

# REFEREE MECHANICS



2012

## Ohio Mechanics

The R has Primary Responsibility for his Crew using OHSAA Approved Standards for FB Officiating Mechanics. Mechanics indicated below are for 5 Man Crews with 4 Man Crew differences indicated with a “**NOTE**”. They are minimal as an effort was made to standardize them. They are summarized on the Primary Responsibilities for 4 Man Crews in the lower right hand corner box. Please review Officiating Tips in the OHSAA Football Manual.

### Referee

1. OHSAA Approved Standards for Mechanics
2. Conserve and Consume Time Ruling
3. KO -- Count Team R (11) at 10 YL
4. FG/Punt/Try -- Count K (11) and Substitutions
5. FG/Punt/Try -- Count LOS players on your side
6. Run/Pass -- Count A (11) and Substitutions
7. QB -- Pass/Fumble and Intentional Grounding
8. Play Clock and 25 second Clock
9. # of Team Timeouts -- Crew and Scoreboard
10. Backward Pass -- Punch and Yell
11. Decides to go to Onside Kick Mechanics
12. <b>The Expert on Rules 2 and 9</b>

#### 1. Ball Handling Mechanics

**CREW** (Ball Exchange): On COP relay the “old” FB to the SL after there is no threat of a dead ball foul. Do not wait for a “new” FB to remove “old” FB to Ball Person.

**Crew GOAL:** 100% Completions. Take extra steps before the underhand only relay.

Contenders watch Dead Ball Action while Pretenders are in a big hurry to secure a new FB. We cannot miss a Dead Ball Foul because we are looking for a new FB.

**CREW:** During hurry-up, play with 1 FB only as much as possible.

**CREW:** During Inclement Weather make shorter relays & run FB in when needed.

**CREW:** Do not throw FB toward SL so it hits the ground (Looks unprofessional).

Ball Persons stay off field entire game.

H & V TEAMS: Each team keeps their own FB's on their own SL.

## 2. Bean Bag Mechanics

2 BLUE bean bags

Fumble: Throw BB into the air at chest level. Throwing BB into air helps prevent inadvertent whistles. (When a crewmember sees a BB he knows ball is loose & will not sound his whistle.). Get BB on correct yard line but not at the spot of the fumble.

Momentum (Inside 5 YL): Drop BB at spot of catch or interception.

SL: No BB – OOB spot on SL (Exception: Fight breaks out down field or OOB)

## 3. Change of Possession Mechanics (COPM)

**Covering Official:** Signal new direction **FIRST**, then signal TO (2 times)

**Non Covering Officials:** Signal TO (2 times) **IMMEDIATELY** when crewmate signals COP

## 4. Coach/Referee Conference Mechanics (CRCM)

Definition: HC wants to Review a Rule Misapplication/ Misinterpretation (Rule 3-5)

**CREW:** OHSAA Requires NFHS Rule/Case Book & Gold Book (OT) is at the Field.

**REFEREE/Wing:** Meet HC at SL & listen to him. Judgment calls do not apply.

**REFEREE** will explain Ruling to HC. **REFEREE** can meet with **CREW** to discuss the ruling. It is imperative that all CREW members have an opportunity to talk. **R** must facilitate talk so an overly aggressive official is **NOT** allowed to dominate the discussion.

**CREW:** If HC Disagrees with **REFEREE's** Ruling, then **CREW** Must Secure 3 Books, Find Ruling in the Book (s) & Show the HC. Consequences for NOT Following this Mechanic is Officials could be suspended a maximum of 2 years for Weeks 1 – 15

## 5. COIN TOSS MECHANICS

**REFEREE:** Face Scoreboard at 50 YL.

LM/U & LJ/BJ: Escort Captains & Introduce to **REFEREE**.

**REFEREE:** Request each official introduce themselves to Captains. Ask which Captain will call & asks him for “call”, then repeats it.

**REFEREE:** Toss coin, catch it, then ask Captain to repeat the “call” again at 20 minutes. Ask Captain if he wants to Defer or choose for 1<sup>st</sup> half. If Defer, Signal PB. If choose kick/receive/GL, turn captains & signal PB.

**REFEREE:** Discuss Sportsmanship with Captains & then check options with Crew.

**2nd Half:** Bring 1 Captain each to center of field, secure options, & signal PB.

**OT:** Toss, secure choices, turn captains, & signal PB by pointing to GL.

## **6. Dead Ball Mechanics (DBM)**

**REFEREE:** In most cases there is no need to run to the DBS at or beyond LOS. Stay back & swivel (2X) your head, watching for any dead ball action. Then hustle to your IP.

**ALL** (Ball Becomes Dead): Swivel head (2X) & watch players in your area rather than stare at DBS. BE A GREAT DEAD BALL OFFICIAL. Talk to players on the “edge” of a late hit, but not late enough to call. Be assertive!

**CREW:** Immediately raise your arm/hand to indicate next down.

**CREW:** Referee dead ball action FIRST. Penalize first Dead Ball Hit; it usually stops it.

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## **7. Field Goal Mechanics (FGM)**

Definition: FG from any YL. (Assume Right Footed Kicker below)

**NOTE:** 4 Man: Wing who looks at R’s back goes to EL. U/Wing (GP Uprights).

Initial Position (IP): **REFEREE:** Plant Leg Side of Kicker. 3 YDS Deeper than Holder, 10 YDS Wide of Holder, & shoulders at a 45 degree angle.

Read & React (R&R) Then Flow:

**REFEREE:** Signal “T” to crew when “Tee” & Kicker come on field.

KEYS:

1. Eligible Backs & Holder #
2. Snap
3. Snapper
4. Holder
5. Catch

6. NO FAKE
7. Rushers
8. Kicker/Holder.

Delay marking ball ready until **U** gets to EL. Inform R players loudly to “stay off center” & “stay off holder/kicker”. FG good – Watch players move to SL FIRST & then signal TD to PB. FG blocked – start back peddling – might be needed at A GL. Yell “Ball’s Away” when FB is kicked to avoid kicker/holder.

### **8. Fight Mechanics (Actual Fight) – See Gold Book (p.15)**

### **9. Fight Mechanics (Prevention) – See Gold Book (p. 15)**

### **10. First Down Mechanics**

Definition: Close to a first down

**CREW:** If CLOSE regarding first down MEASURE. There are many games where a Crew refused to measure, & then, in “eyes of coaches, they could do no right”. On synthetic fields & well-marked grass fields, if forward stake is beyond hash & DBS is behind same hash, we will not measure. Too many times we look across field & think “that is not even close”, and then we bring chains across field -- “Wow – that was close or is a first.

### **11. Flag Mechanics**

- a. Carry 1 or 2 flags. Black ball flags optional for 2012
- b. Recommend in front; however, wherever comfortable
- c. Must be tucked in
- d. Center-weighted flag only
- e. Throw flag overhand; never at a player.
- f. No Spot: Throw flag high into air.
- g. Spot: Throw flag to corresponding YL. Passer beyond LOS – Drop Flag at spot.
- h. Same Foul: Multiple flags – move flags to same spot. Confirm foul & player # & then 1 official signals Prelim to **REFEREE**.
- i. Unsportsmanlike/Dead ball Personal Foul: Throw flag **high** into air.
- j. A non calling official must cover a fellow official’s flag on spot fouls.

### **12. Forward Progress Mechanics**

Place downfield foot in front of backfield foot to mark forward progress.

Square off. Do not “angle in”, “round the corner”, or “banana”.

**REFEREE** marks forward progress behind LOS or BJ marks progress down field

Player hit & driven back between field numbers & SL – wind (2X) & move in, but not past players.

Once an official sounds his/her whistle for forward progress, **swivel** your head (2X), watching for any dead ball action.

### **13. Free Kick After Fair Catch FC/Awarded FC (FKFC)**

Initial Position (IP): **REFEREE** (Kicker)

**NOTE:** 4 Man: **REFEREE** (K Line)

Read & React (R&R) Then Flow:

**REFEREE:** Ask BJ if there was a FC. If so, ask Coach where to spot the FB.

**CREW:** Once kicked identical to FGM.

### **14. Free Kick After Safety (FKS)**

Initial Position (IP):

**REFEREE** (Receiving Team 20 YL)

**NOTE:** 4 Man: **REFEREE/LM** (R's 30 YL); **U** (K's 20 YL); **LJ** (30 YL)

Read & React (R&R) Then Flow: Once kicked, mechanics are identical to KOM.

## 15. Fumble Mechanics

Covering Officials immediately throw BB.

**REFEREE** will stop game clock after 2 seconds if there is no signal from an official regarding possession.

If A retains possession, covering official signals next down & **REFEREE** winds game clock immediately along with LJ.

Large pileup & officials have to “dig”. Covering official, who rules team possession, yells team color & closest official signals direction (2X) of team possession, after making sure of proper direction. Stop clock (2X) for COP.

## 16. Game Management Mechanics (GMM)

**REFEREE** (Meeting with HC's): Inform HC that the **Crew** will send players to the SL who are approaching “fouling status”

**CREW**: Record player number on game card who are sent off of the field. Player can reenter when the HC thinks he is ready. Send out players who are talking to opponents.

**CREW** (Halftime): **R** winds Game Clock then TEAM Jogs Off the field together.

**CREW** (End of Game): **R** signals End of Period & Crew gets together as a TEAM & RUNS OFF the Field to the Locker Room. Don't Stay to Visit – Preventive Officiating.

## 17. Goal Line Mechanics (GLM)

- A. Use GLM for Try-Run (2 Pts.)
- B. Definition: Ball is on or inside +10 YL. **NOTE**: 4 Man: Wings must move into EZ to see catch near EL.

Initial Position (IP):

**REFEREE**: 10 YDS behind the QB & 8 YDS Wide of the QB; Wide side of the field.

Read & React (R&R1 & 2) Then Flow:

**REFEREE**: Same as Pass or Run Play. After TD watch players moving toward their SL before.

**DO NOT** signal TD to PB

**18. Hat Mechanics(HM): See Gold Book (p.17)**

**19. Hurry-Up Offense Mechanics (HUM)**

**REFEREE:** Adjust position by not moving in as far when FB is dead.

**REFEREE:** Emphatically tell Center & QB to “wait for my whistle” if A is ready to snap.

**REFEREE:** If Center is over FB, jog by back peddling to IP before marking ball ready.

**CREW:** When A catches or runs with FB, use 1 FB only when spotting for next down.

**CREW:** GOAL for every game is efficient, quick, & accurate FB spotting so A never has to wait for officials other than TO's or 1<sup>st</sup> down measurements.

**20. Kick Off Mechanics (KOM):**

Definition: KO - score & time don't indicate Onside KO (KO at 40 YL). Same IP. (K/LM/LJ) if KO at 35YL.

**NOTE:** 4 Man: **REFEREE** (10 YL near PB SL)

Initial Position (IP):

**REFEREE:** Straddle GL on wide side of 1 receiver & between 2 receivers.

Pre Kickoff:

**REFEREE:** Count R & secure “ready” signal from LM/LJ/BJ.

Read & React (R&R) Then Flow:

**REFEREE:** KEYS – R Touching Kick, Wind, GL, TB, Blocks Ahead of Runner, Clean Up Behind Runner & R&R. Straddle GL & maintain 5 YD cushion until GL is no longer threatened. Wind clock. Signal TB if needed. Move up field deliberately watching the blocking ahead & around the runner. Once ball is dead swivel head (2X) & clean up first.

**REFEREE:** When R signals TB, LM/LJ run toward the 10 YL field numbers at a 45 degree angle, sounding their whistles loud (2X) to help prevent dead ball fouls.

**REFEREE** jogs up field & sounds whistle loud and repeatedly.



## **21. Microphone Announcements Mechanics (MAM)**

**REFEREE:** Microphone MUST be controlled by the R ONLY, if it is heard in the stadium. If not, do NOT use it. Stand still; face PB; be concise, accurate, & think before talking. Pause to let points sink in.

**REFEREE (Practice):** No microphone in this game – verbalize fouls when you signal PB.

**REFEREE:** Briefly announce unique rulings; keep it short & sweet; avoid being too technical

**REFEREE (Examples):** Beginning with the 2012 Season, Player's # will be ANNOUNCED.

1. Dead Ball, False Start, # 79, Offense, 5 YDS, Still 1<sup>st</sup> Down
2. Illegal Motion, # 38, Offense, 5 YDS, Repeat 2<sup>nd</sup> Down
3. Pass Interference, # 41, Defense, 15 YDS, Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> Down
4. Intentional Grounding, # 12, Offense, 5 YDS, Loss of Down, 3<sup>rd</sup> Down
5. Time-out, Offense, Their 1<sup>st</sup>; SL Warning (Give Name of HS), Their 1<sup>st</sup>

## **22. Observer/Crew Meeting Mechanics: See Gold Book (p.19)**

### **23. Onside Kick Off Mechanics (OKOM)**

If in doubt, use OKOM. Discuss after Try—**REFEREE** makes Final Decision if disagreement

**CREW:** If HC indicates his team onside kicks a lot – use OKOM always when they kick off

Do **NOT** give signal regarding possible onside KO - - be ready for onside KO every time.

**REFEREE:** On GL

### **24. Pass Mechanics (PM)**

Definition: Ball between – 10YL & + 10YL. A Pass is thrown. **NOTE:** 4 Man: **Wings** have all receivers on their side & have coverage over middle of field (with no **BJ**).

Initial Position (IP):

**REFEREE:** 10 YDS behind **QB** & 8 YDS wide of **QB** at 45 degree angle; Wide side of field

Read & React (R&R1, 2, & 3) Then Flow:

**REFEREE:**

KEYS:

1. Snap
2. QB
3. Opposite Tackle
4. Passer

- Maintain a 5 YD cushion with Passer.
- Yell "Ball's Away" to inform B Rushers to stay off Passer.
- Backwards Pass – signal and yell "back".
- If Passer rolls, follow & maintain a 5 YD cushion; eye on passer after pass.
- DON'T Be a Head Wagger.
- Passer close to LOS –Memorize spot of release and move to it quickly – check with U – beyond or behind. Be ready to rule on Passer who is hit – Pass or Fumble.

**CREW:** STOP-N-WATCH at moment of Judgment – You Can See Much Better!!

**25. Penalty Enforcement**

**CREW:** Report foul as "A" & "B" since Offense/Defense change during down.

**Calling Official:** Give Prelim Signal for foul you called after ball is dead. We look STRONG & DECISIVE by giving Prelim Signals ASAP!!! : If 2 officials have same foul, confer, & then 1 signals. After Prelim Signal, he describes to Wing what team did.

**Calling Official:** Be Descriptive – more than # 88 held; need info to "sell" call.

**10 Sec. Rule:** Simple 5 YD DB Foul – **Crew GOAL:** Mark ball ready w/in 10 seconds.

**10 Sec. Rule:** Assumes Center has FB & hands it to U for 5 YD mark off.

**REFEREE:** Find open space immediately & give Prelim Signal; do not walk around!!!

**REFEREE:** Signals 1 Prelim ONLY for 5 YD DB Fouls – FST, ENC, DOG, Ill Sub, etc.

**REFEREE:** Verbalize all fouls as you signal PB (when you are "miked" it is easier).

**CREW:** ASK questions **NOW**-- maybe wrong Pen. Enforcement; not in Locker Room.

**REFEREE (Microphone):** Use "dead ball foul", NOT "prior to the snap".

**REFEREE:** Watch for clock status from LJ before signaling

## 26. Pre Snap Mechanics (PSM)

**CREW:** Hustle to IP once the ball is spotted for next down.

**REFEREE (Wide Side):** For GLM, Passes, Punts, RM & Runs the R's IP is the Wide Side of the Field. Snap in the middle of the field? **R determines Wide Side.** R No Longer will ask the HC's whether their QB's or Punters are right/left – only Try/FG Kicker.

**REFEREE/U:** Count A 11 Players & Hold Signal for 2 seconds. Get eye contact.

**REFEREE:** Primary Responsibility for A substitutes in & out of huddle. Mark ball ready after A is behind their LOS unless they are delaying. Mark ball ready ONLY after the down box is set for 1<sup>st</sup> down.

**REFEREE:** If A is at LOS or moving to LOS, Back Peddle Out to IP before marking ball ready.

## 27. Punt Mechanics (PUM)

Definition: K lines up in punt formation.

**NOTE:** 4 Man: U is downfield with R receivers the same as a 5 Man BJ. LM/LJ on LOS.

Initial Position (IP):

**REFEREE:** 5 YDS Deeper & 10 YDS Wide of Punter at a 45 degree angle. Wide side of the field. If punter is in EZ, stand on EL.

Read & React (R&R) Then Flow:

**REFEREE:** KEYS:

1. Snap
2. K Catch
3. Eligible Backs #'s
4. Blocking by Backs
5. Kicker.

Inform R players loudly to “stay off center” & “stay off punter. Be aware of low snap & Kicker's knee. Yell “ball's away” when FB is punted. Determine roughness/running into. Stay with K until no threat of foul.

**REFEREE:** Jog to LOS, stop, & watch K/R. If runback, back peddle & get to GL, if needed.

**CREW:** If punt is tipped, give the tip signal (2X).

## 28. Reverse Mechanics (RM)

Definition: Ball inside – 10YL.

Initial Position (IP):

**REFEREE:** 8 YDS Wide of QB at 45 degrees on EL (Due to errant snap). Wide Side of Field. NOTE: If snap is between the – 10 YL and 15 YL the REFEREE's IP is 10 YDS wide of QB at 45 degrees on GL.

Pre Snap: **R** will signal both Wings that they have GL by pointing at them & then at GL. Wings

**Eye contact between R & Wings is a MUST as to GL responsibility.**

Read & React (R&R 1, 2 & 3) Then Flow:

**REFEREE:** Remain at EL until no threat then move forward. Maintain 5 YD cushion w/QB

**NO LONGER IN RM:** Once the ball touches - 10YL, **R** has responsibility for GL. The **REFEREE** will point to himself & then to GL, signaling to **Wings** that the GL is his. **Wings** will point to the GL & then to the **R** confirming that **R** has GL.

--If ball is on – 10 YL or close to it,

--**REFEREE (Initial Position)** straddles GL & move wider than 8 YDS to avoid players after snap.

## 29. Run Mechanics (RUM)

Definition: Ball between – 10YL & + 10YL. Run occurs from scrimmage.

Initial Position (IP):

**REFEREE:** 10 YDS behind QB & 8 YDS wide of QB; Wide Side of Field.

Read & React (R&R) Then Flow:

**REFEREE:** KEYS:

1. Snap
2. QB
3. Handoff
4. QB
5. Line Play at Point of Attack (POA).

--Follow QB if he rolls – maintain 5 YD cushion. Eye on QB after handoff. Check the line play at POA & action around the runner. When runner is tackled Swivel your head (2X) for action after the play. Relay the ball from **Wing** to the **U** on plays into the side zone & OOB at & behind the LOS.

**30. Signaling Mechanics (SM): All signaling mechanics can be found in the Ohio Mechanics Manual**

**31. Third & Fourth Down Mechanics (TFM): See Gold Book (p.26)**

**32. Timing and Time Out Mechanics (TOM):**

**Crew:** When scoreboard clock does not work or is turned off, announce time remaining at 9, 6, 4, & 2 minutes. Once inside 2 minutes attempt to announce the time remaining after every play. Use a very loud voice to communicate to benches.

**R:** Check that Scoreboard has correct number of TO's before marking ball ready.

**REFEREE secure signal from the BJ whether or not the clock starts on the ready or snap**

Note: This is due to **LJ** talking with a coach, walking off penalty yards, etc. A "Top Contending" Crew will have most officials signaling **REFEREE** on most plays.

**REFEREE/U:** Official facing scoreboard rules on snap versus end of period.

**REFEREE/LJ** signal start clock. If it does not start, ALL officials signal start clock.

**CREW:** Every official MIRRORS every TO (2X) signal every time.

**CREW:** TD, TB, Safety, & Incomplete Pass Signals automatically STOP clock – do **not** follow any of these signals with a TO signal.

**CREW** (Inside 2 Minutes & All TO's): Someone **MUST** visibly see scoreboard clock was stopped on OOB, incomplete passes, TO's, etc – it is that critical.

**REFEREE/LM/B(KO & Start Clock):** Kick touches player/caught between hashes – **R** only signals. Kick touches player/caught in side zone – **REFEREE & near Wing Only** signal.

**CREW** (Team TO): When necessary for several officials to get together & talk, then DO IT. But still keep an eye on "your" team as needed.

**CREW** (Team TO): Calling official – Whistle, signal TO (2X), then point to the team (2X). **REFEREE** signals TO (2X) facing PB, then turns toward that team's GL & points in that direction (2X) with both arms.

**CREW** (Team TO): All 5 officials signal TO's REMAINING for each team to each other & records it. The **REFEREE** will give 2 "tugs on the steamboat whistle" & point to team when they are OUT of TO's.

**REFEREE** signals to PB.

**CREW** (Clock Stopped): Give "stop signal" to **R** unusual delays in marking ball ready.

**REFEREE/U/LJ** (TV Games): **LJ** signals **REFEREE/U** with "stop signal" until TV Coordinator indicates to LJ that TV is ready. **U** stays over Ball until LJ signals that TV is ready to go.

### **33. Try-Kick Mechanics (TRYM)**

Definition: Try will probably be kicked. (Assume Right Footed Kicker below)

**NOTE**: 4 Man: Wing who looks at **REFEREE's** back will go to EL. U/WING (GP Uprights)

Initial Position (IP):

**REFEREE**: Plant Leg Side of Kicker. 3 YDS Deeper than Holder & 10 YDS Wide of Holder, & Shoulders at a 45 degree angle.

Read & React (R&R) Then Flow:

**REFEREE**: Communicate ASAP to crew when you see "Tee" & Kicker coming on field.

KEYS:

1. Eligible Backs & Holder #
2. Snap
3. Snapper
4. Holder
5. Catch
6. NO FAKE
7. Rushers
8. Kicker/Holder.

Ask Captain where he wants FB spotted. Delay marking ball ready until **U** gets to EL. Inform R players loudly to "stay off center" & "stay off holder/kicker". Try is good – Watch players move toward SL FIRST & then signal TD to PB. Try is not good – Move toward players. Yell "Ball's Away" when the ball is kicked to warn rushers to avoid kicker/holder.

### 34. Whistle Mechanics (WM):

**R** – Mark ball ready when clear of any players

Sound whistle when ball becomes dead by Rule:

Most cases no more than 2 whistles, rarely 3. Who has primary coverage?

#### **A Contending Crew has Great whistle discipline**

See leather, ball dead in possession by Rule before sounding whistle

Ball dead by Rule – **1 only** strong short blast of whistle; keep whistle in mouth until threat of a dead ball foul is over

Whistle on every play – **No** Exceptions

Short repeated blasts of whistle to indicate:

1. Signifying foul – away from play; out of sight.
2. Time-outs
3. Coach request for information.
4. Stop play for unusual situation.
5. “Chicken fighting” – Break up – “opponents talking to each other”

Plastic whistle only, NO metal whistles. Whistles NOT in mouth prior to snap.

Carry whistle in your hand only until the ball becomes dead by Rule; **not** in your mouth.

Finger whistle – use NFHS & OHSAA approved hand signals with both arms, if needed.

Sound whistle when Runner is near & you SEE LEATHER ONLY