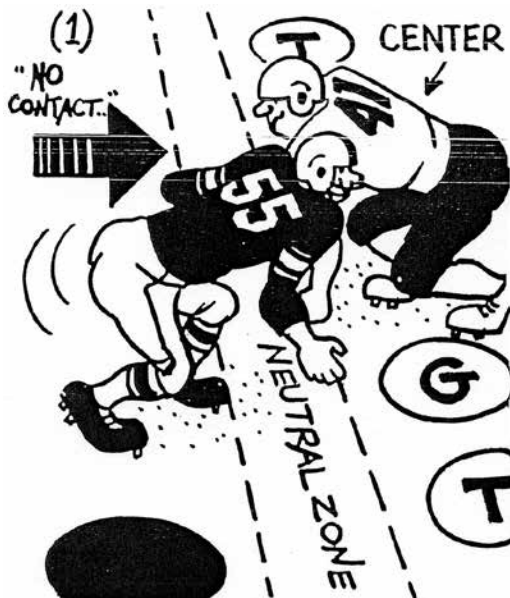


Fig Off042a1

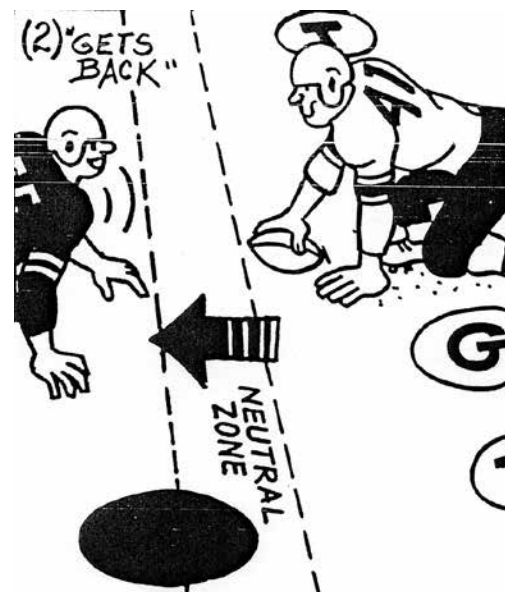


Fig Off042a2



## Illegal Blocking

17. A Player may not hold hands, lock arms, or raise the arms above the shoulders in blocking. The blocker shall not grasp an opponent, as is shown here, hold or encircle an opponent.

When hands close on a Player, it is holding, unless it is the ball carrier.

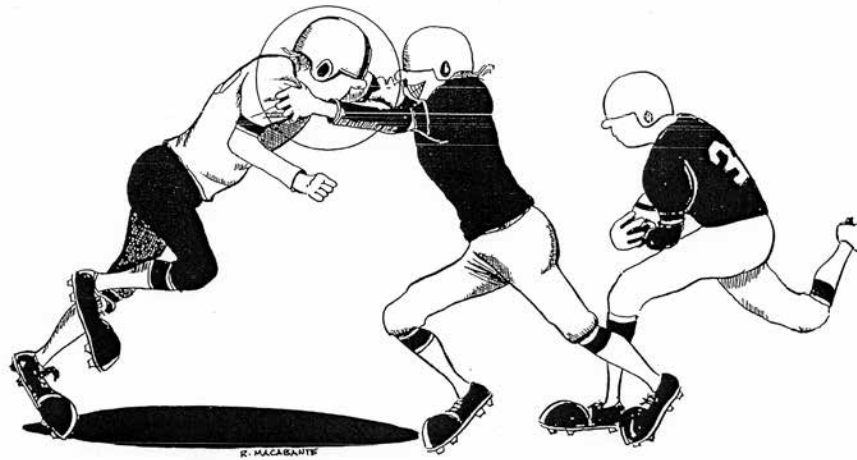


Fig Off042b

## Kick Off

18. (a) On a Kick off, all A Players behind the ball are onside. The ball must travel 10 yards unless touched by B first. If the ball goes 10 yards, or is first touched by B, A may legally recover the ball.

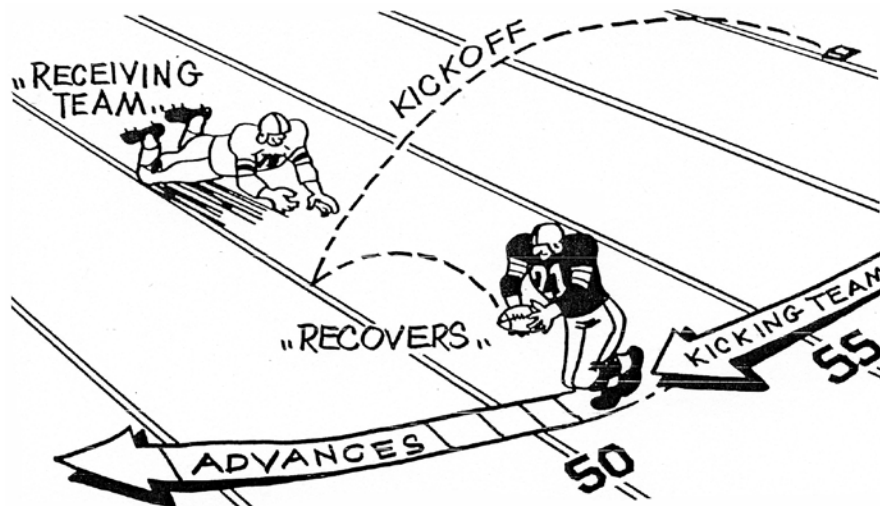


Fig Off043



- (b) B15 has touched the ball, A80 may legally recover. A80 may bat the ball O.B. or carry it O.B. and retain possession.

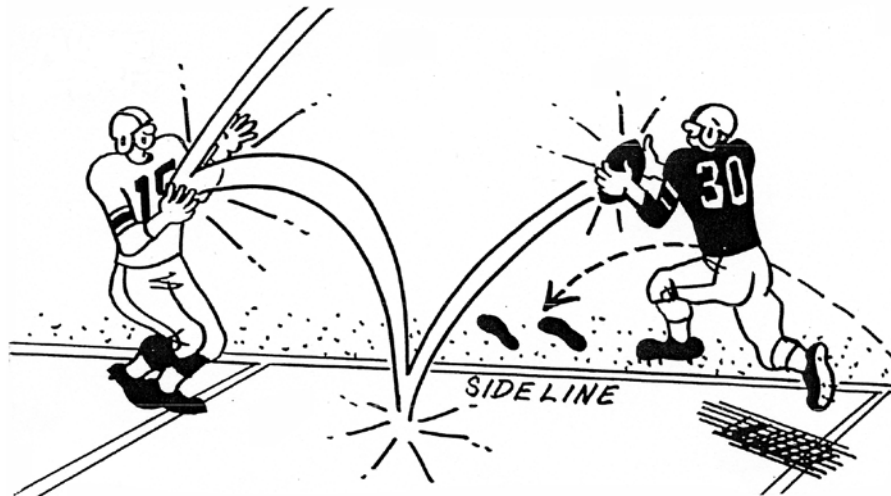


Fig Off044

## Interference on Kick off

19. (a) Players of the receiving Team B must be on their own side of the neutral zone (10 yards from line of K.O.) until the ball is kicked. They may block any member of the kicking Team A at or above the waist after the ball is kicked.

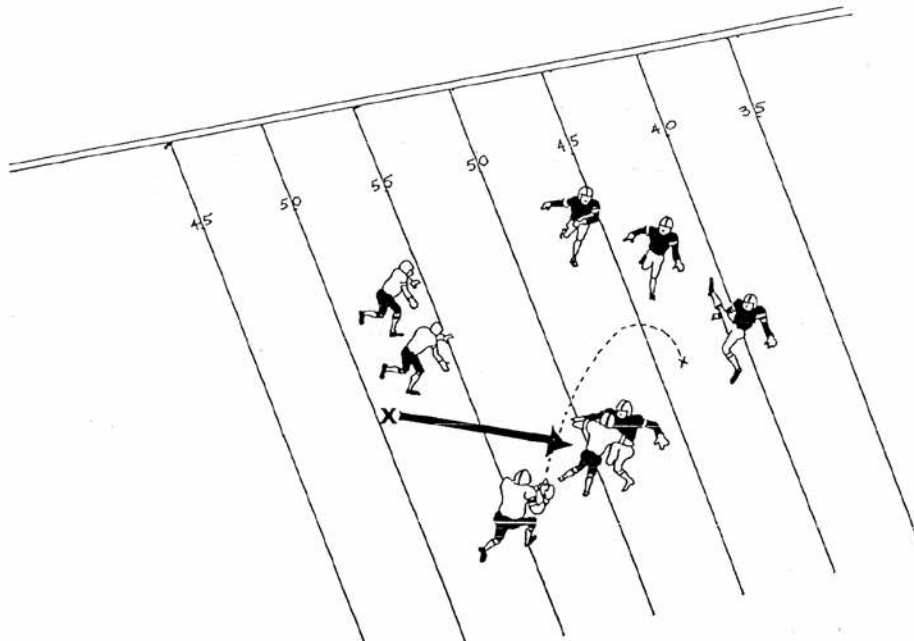


Fig Off045



- (b) Players of the Kicking Team (A) may only use their hands and arms to ward off blockers and cannot block B Players to allow an A Player to gain possession of the ball.

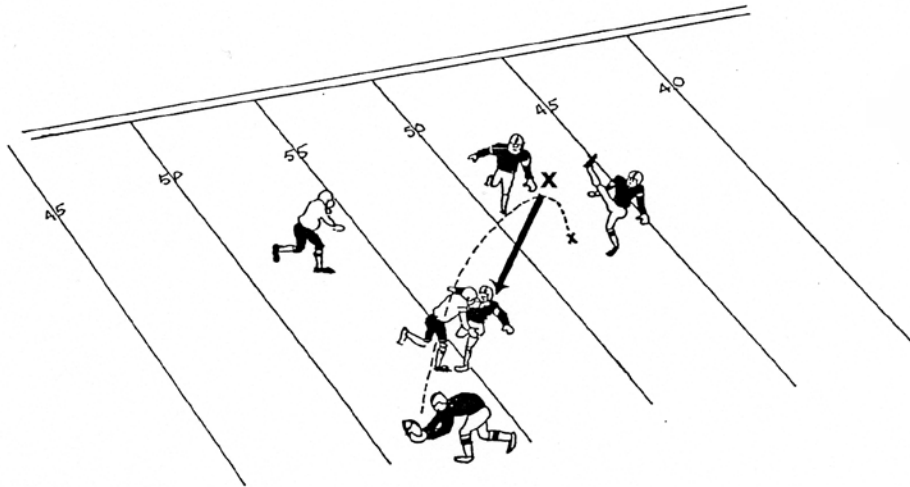


Fig Off046

## Kicks from Scrimmage

20. Blocked Kick – is a kick from scrimmage which is prevented from crossing the line of scrimmage because of contact by a B Player, or an offside A Player. If after the contact, the ball crosses the line of scrimmage, it is a deflected kick, not a blocked kick, and the touching of the ball is disregarded. On a return kick, it is a blocked kick if the ball is contacted and the ball travels in a direction parallel to, or in the direction of the kicking Team's dead line. There cannot be a restraining zone foul after a blocked kick.



Fig Off047



## Blocked Kick Recovery

21. (a) Any A Player may recover the blocked kick and the play becomes a regular scrimmage play. If a forward pass is thrown, forward pass rules apply.

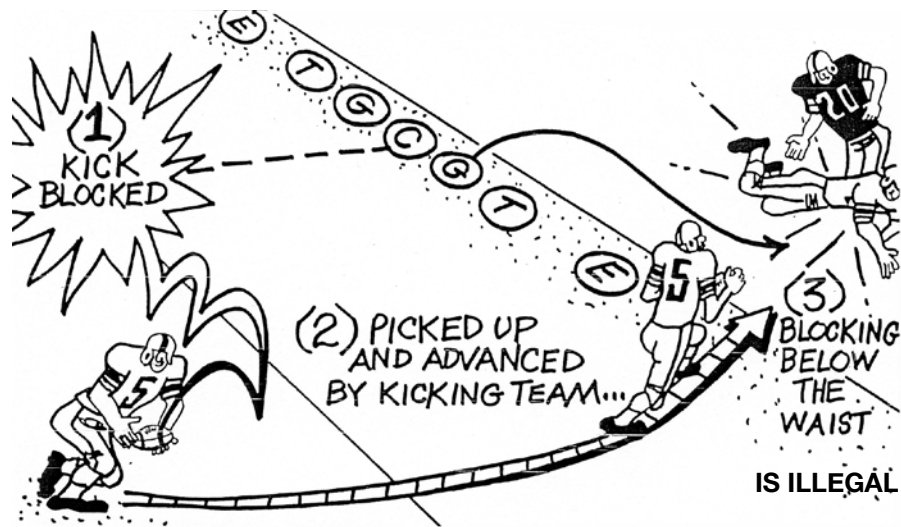


Fig Off048

- (b) Any B Player may recover the blocked kick. Blocking below the waist is **illegal** due to the change of possession.

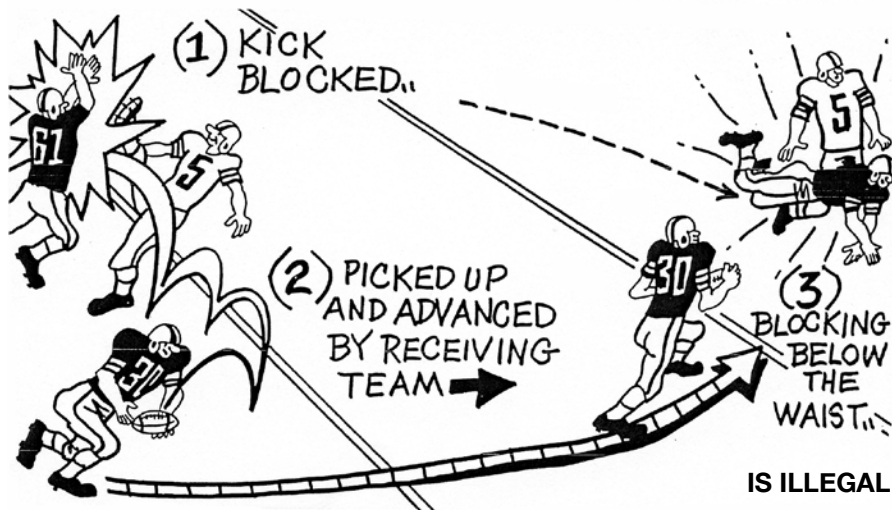


Fig Off049





22. As long as there is no restraining zone violation by A85, the recovery by A85 is legal and a T.D.

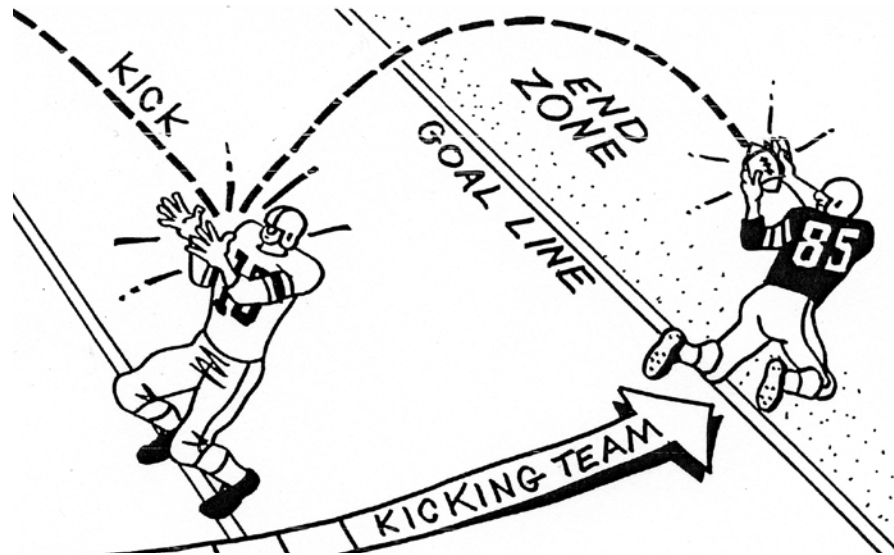


Fig Off050

23. If an A Player violates the restraining zone and makes contact with the B Receiver before the ball is touched, A is assessed a double penalty for U.R. plus the restraining zone foul. This is a safety factor and should be called closely. If the contact is incidental and unavoidable, such as a minor brush because of a Player sliding, in the opinion of the Official, the UR foul should not be called.

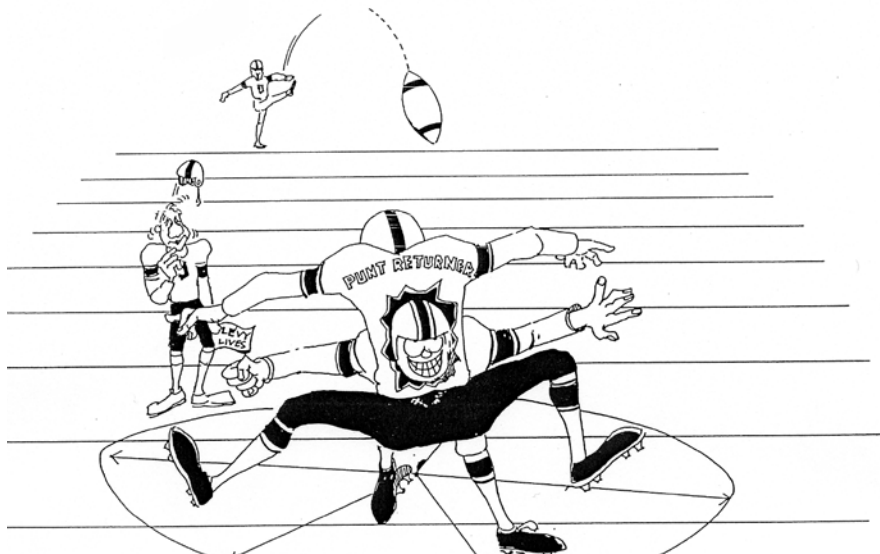


Fig Off051



24. (a) On a punt, all B Players may block any A Player at or above the waist after the A Player has crossed the L.S.

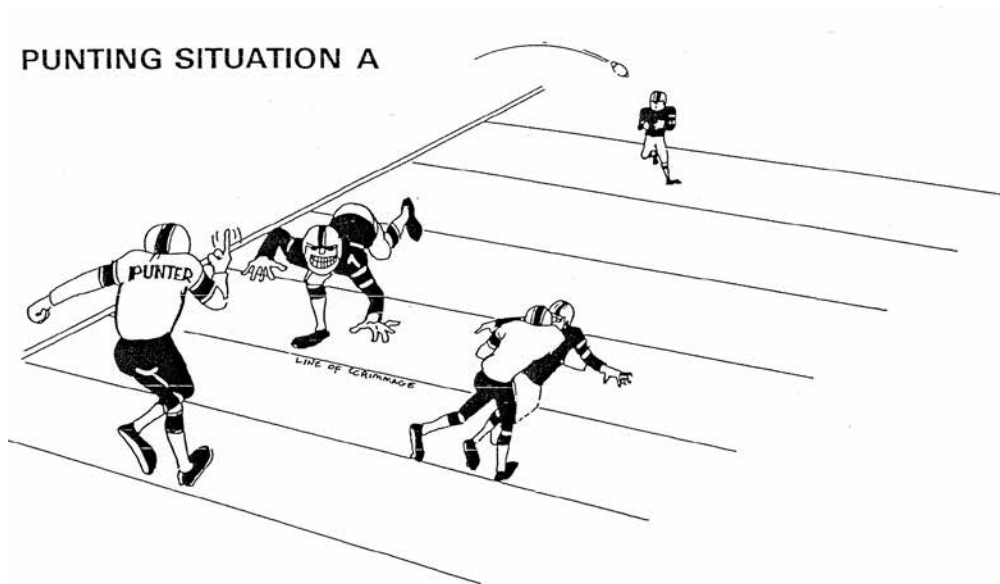


Fig Off052

- (b) The kicker shall not be blocked behind the neutral zone until the ball has been touched by the receiving Team.

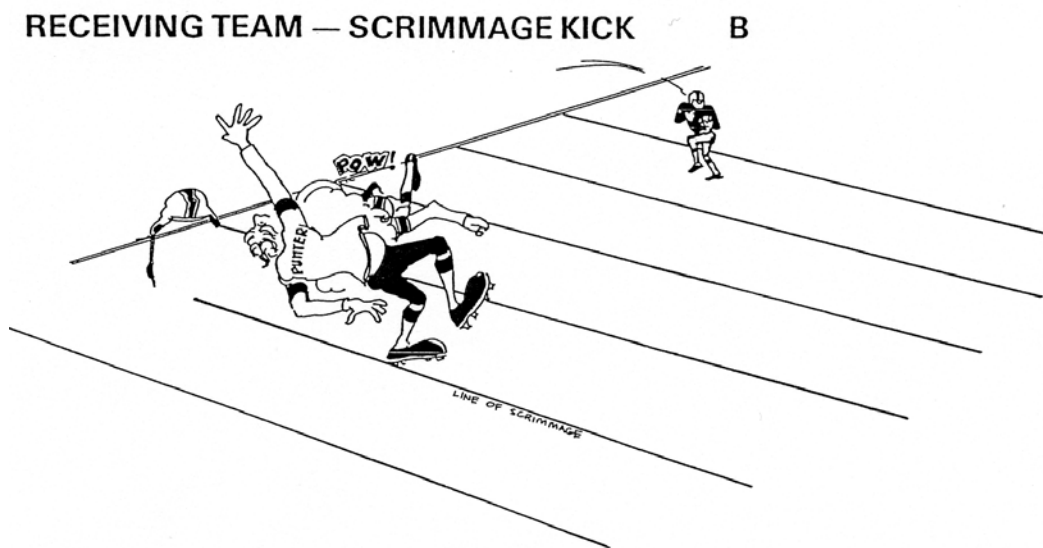


Fig Off053



25. On a short or wide field goal, the restraining zone applies, with the same blocking rules as for a punt.

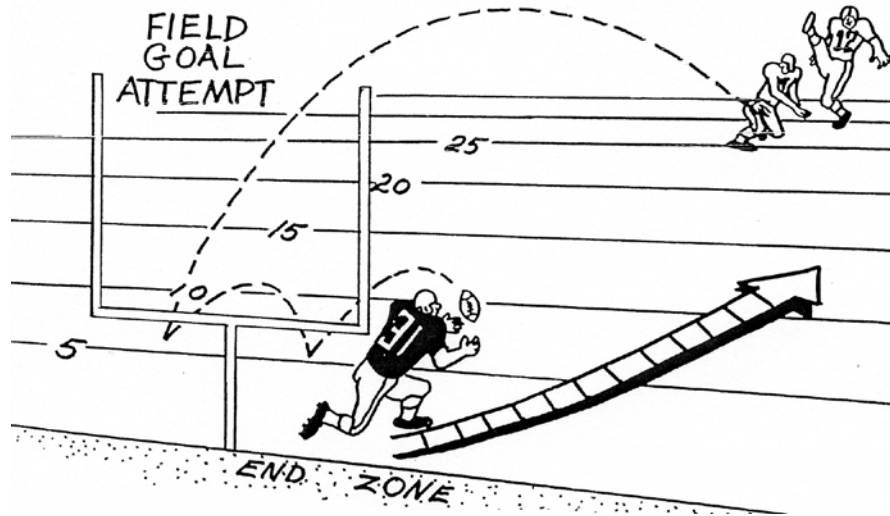


Fig Off054

26. The A Team may use their bodies to “strip” the blocking from the ball carrier, providing the contact is at or above the waist.

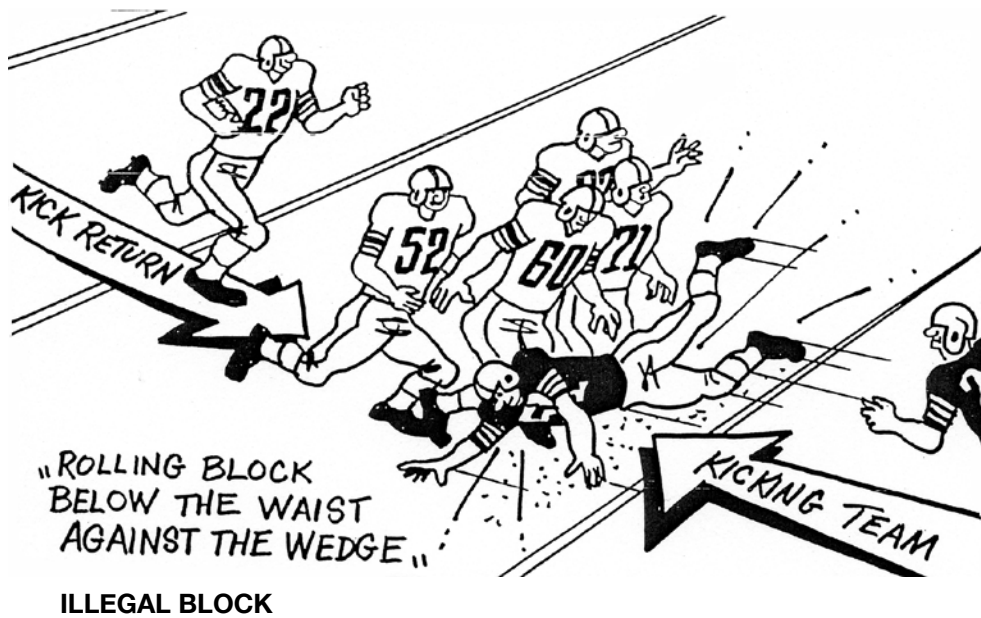


Fig Off055





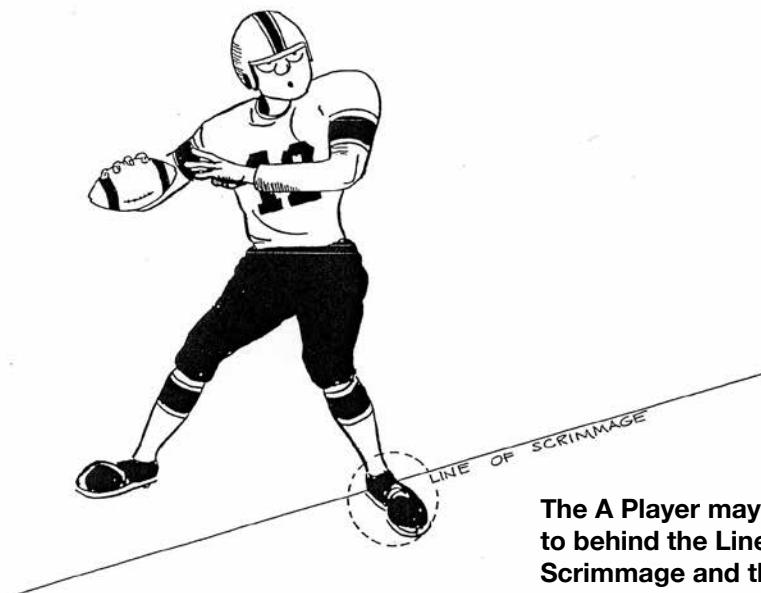
## Forward Pass

27. (a) Thrown in the direction of the opponents' dead line, by any A Player, from behind the L.S. Only one forward pass may be thrown per down.



Fig Off056

- (b) If the pass is thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage, after the passer has crossed the L.S. – Illegal F.P. This is normally the Referee's call in conjunction with the Held Official.



**The A Player may retreat to behind the Line of Scrimmage and then throw a F.P.**

Fig Off057



## Ineligible Receivers

28. (a) A Players wearing numbers 40 to 69 are Ineligible Receivers, regardless of position on the line or backfield, unless having reported to the Referee.



Fig Off058

- (b) If the pass is caught simultaneously by opposing Eligible Receivers, it shall belong to the passer's Team.



Fig Off059



29. (a) If the ball is touched by B behind the L.S., Ineligible A Receivers are still ineligible.

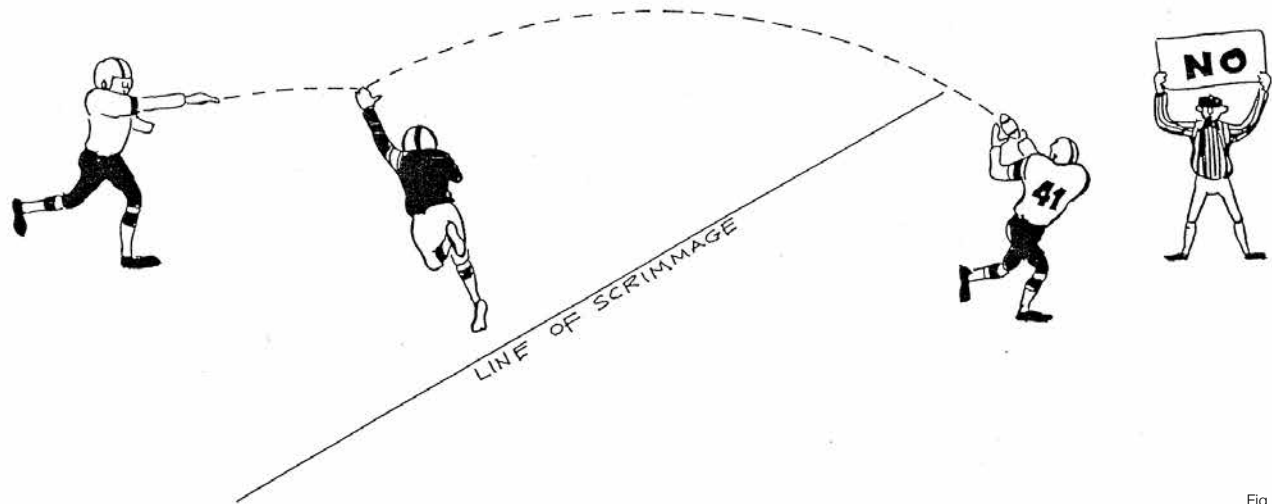


Fig Off060

(b) If the ball is touched by B across the L.S., any A Player is an Eligible Receiver, provided that the ineligible Player is legally downfield.

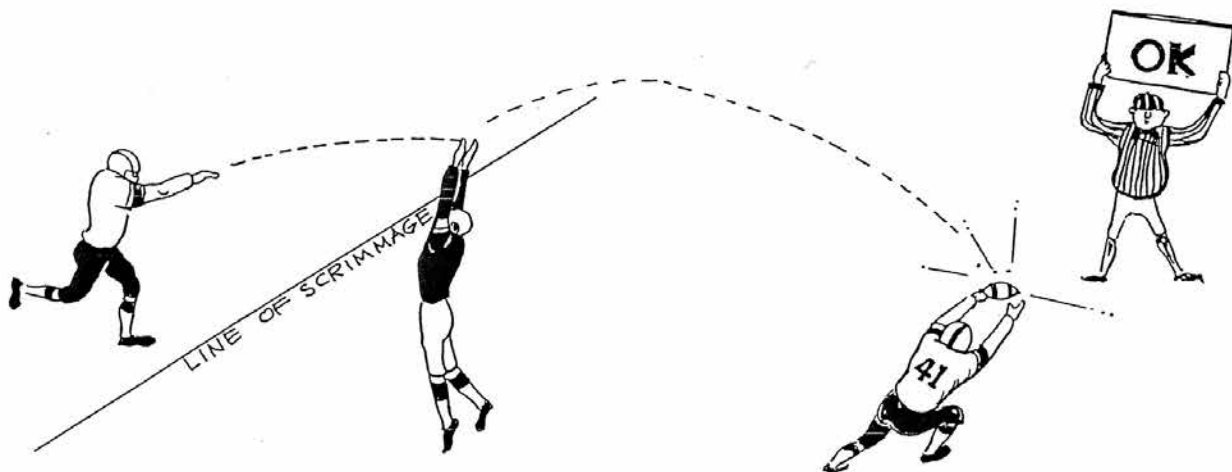


Fig Off061



## Complete Pass

30. A80 left the ground inbounds, gained possession in the air. B20 contacts A80 and lands O.B. The pass is ruled complete.

(1) CONTROLS PASS...



Fig Off062a

(2) TOUCHES FIRST OUT-OF-BOUNDS...



Fig Off062b

31. A81 gained possession in the air, established an inbound position with their left foot touching inbounds. When their right foot comes down O.B., the ball is dead. Completed pass, and the live ball carried O.B.

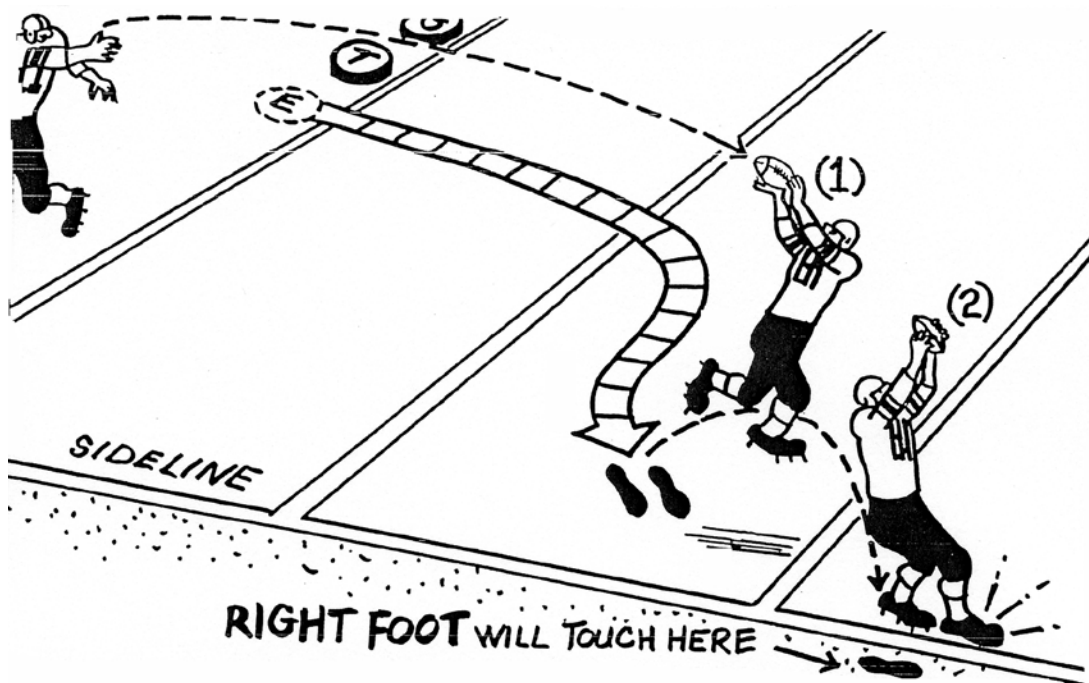


Fig Off063



## Incomplete Pass

32. Notice the difference to our previous completed pass picture, where one foot inbounds established an inbounds position and a completed pass. Here A11 catches the ball in the air inbounds, but their first contact is out of bounds. Incomplete pass.

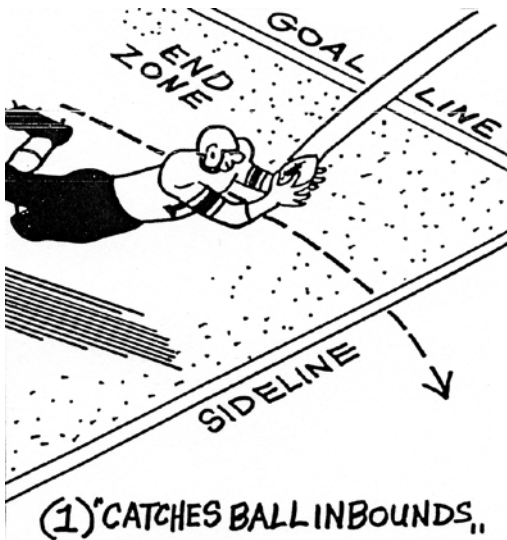


Fig Off064a

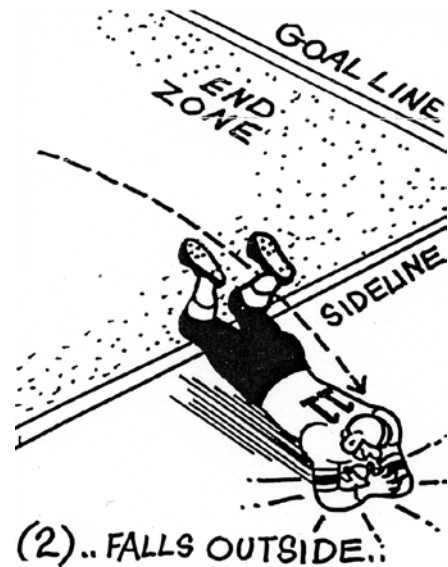


Fig Off064b

33. (a) A F.P. is incomplete if it touches the ground or an Official, or the goal post assembly, or the downsbox or distance chain rod, or goes out of bounds, even if it is touched first by a Player. If a Player touches the ball and it bounces off the goal post, it is immediately dead.

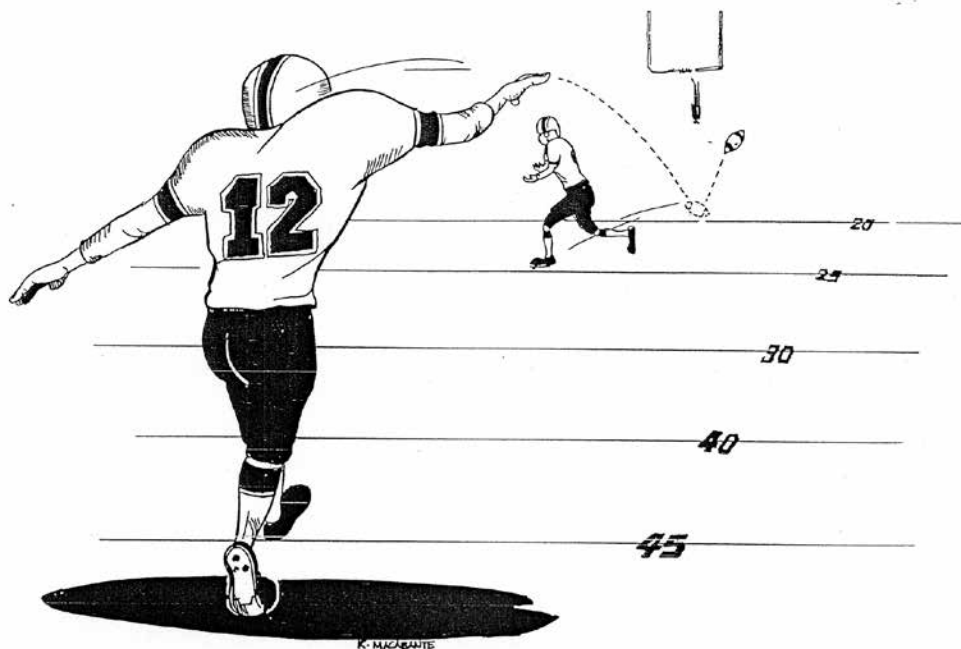


Fig Off065





- (b) If the forward pass touches an Official, it is immediately dead either before or after the ball has been touched by a Player.



Fig Off066

## Illegal Interference

34. Illegal interference on a forward pass – contact by opponent before the ball has touched an Eligible Receiver – from an unfavourable position.



Fig Off067



Fig Off068



35. (a) Contact with a Receiver **before the pass is thrown** is illegal, except on the L.S. Penalize for Illegal Contact on an Eligible Receiver.

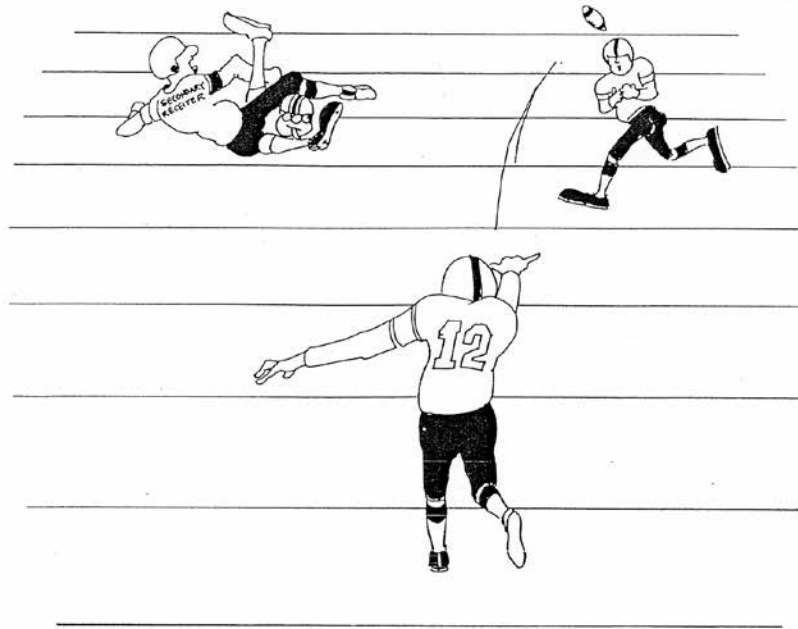


Fig Off069

- (b) There may be legal contact between 2 Eligible Receivers. Here both A31 and B20 have an equal opportunity to catch the pass, and both are in an equally good position. The contact may be heavy and both Players may fall from the contact, but there is no foul.



Fig Off070



36. (a) B20 is in an unfavourable position to play the ball. If he/she tries to “drive through” A85 before A85 touches the ball, it is illegal interference.

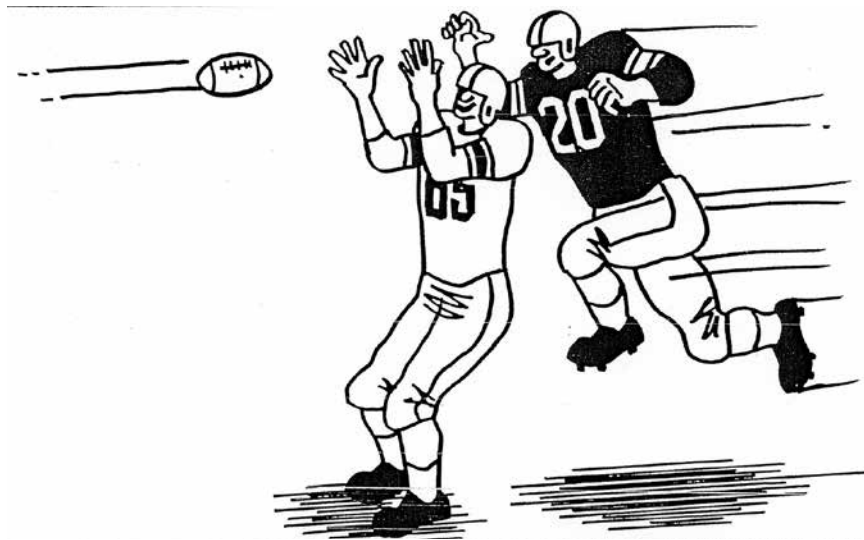


Fig Off071

- (b) The pass is uncatchable, therefore there is no pass interference.

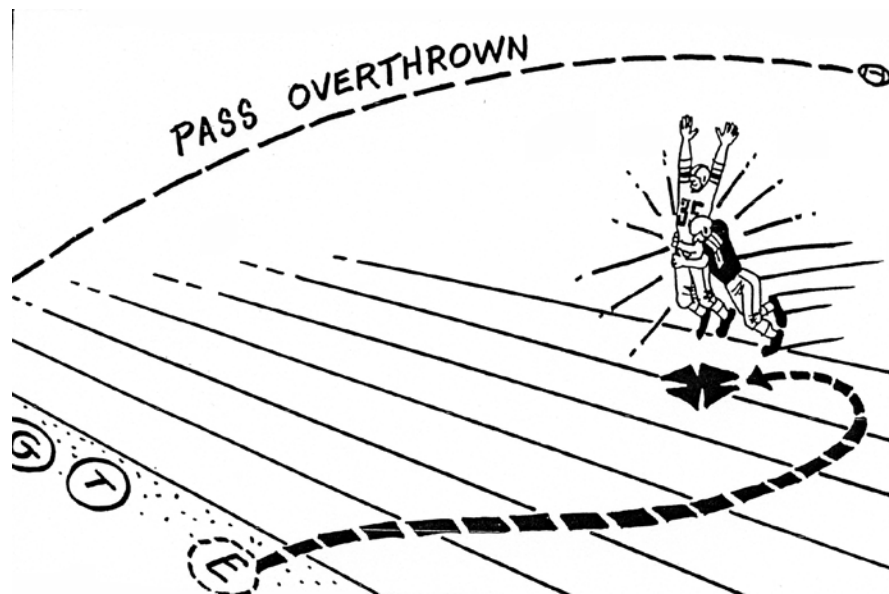


Fig Off072





37. (a) When A20 runs directly at the B Player, the B Player is allowed to protect their position by warding off what might be an A block. It is legal for B to do this until the ball is in the air on the F.P. Once the ball is in the air, A cannot block B, so B does not need to protect their position.

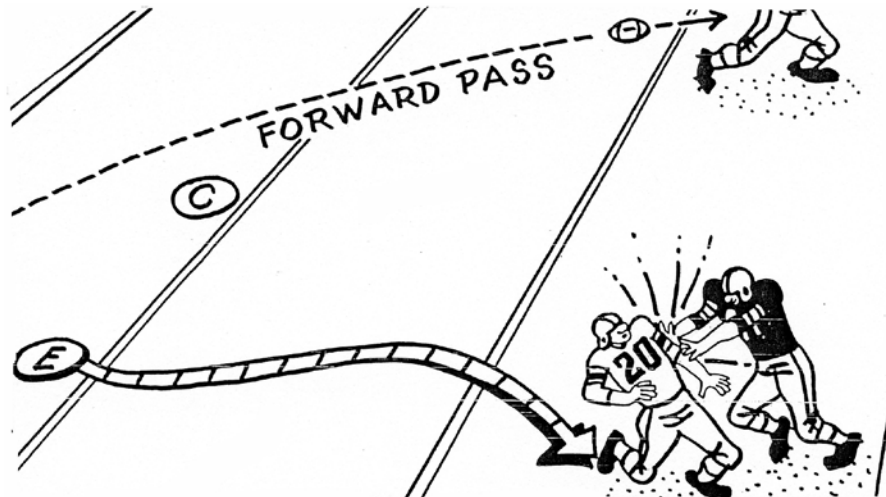


Fig Off073

- (b) If B makes the contact after A has made their cut, B is not protecting their position and the action by B25 is not legal. It may be illegal use of hands, or I.C.E.R. before the ball is in flight, or pass interference, if the ball is in flight.

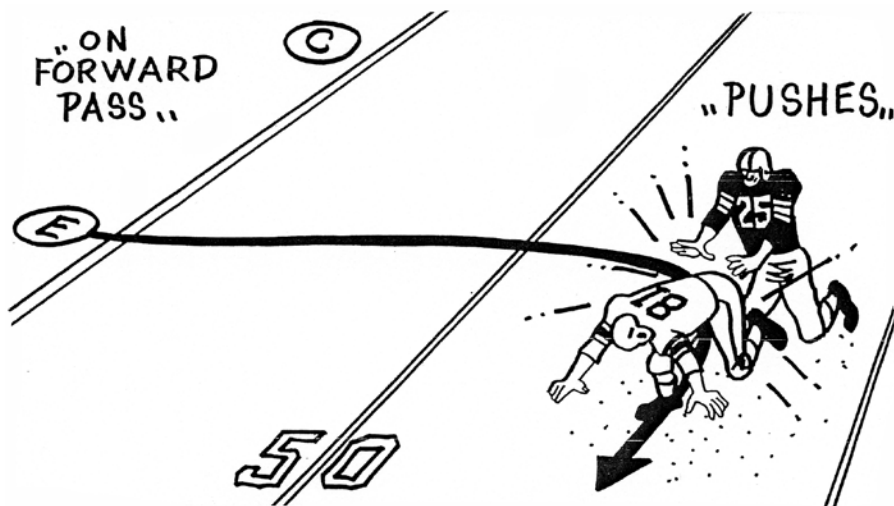


Fig Off074



Every eligible Receiver, both offensive and defensive, is entitled to their position on the field, or their path to the ball, provided he/she takes the position early enough that he/she does not interfere with another Player who is already moving into the position; or he/she establishes their path to the ball without interfering with another Player who has already established their path. A Player may take a position or path far enough ahead of another Player to allow their to stop or change direction (usually about 2 steps is adequate).

38. (a) A has established a path toward the destination of the pass.

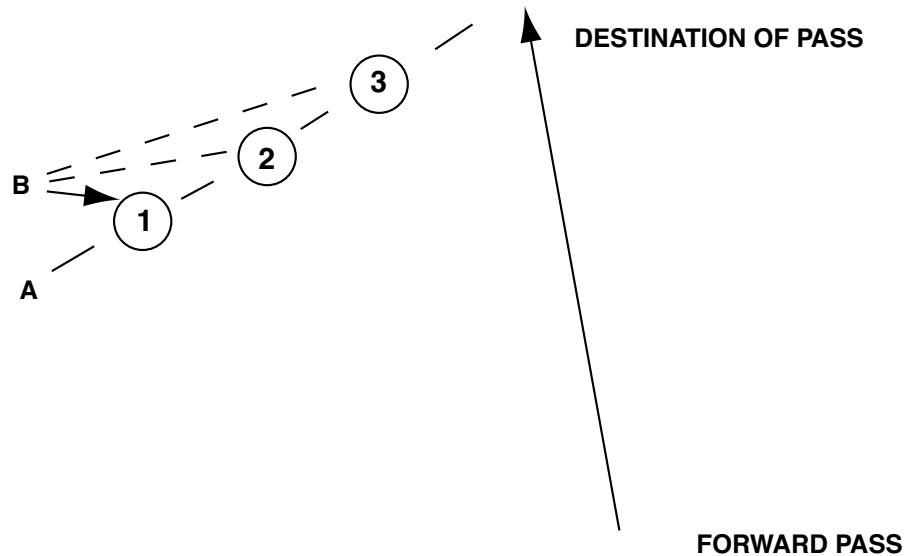


Fig Off015

- (b) B moves in front of A at 1, about 1 step ahead of A, and contact results. Interference by B.
- (c) B moves in front of A at 2 about 3 steps ahead of A and establishes their path toward the point of pass destination. A continues to run their path and makes contact with B. Interference by A – B set their path far enough ahead of A that A could stop, or change direction before contacting B.
- (d) B moves in front of A at 3 about 6 steps ahead of A and established their path toward the point of pass destination. A continues to run their path and makes contact with B. As in (c) this is pass interference by A. B had the advantageous position and had set up their path without interfering with A.



## Fouls

39. The ball carrier may use their hands or arms to ward off tacklers, but not a fist or closed hand in a punching or striking action.

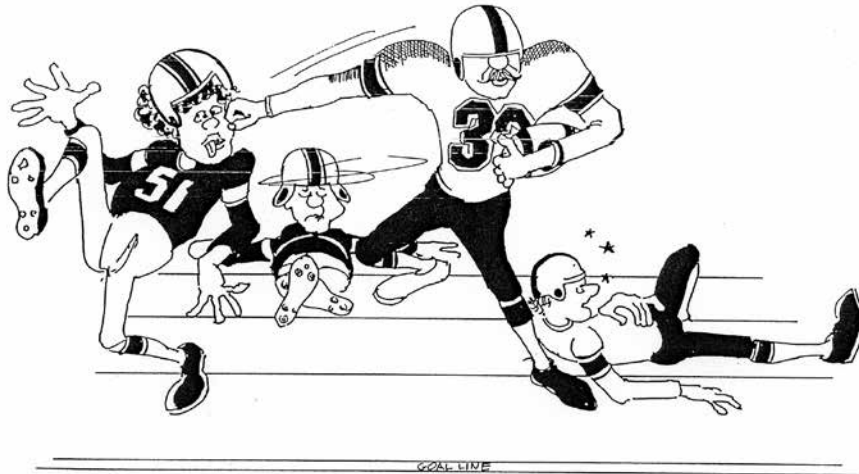


Fig Off075

40. Blocking from the rear – is blocking an opponent other than the ball carrier by charging into the opponent's back or throwing the body across the back of the legs. The point of contact is what determines the legality or illegality of the block. If the initial point of contact is on the rear part of the body, the block is from the rear.

A block from the rear is illegal except:

- 1) If it is in the close line play area, with the first contact in the neutral zone (tackle to tackle and 2 yards either side of the LOS), by a Player positioned in the area at the snap.
- 2) If the initial contact is on the front or side, and motion of the Players makes the block end up at the rear.
- 3) If the initial contact is from the rear, due to action of the opponent, such as turning their back after the blocker has committed himself/herself.

**You must see the whole action before you can rule correctly on Blocking from the Rear. If you only see the end of the block, you cannot be certain as to how the block occurred, and you must not call a foul.**

41. (a) B51 is about to tackle the ball carrier

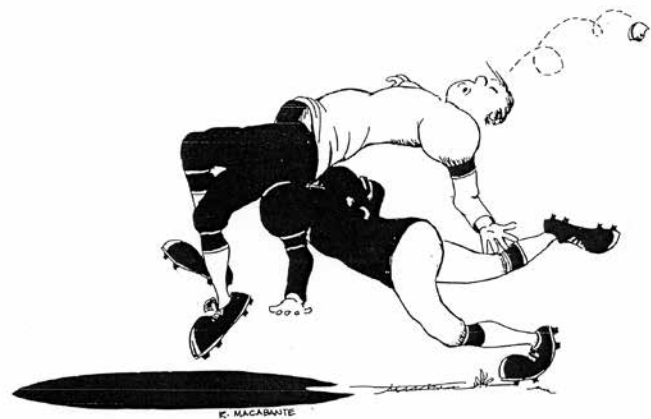


Fig Off076



in the open field, where A65 hits their from behind. Foul.

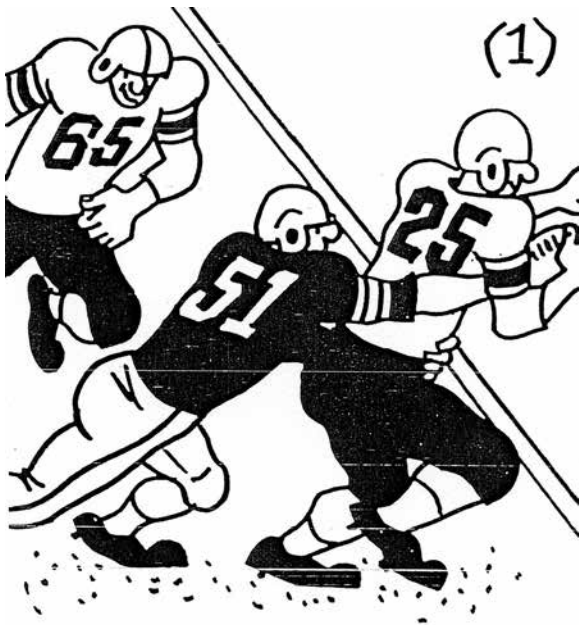


Fig Off077a

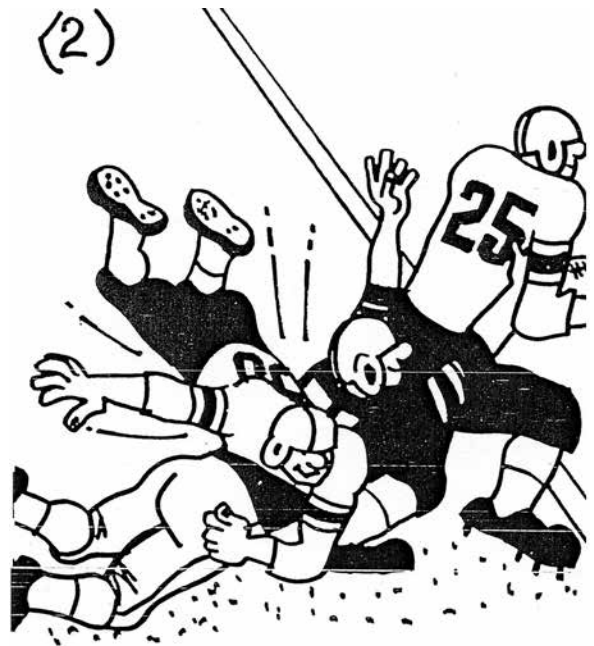


Fig Off077b

(b) A60 has committed himself/herself to a block on B40. B40 turns and A60 hits their across the back of legs. **NO FOUL** – The block from the rear was caused by B40 turning. **If you only see picture 3, you cannot call a foul correctly, since you cannot tell how A60 got there.**



Fig Off078a



Fig Off078b



Fig Off078c



42. (a) Punching a Player, kicking their or deliberately kneeling their is a rough play penalty which merits disqualification. It is the type of play which can and often does cause injury to a Player and must not be allowed.



Fig Off079

- (b) Piling on – once a Player is down, he/she is unable to protect himself/herself. When the ball is obviously dead, no Player shall tackle, or run into, or block the Player, or pile on the ball carrier. However, a Player who has committed himself/herself to the tackle before the ball goes dead usually cannot stop quickly enough to avoid contact – he/she may even be in the air. If this Player then hits the ball carrier, there is no foul, unless knees, elbows or extra force is used. However, if the head, or helmet is used, spearing must be called.



Fig Off080





43. (a) Tripping – intentional use of the lower leg or foot to obstruct any opponent below their knee. This includes tripping the ball carrier.

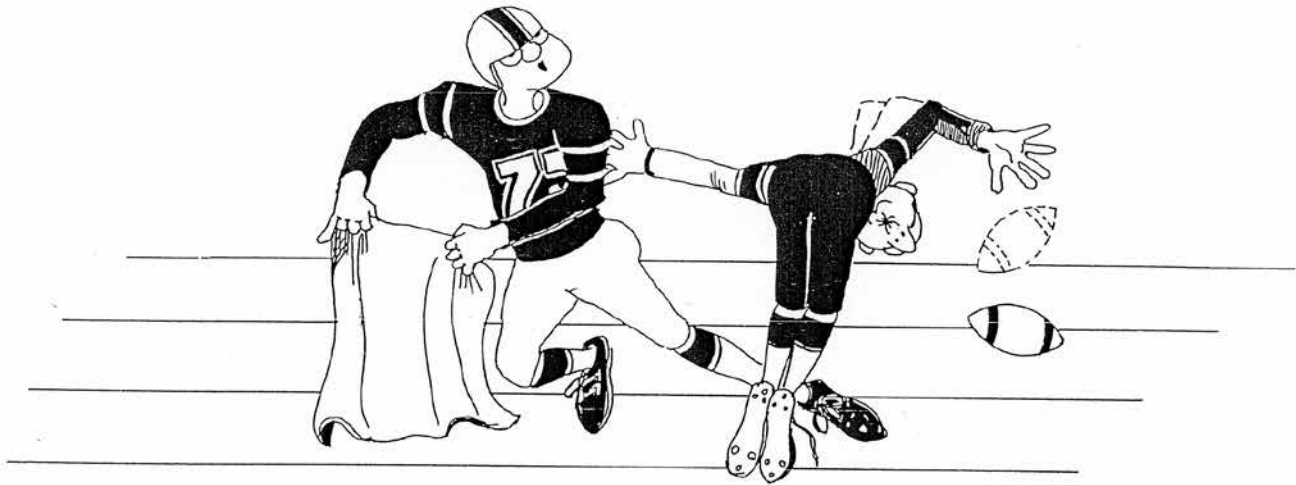


Fig Off081

- (b) It is illegal to grasp the facemask of an opponent. This means that the fingers must close on the facemask. If the hand is open on the facemask, no foul.

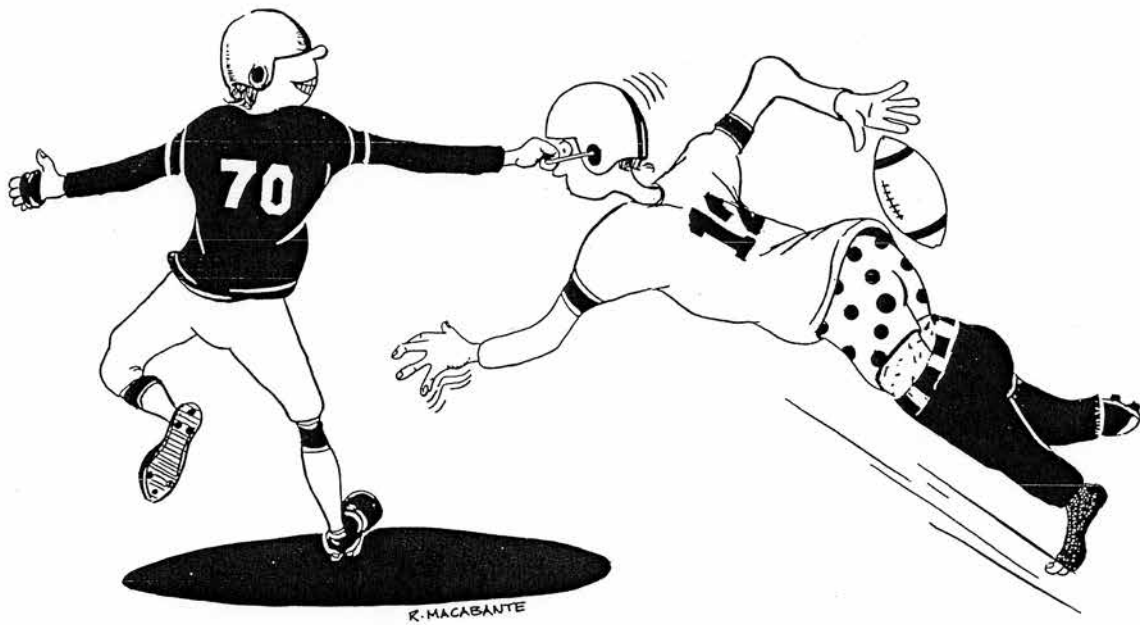


Fig Off082



## Use of the Head and Helmet

44. Spearing – deliberate, malicious driving of the helmet into a Player who is down or held, so that he/she is unable to protect himself/herself. It is illegal whether it happens before or after the whistle, and it does not matter whether the Player has committed himself before the whistle and could not stop. The use of the helmet is still illegal and a foul must be called.



Fig Off083a



Fig Off083b

45. (a) Here the Player is held and is defenseless when A51 spears their from behind.



Fig Off084a



Fig Off084b



- (b) Here the Player is down, and B drives into their with the helmet. Spearing – whether B committed himself/herself before or after the whistle.

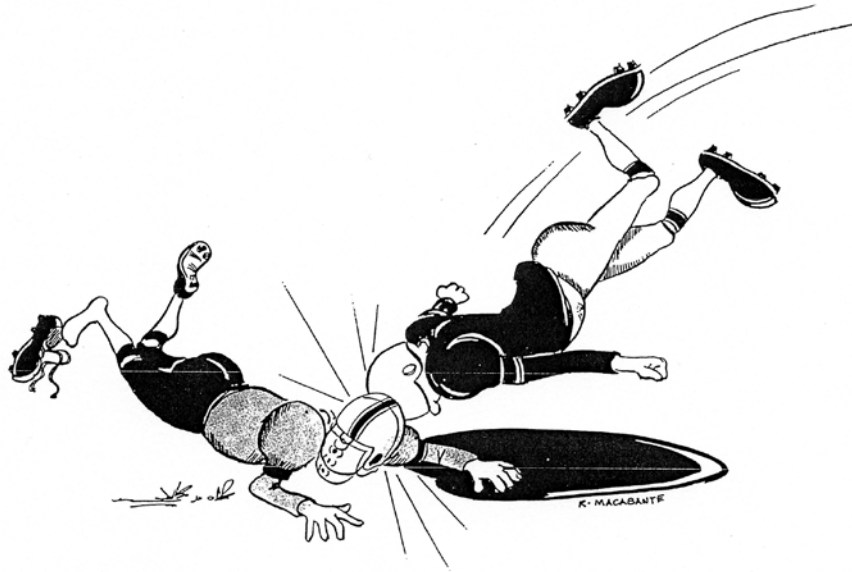
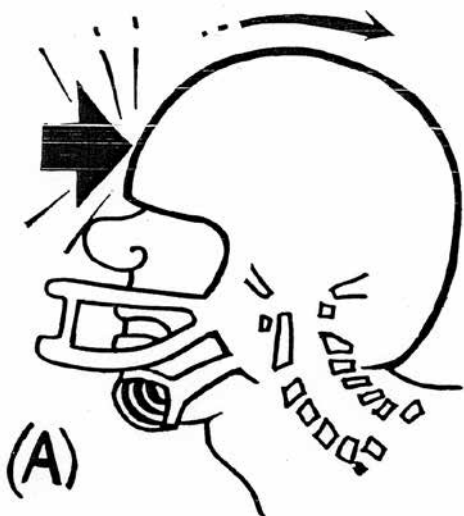


Fig Off085

## Butt Tactics – Blocking & Tackling

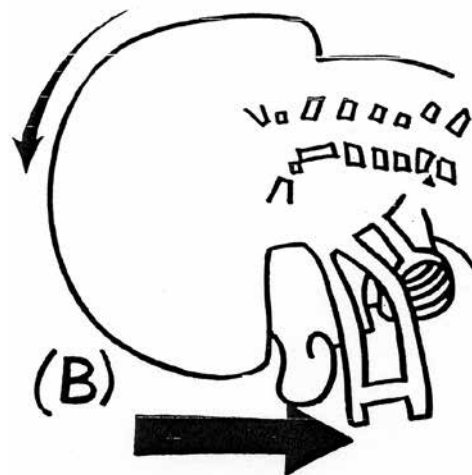
46. The use of the head, in blocking or tackling, as the primary point of force is dangerous for both Players but particularly to the Player who is executing the block or tackle.

When the neck is in Compressive Hyperextension, or in Compressive Hyperflexion, the neck vertebrae are particularly vulnerable to damage. Damage to the spinal cord or paralysis may result when the head, helmet or facemask is used to deliver a blow.



(A)  
Compressive Hyperextension

Fig Off086a



(B)  
Compressive Hyperflexion

Fig Off086b





47. Here the facemask is used as the primary point of force in the block made by A61. Butt block.



Fig Off087a

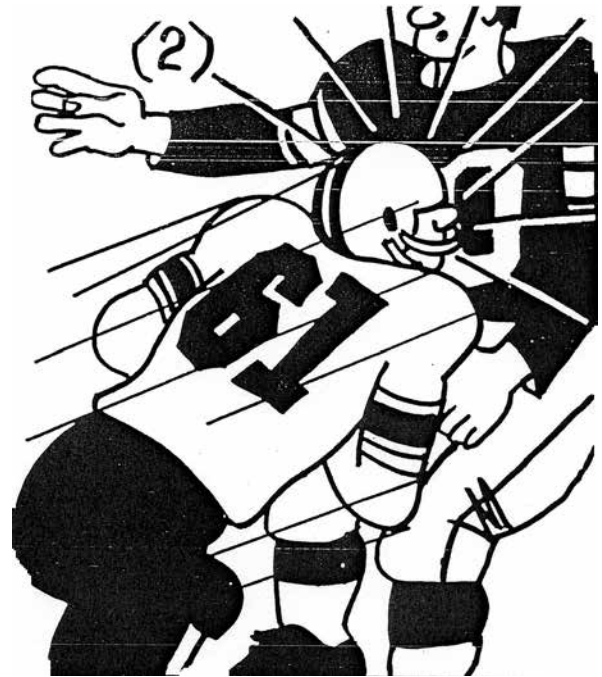


Fig Off087b

48. (a) Here the top of the helmet is used as the primary part of the force. Butt tackle.

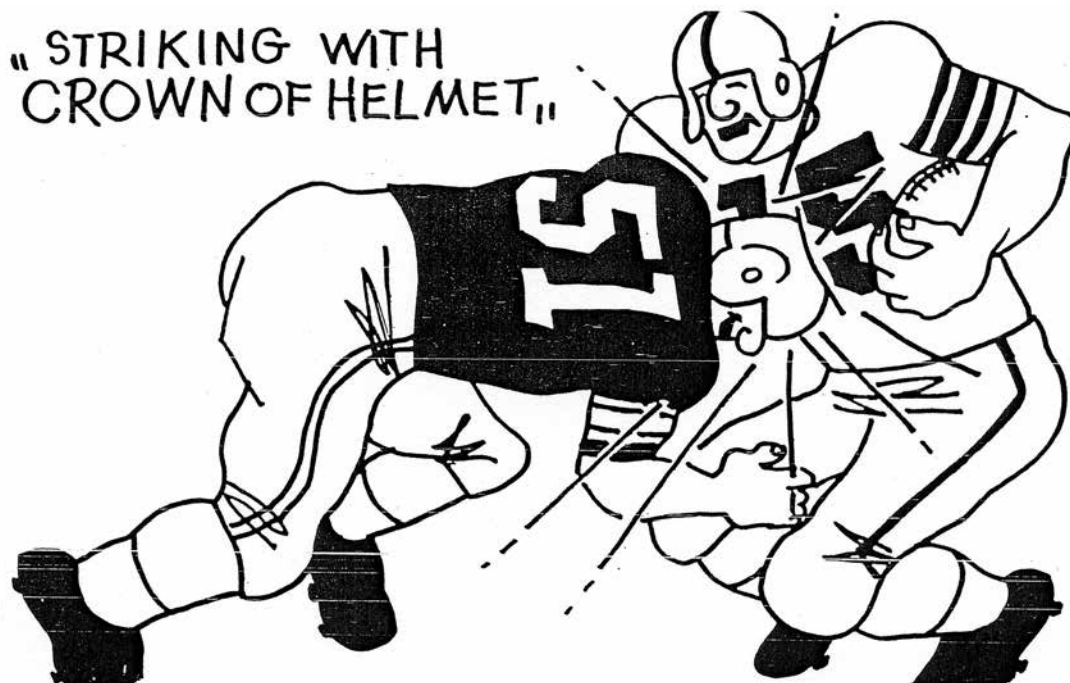


Fig Off088



- (b) The facemask is part of the helmet. Driving the facemask into the ball carrier is butt tackling. All of these tactics are dangerous, should not be taught by Coaches, nor allowed by Officials. The safety of the athlete is the most important consideration of which any Coach or Official should be aware.

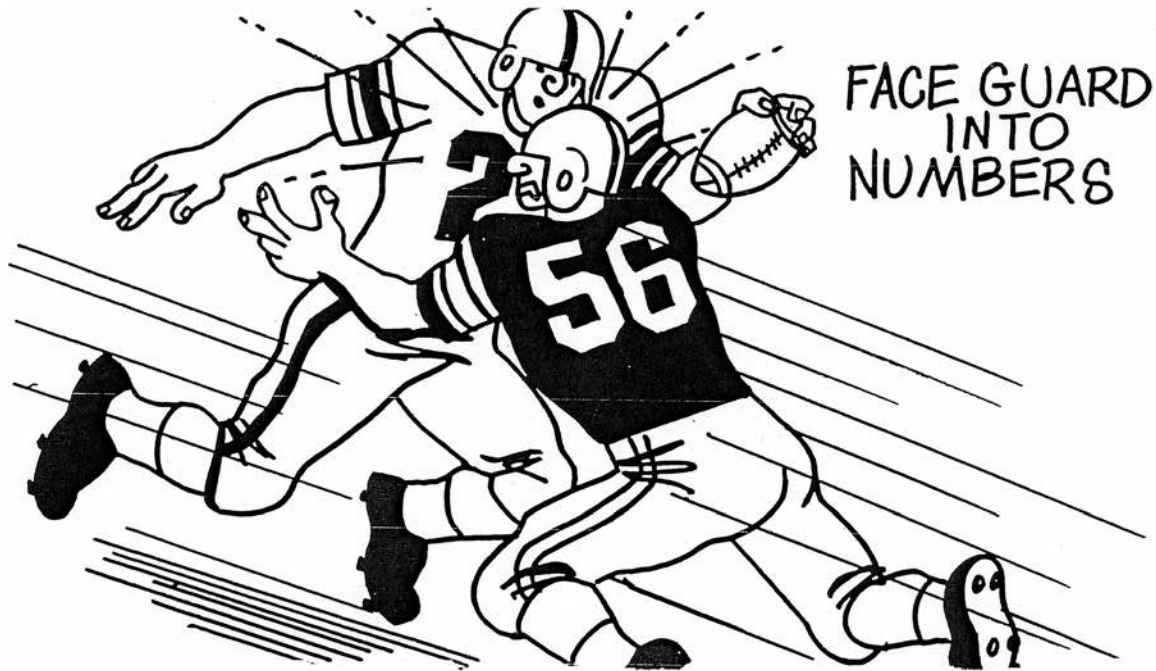


Fig Off089

## Objectionable Conduct

49. When a Player or a Team Official uses obscene language on an opponent or Official, Objectionable Conduct should be called.

If a Player or Team Official uses abusive language directed at an Official, Objectionable Conduct, should be called.

If a Coach or Player becomes excited and begins to get generally abusive, the Official should attempt to calm their down. The soft answer can turn away the wrath.

Minor grumbling can be safely ignored, unless it begins to escalate and a quiet warning is in order.



R. MACAENTE

Fig Off090



## Reporting Penalties

50. Use the proper format. Know the things that are needed by the Referee:

C-I-N-S or T-I-N-S

- C – Colour of Team jersey (or T-Team name)
- I – Infraction (what was the foul – use correct name e.g. It is Unnecessary Roughness – not Roughing)
- N – Number of Players – get the correct number – for the offending Team Captain and Coach.
- S – Stay around to give Referee any additional details such as:
  - Where was the ball when the foul occurred?
  - Had yards been made before the foul?
  - Do not use “Offence” or “Defence” – if there is a change of possession?
  - You can say “Red Team, defensive holding, number 66” – as long as the Team is properly identified.

**C · I · N · S or T · I · N · S**

**C · Colour (T – Team)**

**I · Infraction**

**N · Number (of player)**

**S · Stay around**

Fig Off016



# Section 10

**Some Do's and Don'ts for  
Officials**

**Getting Off to a Good Start**





## Some “Do’s and Don’ts” for Officials

1. DO get physically fit and stay in condition.
2. DO know the rules thoroughly.
3. DO communicate with your fellow Officials.
4. DO cooperate with others and show good Teamwork.
6. DO be dedicated to the game.
6. DO dress and appear neat, clean and standard.
7. DO put yourself above reproach in your personal behaviour during the game.
8. DO have the courage of your convictions.
9. DO be courteous, but firm.
10. DO be consistent in your calls.
11. DO use your judgement. Warn first on technical type of fouls.
12. DO set your officiating pattern early and keep it.
13. DO cover your position and read the play situations.
14. DO get the correct number of the penalized Player.
15. DO know for certain where the ball is if you are whistling the play dead.
16. DO know where the ball is when you call a penalty.
17. DO assist the Referee in every conceivable way.
18. DO call early and save yourself the last minute brawl.
19. DO check the penalty distances: when it is 5 yards, see that it is not 4 or 6, and 10 yards, not 9 or 11.
20. DO remember “C I N S” or “T I N S” when reporting penalties:
  - C – Colour of Team or T – Team name
  - I – Infraction
  - N – Number of Player
  - S – Stay near Referee to give additional facts:
    - (a) Location of ball at time of infraction, or
    - (b) Spot of infraction.



21. DO report penalties clearly and confidently.
22. DO stay with the Referee on your penalty calls.
23. DO keep close to the play, always looking in.
24. DO see the whole scene, not just the end of it.
25. DO get the furthest point of advance of the ball.
26. DO be responsible in your acceptance of game assignments.
27. DO be punctual for game (at the pre-game stated time).
28. DO be prepared to talk over game procedures.
29. DO be aware of situations, but not fouls.
30. DON'T criticize other Officials. Be loyal and display confidence.
31. DON'T fraternize with Players or Coaches during the season.
32. DON'T talk "out of school" to friends, Players, press, etc.
33. DON'T lose your temper under any circumstances; be calm and impersonal.
34. DON'T become personally involved in any play or incident. Stay detached from the game.
35. DON'T argue with any Player or Coach about the rules, on or off the field.
36. DON'T have rabbit ears.
37. DON'T over-officiate.
38. DON'T coast or relax in a dull game.
39. DON'T threaten a Player or Coach, caution only.
40. DON'T let Players get behind you.
41. DON'T turn your back on another's mistake. Correction must be made at the time.
42. DON'T warn on roughness or objectionable conduct.
43. DON'T be half-hearted or hesitant in your penalty calls.
44. DON'T be afraid to admit a mistake to the Referee. He/she can wash out the penalty flag.
45. DON'T second-guess in order to save a few steps.
46. DON'T walk away from close decisions.
47. DON'T second-guess the Referee or make any explanations to Players, Coaches, or fans on the call of other Officials.
48. DON'T tell a Team if they are one or more men short or too many. Tell them to "count their Players."
49. DON'T call when you "Have not," "Could not," or "Did not" see the whole action. A bloody nose is not a "punch".



50. DON'T call in anticipation.
51. DON'T call blocking from the rear or blocking below the waist unless you saw the initial contact.
52. DON'T defer to another penalty call even though it's different than yours.
53. DON'T throw a so-called "back-up" flag. Either you saw an infraction or you didn't.
54. DON'T turn to the Referee immediately if you have a penalty infraction. Your coverage continues until play is dead.
55. DON'T call the penalty; just call the infraction. It is "Rough Play" not "He/she's out of the ball game."
56. DON'T hold conferences on the field near Players or Coaches.
57. DON'T forget the ball at half time.

**Films and TV allow us to be looked at many times over.**

**We work in a fish bowl, yet must go unnoticed.**







# Getting Off to a Good Start

## 1. Preliminary Preparation

### A. Watch Game as an Official

Watch games as if you are a part of the crew.

Live the game with the crew.

What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of each Official?

What things were handled well and not so well?

Ask questions when time permits – why, what, etc.

### B. Take an Active Part at Meetings

Attend weekly study sessions.

Take an active part. Ask questions, enter into discussions, etc.

Become a part of meetings – PARTICIPATE.

### C. Have Quality Equipment

Purchase good quality equipment – look the part.

Follow the “Dress Code” to the letter.

Quality gear will last for the “long haul”.

### D. Physical Conditioning

Be in shape to work the whole game – 4 Quarters.

Inexperience leads to “extra miles” per game.

Display good hustle at all times, but don’t waste energy.

### E. Attend Team Preseason Scrimmages

Gain practical experience by attending practice sessions.

Attend with experienced Official(s), if /when possible.

Develop positive rapport with Teams.

### F. Learn Basics First

Gain a knowledge of the common rules and penalties.

Learn the fundamentals of positioning and mechanics.

Learn to use the routine signals – will become automatic with time.

Work on developing Teamwork Concept – Zone Concept.





## 2. Pre-Game Preparation

### A. Know the Fields

Become familiar with the various fields to which you are assigned.

Note regulation and non-regulation fields.

Note any safety hazards.

Always carry out a Field Inspection and note any problems (lines, benches, etc.).

### B. Travel with Fellow Officials

Travel with fellow Officials (out of town games) whenever possible.

Talk game strategies – review of mechanics, etc.

On the way home discuss game performance.

Note any Travel Dress Code requirements.

### C. Be on Time – Even Early

Be on time for assignments as set out by your Association.

Dress at home if no dressing room facilities at site

Dress at the field if adequate facilities are provided

Pre-game discussions with the crew – place will vary.

Arrive early so as not to be rushed.

### D. Be Rested – Be Sharp

Get proper rest.

Avoid large meals before a game – follow a proper diet.

Be prepared for double headers, weather conditions, etc.

### E. Be Ready for the Unexpected

Never expect an “easy” game.

Be prepared for challenges – have courage rather than being fearful.

## 3. At the Game

### A. Positive Approach

Develop a positive rapport with others.

Enjoy your job – even under “Not So Good Experiences”.

Turn Negatives into Positives.

Be Professional in dealings with Players, Coaches, etc.



**B. Work at Avoiding Beginner's Mistakes**

Avoid anticipating what might happen – develop “play awareness”.

Take time to signal properly – clear and concise.

Enforce rule consistency – for the “Whole Game”.

Know Positioning & Mechanics – where to be, what to do.

See suggested list of “DO'S & DON'TS” on page 115-117.

## 4. Post Game

**A. Post Game Critiques**

Take time after the game for discussion with the crew (whenever possible).

Ask questions as to the “WHY'S, WHAT'S” etc. of the game.

**B. Discuss your Game**

Listen to others on the crew, be open to critique(s).

Ask questions regarding your game performance and any doubts you may have.

Game Observers may be present to offer a formal critique.

**C. Keep a “Book” on Your Games**

Keep notes on “STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES”.

Things to improve on – what to work on for your next game.

Rule Interpretations.

Mechanics techniques you observed – ask questions.

Work on one thing at a time.

Questions for the next meeting.

**D. Ask Questions**

Don't hesitate to ask questions.

All critiques are meant to assist one another.

No question is “stupid” – ask while fresh in mind.

## 5. Learn the Rules

**A. Learn the Basics**

Learn the fundamental rules of the game.

Rule 1 is imperative.

Learn the intent of rules as you progress.

Regular rules study.



**B. Learn Legal vs. Illegal**

Learn to identify legal vs. illegal tactics.

Experience is a “Great Teacher”.

**C. Penalty Applications and Rule Complications**

Make your call and report the necessary data.

Application of penalties will come later:

- Points of application

- Distance(s) to apply, etc.

Complications regarding penalty calls:

- Dual & Double Fouls

- Before/After Yards Gained or Changes of Possession



## Personal Notes:

**Progress from the Known to the Unknown —  
One Step at a Time**

