

Michigan Officials Association - 2010

Linesman – Techniques and Responsibilities

General Responsibilities

- Game Control
 - Coach Communication
 - Field Presence and Signals
 - Whistle
 - Count Players
- Penalty Enforcement
 - Check Umpire – mark spot and pace off penalty
 - Check and make sure penalty will result in first
 - Communicate placement, first down, etc to Umpire and Referee
- Pre Game
 - Meet the Chain Crew
 - If the Referee is not available you run the Pre Game Conference
 - Place the Chain Clip (should always be placed at the back edge of the yard line closet to the back stake)
- Coin Toss
 - Bring Captains in from your sideline
 - Stop at the hash marks and make sure no one crosses that spot

Free Kicks

- Pre Kick
 - 5 man HL is on the side opposite the press box at the 20 yd line
 - 4 man – HL is on the side opposite the press box at the 50 yd line
 - Count the players on the receiving team
 - Make sure all players and coaches are back of the 2 yd restraining line
 - Raise your hand to indicate you are ready and completed your pre kick responsibilities
- At the Kick
 - Observe the nearest man on your side of the Receiver's Front 5 players, watch the initial block and make sure it is legal. Then move to zone coverage
 - Keep about 20 yard cushion between you and the Referee in 4 man
 - If the ball comes to your sideline you have forward progress all the way to the goal line
 - If the ball goes to the opposite side, you monitor blocks in the center of the field
 - Blocks below the waist
 - Holding
 - Clips
- When the Kick Ends
 - Clean up and help spot the ball

- Set the Chains

Scrimmage Plays - Runs

- Pre Snap
 - Confirm down distance and clock status
 - Position off the field straddling the line of scrimmage
 - Watch for substitutions from your side
 - Make sure side line is clear
 - Make sure players on your side are eligible by number and position
 - If line is unbalanced, communicate to partner (Hand on Cheek)
 - Count Players in backfield
 - Assist Wide Receivers to be ON or OFF, use a standard communication but DO NOT COACH
 - If the last player on your side is off the line extend your hand to the offense backfield – keep you hand until the snap or until the formation changes
 - If you have a foul such as not enough people on the line, grasp your flag and move it so your partners sees. This helps communicate that there is a problem with the formation and if verified there should be flags from both the Line Judge and the Linesman
 - Men in motion are the responsibility of the side they started on until they reach the opposite side of the formation. Do not move into the backfield to track a man in motion. Make sure they are heading in line parallel to the line of scrimmage and are not heading toward the line prior to the snap
- At the Snap
 - HOLD READ REACT
 - Watch your keys – End and Tackle on your side – watch for hold and chop blocks
 - Watch for encroachment, illegal formations, Illegal Formations, Illegal Shifts/Motion False Starts, Holding, Clips, Chop Blocks
- During the Play
 - If the run is to your side, be prepared to step BEHIND the runner to avoid a collision, you have forward progress
 - If the run is to the opposite side, you MAY ASSIST with the spot, but if there is a conflict between you and the line judge – the LINESMAN adjusts to the Line Judge spot
 - Spot forward progress, check for first down and let the Referee know, do not signal first down, but do kill the clock
 - After assuring there are no penalties turn and signal to the Chain Crew to move the sticks, unless a first down only the Down Marker will move.
- A Pass Play

- Pre Snap
 - Know your eligible receivers; watch Backs from the Backfield that may come to your side. In general you have the last player on the line of scrimmage and either the Running Back or the Slot Receiver.
 - REMEMBER YOUR PRESNAPS KEYS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE PLAY DEVELOPS
 - You are responsible for Zone Coverage from the middle of the field until the sideline. In 5 man the Back Judge has the area between the hash marks
- At the Snap
 - HOLD READ REACT
 - Be prepared for the quick pass
 - If the pass is backward extend your arm to the backfield to let the crew know (You do not have primary responsibility for the backward pass but this is good crew communication)
 - Stay within 15 yds of the line of scrimmage until the pass is thrown, less in 5 man
- At the Pass
 - Try to be between 5 and 10 yards away from the reception to make a clean call
 - You must see both feet and the catch in order to make the call
 - Only 1 foot, hand, elbow, head, etc is required to be in bounds to allow a catch
 - Watch for intentional ground but do not throw the flag
 - Be aware of illegal men downfield
- At the End of the Play
 - If the pass resulted in first down, kill the clock and spot the ball.
 - If the pass is incomplete then signal clearly incomplete, if the ball was bobbled or touched the ground, signal emphatically to SELL THE CALL

Scrimmage Kicks – PUNT

- Pre Snap
 - Initial position is same as scrimmage plays
 - Line Judge is ALWAYS the release official in MOA games. Make sure you pregame this
 - Watch for standard duties including offside, illegal formations
- During the Punt

- Release downfield after the ball as goes 10 – 15 yards downfield
- Watch for the ball coming to your side
- Watch for Blocks in the Back, Clips, Holding, Blocks Below the Waist, Fair Catches, Interference with the Opportunity to Make a Catch
- End of the Play
 - Kill the clock
 - Mark forward progress
 - If ball is away from you, clean up center of the field

SCRIMAGE KICK – FIELD GOAL

- Pre Kick
 - Play is no different from a scrimmage punt except that points may be scored
 - Be aware if kick turns into a play
 - Crew of 4 you have the holder and kicker the Referee has the upright
 - Crew of 5 you have the the LOS
- At the Kick
 - Make sure it is not block – If it is a Point Try –then the ball is dead when it crosses the LOS
 - If Field Goal then react like a scrimmage kick
- After the Kick
 - If made, move onto the field to help the Umpire control the lineman
 - Assist in getting the ball to the Back Judge or Umpire for kickoff or setting of LOW

Any updates or additions can be sent to Bob Feldscher at rfeldsch@yahoo.com