



FOOTBALL TRAINING – BACK JUDGE POSITION

(For 5-Person Crews/Mechanics)

AUGUST 13, 2022

AGENDA

- PRE-GAME (30 MINUTES ON THE FIELD) – BJ PERSPECTIVE

- Play-Clock Operator Instructions
- Play-Clock Instructions with QB's
- Ball-Boy Instructions
- Getting Captains

- PRE-SNAP MECHANICS – BJ PERSPECTIVE

- Free-kick Downs
- Scrimmage-kick Downs (Punts)
- Scrimmage-kick Downs (Scoring Kicks)
- Normal (Non-kicking) Scrimmage Downs

- BACK JUDGE POSITION

- Final Thoughts

- ***SPECIAL NOTE #1: IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THAT ALL BJ'S HAVE A :40/:25 REF-SMART DEVICE (OR SOME OTHER TIMING/WATCH DEVICE THAT WILL PROVIDE ACCURATE PLAY-CLOCK STATUSES).***

- ***SPECIAL NOTE #2: PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS PRESENTATION IS BASED ON 5-PERSON CREWS; REACH OUT TO PATRICK FARLEY DIRECTLY IF YOU WOULD LIKE A 7-PERSON VERSION OF THIS PRESENTATION AND HE WILL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO PROVIDE THAT INFORMATION TO YOU.***



PRE-GAME (30 MINUTES ON THE FIELD) – BJ PERSPECTIVE

- First job of the BJ when taking the field 30 minutes prior to the kick-off is to meet with the Play-Clock Operator (PCO) — *Per the NFHS, the PCO is to be onsite no later than 30 minutes prior to kick-off.*
 - Review with the PCO the start/stop game clock signals (wind vs. ready/chop-in vs. killing the game clock.
 - Remind the PCO not to stop the clock on plays near the sideline where the runner's forward progress is stopped in bounds (and has not reached the LTG) and then pushed out of bounds.
 - Confirm that the PCO is trained on adding or subtracting time from the game clock.
 - Remind the PCO that if there is a major malfunction making the game clock/scoreboard inoperable, time will be kept on the field.
 - Confirm with PCO the time for halftime intermission (10, 12, 15 min) as well as the mandatory 3 minute warm-up period.



PRE-GAME (30 MINUTES ON THE FIELD) – BJ PERSPECTIVE

- PLAY-CLOCK INSTRUCTIONS TO QB'S:
 - Meet with each starting QB (having their HC and/or OC present and listening in looks good as well) – introduce yourself letting them know you as the BJ are responsible for the :40/:25 play-clock.
 - Discuss the hand signals that you will be using – hand goes up at :10, start chopping at :05
 - If the BJ feels the snap is imminent even when you hit :00, let the play go; if you get to -:01, -:02, then bang them with a DOG.
 - Ask the QB's if they have any questions and wish them good luck.
- BALL-BOY INSTRUCTIONS:
 - In coordination with both the HL & LJ, ensure both ball boys understand their duties if utilizing the 1-ball system.
 - If utilizing the 2-ball system, ensure both ball boys understand their duties.
 - Confirm with ball boys (1) do they have a separate "K" ball for FK's (2) and if they do confirm placement of the FK ball (behind goal post or will hand the ball to the BJ) after successful FG's and Try's.
- GETTING CAPTAINS:
 - BJ will coordinate team captains on the Visitor's sideline.
 - Both HL & LJ should have their respective team's FK ball in their possession prior to coin toss.
- **When on the field 30-minutes to kick-off - DO NOT just linger (this is for ALL officials) - talking/laughing it up with players/coaches – this just looks bad and is not apart of our pre-game mechanics. "Body language" says a lot about your interest or lack thereof and coaches will sense this.**



PRE-SNAP MECHANICS – BJ PERSPECTIVE

- FREE KICK DOWNS – Non Onside Kick

- Have K's FK ball in hand – confirm legality of the tee.
- Count K to ensure 11 players before handing the ball to the kicker – confirm with LJ the correct count.
- Advise kicker to wait for R's ready-for-play whistle before kicking.
- Confirm legal formation of K team (5-yard rule).
- Raise one hand to confirm (1) 11 players confirmed on K and (2) signal to R that your pre-snap routine is complete and you are ready for the kickoff. You should be lined up on K's restraining line, on the Visitors sideline.

- FREE KICK DOWNS – Onside Kick

- Same 5 bullet points from above.
- LJ is now opposite you on K's restraining line.
- “Plate of Glass” now in effect – dead-ball foul, encroachment, shut it down!



PRE-SNAP MECHANICS – BJ PERSPECTIVE

- SCRIMMAGE KICK DOWNS (Punts)

- Count R to ensure they have 11 players in formation.
 - **Illegal Substitution (3-7)** – dead ball, 5-yard foul, 12 players in formation (i.e. 12th player is not making any attempt to get to the sideline) and the snap is imminent; shut the play down before the ball is snapped!
 - **Illegal Participation (6-4-C)** – live ball, 15-yard foul, 12 players in formation or non-formation (usually by a late substitution or replaced player) – and BJ counts/re-counts and still has 12 players but the snap goes off. Not ideal but if all 12 are ***participating*** then by rule we have to go with IP.
- Remind deepest R player valid fair catch signal (1 hand above helmet waive side-to-side at least 2x).
- Begin the play 7 to 10 yards wider than and 2-3 yards behind the deepest receiver on the linesman side of the field.
- BJ must be prepared to move up-field if the kick is short or downfield if the receiver has to retreat.



PRE-SNAP MECHANICS – BJ PERSPECTIVE

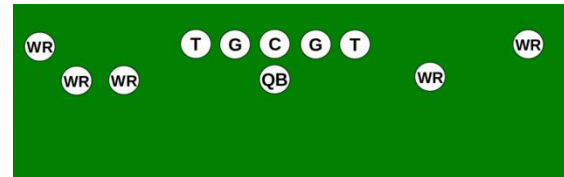
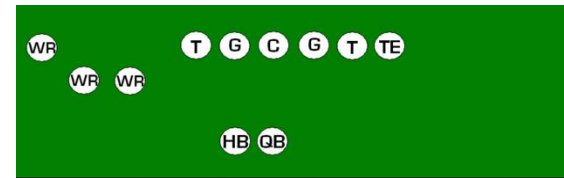
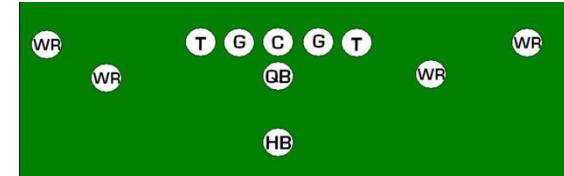
- SCRIMMAGE KICK DOWNS (Scoring Kicks)
 - Count B to ensure they have 11 players in formation.
 - BJ is positioned beyond the endline and behind the upright.
 - Either the LJ or HL will join the BJ
 - If you are facing R's "backside" – you are going under with the BJ
 - If you can see R's face – you are staying put but now have the entire LOS
 - In case we have a "fire-fire" situation (fake or busted play), deep officials should move along the endline and toward the nearest sideline; You might have to move up to help with pylon coverage (i.e. did the ball break the goal-line or not?)



PRE-SNAP MECHANICS – BJ PERSPECTIVE

- NORMAL (NON-KICK) SCRIMMAGE DOWNS

- Count B to ensure they have 11 players in formation; 20 yards off
- **Passing Formation 1:** twins on each side, balance formation, BJ will always first key towards the LJ side which means the HL will have responsibility for both receivers on their side
- **Passing Formation 2:** trips to one side, BJ will always first key to the #2 and #3 receivers (two inside receivers) on the trips side; the LJ/HL will first key on the most outside receiver (or #1)
- **Passing Formation 3:** trips to one side, twins to the other side – BJ will always first key to the #2 and #3 receivers on the trips side and the LJ/HL will first key on the most outside receiver (or #1) - which means the opposite flank (HL or LJ) will have responsibility for both receivers on their side
- **NOTE:** SUPER critical that the BJ pre-games with both the HL & LJ to review the above passing formations/keys – the worse thing that can happen is when we have a receiver with “no eyes” on them and gets targeted!



BJ POSITION

- FINAL THOUGHTS

- The **back judge** is the crew's chief dead-ball official and acts as the “referee” of the defense.
- This position requires one to do a lot of running (particularly in 5-person) so being in the best physical condition is a must.
- The position also requires the ability to make quick decisions particularly when it comes to OPI/DPI.
- It’s imperative the BJ helps their fellow flanks (HL/LJ) especially near the sideline/out of bounds plays where dead-ball officiating comes into play.

