

2021 OKLAHOMA Football Officials Mechanics

The time has come for the football officials in Oklahoma to take a major step forward. After much conversation with Mr. Gower, Ethan Rolen and David Gore, it is our hope that all crews will utilize the same set of mechanics. Being in the correct position to rule on a play is paramount in officiating. Being in the best position at the right time will allow your rules knowledge and sound judgement to operate efficiently. The following document contains those mechanics for your crew to study and begin to implement as you prepare for the upcoming football season. Officials' mechanics can be flexible based upon the game situation and upon individual strengths and weaknesses and it may become appropriate for the crew to make some adjustments. We do ask you to implement these mechanics with your crew as much as possible to maximize your efforts on the football field. Our general focus is on the safety of our officials and the players with emphasis on minimal movement at the critical moments when decisions must be made. The expectation for 2021 is for our crews to focus on these mechanics. You are expected to be prepared.

PRE-GAME ROUTINE

Make a special effort to have your conversation with the head coach at least a full hour or more prior to the kickoff. We certainly understand that travel considerations may make this difficult on occasion. We do encourage you to be in full uniform as you address your responsibilities on the field. Your conversation with the head coach should be professional, brief and to the point. Topics to be addressed include: 1.) your game card with the names and ID numbers of the crew which can also include the address for the coach to send the HUDL video; 2.) signing of the Gold Card - briefly mention that we respectfully request the head coach's help in all three areas of concern; 3.) confirmation of the halftime length; 4.) coin flip early or at the regular time with the captains (involve the captains at the regular time anytime the head coaches really don't have a strong opinion); 5.) rather than ask a head coach specific questions about either team, we encourage you to finish up with the following question - "Is there anything else that you would like to visit with us about?"

As the crew observes the pre-game activities for both teams, at least 2 officials should be lined up at midfield keeping the teams separated and paying close attention to equipment issues that need to be addressed before the game. Be alert for verbal exchanges or any attempt to intimidate the opponent. It is suggested that you keep each team inside their 45 yard line to create a 10-yard buffer between the teams. The referee should communicate with each QB to get his name and to encourage open communication during the game. The umpire should communicate with each snapper to get his first name and discuss the possible use of the 'stop sign' if a slight delay is necessary. It is recommended that the 2 wing officials observe the offensive team plays from the vantage point that they will have throughout the game to get an idea of the formation(s) being utilized by each team. It is also important for the BJ to observe kickoffs and punts to determine the relative strength of each kicking game. The HL should wait until the teams have left the field to visit with his chain crew and this is also a good time to carefully look for any safety issues on the field. During these pre-game responsibilities, each official should introduce himself to each head coach. Keep your introduction short and refer all game administration questions to the referee.

FREE KICK MECHANIC

This is the free kick mechanic that we now expect each crew to use. A rare adjustment may be necessary because of a game situation or possibly a crew injury issue to put the crew in their best position. This will give you the best coverage for free kicks.

Referee - line up on R's goal line anywhere between the hash marks with responsibility for the entire goal line ruling on touchbacks – use a strong signal to start the game clock if necessary - if a return/running play develops, you will observe the play as it progresses from behind the runner as you do on most all scrimmage plays – focus on the blocks near the location of the runner. It is R's responsibility to confirm that there are at least four K players on each side of the kicker until the ball is kicked.

HL & LJ - your initial alignment will be on your respective side of the field near R's 10 yard line - the only time that you would ever retreat toward the pylon would be for the extremely rare occasion that the untouched kick travels near the pylon and R can use your help with a ruling of touchback or out of bounds - prior to the ready for play whistle, carefully observe the kicker's alignment with relation to the football as it is a most common occurrence that the kicker will telegraph what he is about to attempt with the kick (pooch, on-side, deep) - the wing official to the side of the field where K's team bench is located should feel free to move up the field in anticipation of the more common pooch kick that is usually kicked toward K's bench when there is evidence to support that possibility - either wing official should be prepared to make that adjustment when the evidence dictates - it is certainly appropriate to move your initial alignment from the 10 yard line nearer the appropriate yard line if your pre-game observations indicate that the kicker will clearly not threaten R's goal line at all - the primary responsibility for the wing officials becomes forward progress once a return (running play) is in progress as you observe the blocking throughout the return - this alignment then gives you the same look at the action as you experience on most scrimmage plays – it is not necessary to focus on the runner until he is about to be contacted or run out of bounds.

BJ - you will be responsible for team K and their free kick line - as the K players align for their free kick, you are free to verbally fix any alignment issues prior to any signal to your referee for the 'ready' whistle - always take a position on the sideline where team R's bench is located as most pooch kicks and on-side kicks are directed toward team K's bench and we want the Umpire on that side of the field on R's free kick line - on legal kicks downfield, after the players clear your area move from your sideline position onto the field out near the hash on your side to observe the return/running play progressing back toward your position – your focus should be on the blocks in

and around the location of the ball. Be prepared to assist the wing officials on forward progress on lengthy returns and you must be responsible for coverage on K's goal line.

Umpire - you will be responsible for team R's free kick line - following any verbal communication you have for the team R players, take a position on the sideline where team K's bench is located - it is important to have that position covered as we have discovered that most pooch kicks and on-side kicks are usually directed toward team K's bench - on legal kicks downfield, after all players clear your area move from your sideline position onto the field out near the hash on your side to observe the return/running play progressing back toward your position – your focus should be on the blocks in and around the location of the ball.

EVERY official must be keenly alert for blind side blocks during a kick return as this is a prime spot for this to occur – DON'T be a ball watcher unless and until you clearly have forward progress responsibilities!!!

PRE-SNAP SCRIMMAGE DOWN RESPONSIBILITIES

Referee - your alignment should be 13 - 15 yards behind the LOS and as wide as 1 - 2 steps outside the normal tight end spot and on the side of the QB's passing arm - whether the offense huddles or not, it is important that you determine as quickly as possible that there are 11 players on offense and that there are 5 linemen numbered 50 - 79 - we would certainly recommend a hand signal of some kind to indicate to your entire crew that you have 11 on offense and the umpire will indicate the same - this determination may occur before or after the ball is ready for play depending on the pace of the offense – be prepared for the appropriate clock responsibilities that are now in place as a result of our 40/25 second play clock possibilities.

Umpire - your alignment should be 8 - 10 yards from the LOS and you will adjust your lateral position according to the defensive players and your ability to see your offensive linemen - you will also count the offensive players and quickly determine that there are 5 linemen numbered 50 - 79 - you are expected to place the ball down for the next play and move quickly to your position behind the defensive line rather than standing over the ball waiting for the ready for play – the use of a 'stop sign' and the snapper's first name may be necessary for a slight delay.

HL & LJ - your position must be outside the sideline and inside the restricted area prior to the snap - verbally communicate with any offensive or defensive player(s) who align themselves near your position on the sideline to help with their alignment and hopefully avoid any illegal formation / encroachment issues - we would encourage the following communication only (while extending your leg out to mark the LOS, "this is your line of scrimmage" and as they take their position, "you are on" or "you are off") - we would prefer that you never tell a player to "move up" or "move back" - after the player has taken his position and either the offensive or defensive player is too close to their LOS, ("#??, here is your line, take a look") - at this point, the 2 wing officials

must determine that the offensive formation is legal at the snap - an illegal offensive formation really should have a flag on the ground following the snap from each wing official - it needs to be absolutely crystal clear that we have an illegal formation - leave the marginal alignment alone - remember to look for the referee's signal for 11 players and then just count the 4 players that are normally off of their LOS - an exchange of signals between the 2 wing officials to determine players on or off the LOS is certainly optional for the crew - since the wing officials are concerned about the offensive alignment on each scrimmage play, it does make sense for them to also count the offense if the crew chooses - 2 officials (R & U) counting the offense and 1 official (BJ) counting the defense is probably sufficient. The LJ will start the game on the visitor sideline with the chains. The HL will work the home team sideline opposite the chains. The wing officials will then switch sides for the second half. Your specific responsibilities on each down do not change other than your handling of the chain crew. The LJ and the HL will retain the same responsibilities throughout the game.

BJ - your alignment should be at least 20 yards from the LOS between the hash marks and near the side of the offensive formation strength - it should not be a problem for the BJ to easily count the defensive players for each down since their pre-snap responsibilities are limited - the BJ has timing responsibilities and should make a habit of keeping an eye on the clock between plays when his position is facing the clock - helping the Referee to remember the status of the game clock is also a strong habit to develop anytime it was stopped for any reason – physical signals to restart the game clock or not can be very helpful. Verify that the play clock has been set correctly.

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP AND ON RUNNING PLAYS

Referee - watch for a legal snap or a possible false start in addition to the initial movement of the opposite side tackle and guard plus the movement of the offensive backs while limiting any movement of your own - your initial focus at the snap should be on either lineman who is covered by a defensive opponent until the play begins to develop into a run or pass - for a run, your focus quickly changes to the direction of the run to observe the critical blocks.

Umpire - watch for a legal snap or a possible false start in addition to the initial movement of the snapper plus the guard and tackle on the same side as the Referee while limiting any movement of your own except to vacate a spot for safety reasons - as the play begins to develop, adjust your focus for the critical blocks on the running play at the point of attack.

HL & LJ - your focus at the snap is on a legal offensive formation in addition to any alignment problems that may result in an encroachment foul - immediately following a legal snap, focus on the initial contact between offensive and defensive players in your area as you watch for the play to develop into a run or pass - for a inside run to your side, begin to focus on forward progress and if the run moves to the outside toward your position, your focus must include any critical blocking

in advance of the runner in addition to forward progress - hold your position on the sideline to observe as much as you can while stationary beginning to move for the forward progress when it becomes necessary - for runs to the opposite side of the snapper, do not become a ball watcher - focus your attention away from the runner to watch for any player action on the backside of the running play. Pay close attention to action on the QB after he is no longer a runner. He must be protected.

BJ - your focus at the snap will be on your specific keys dependent on the offensive formation - remain still at the snap without any movement forward to read the play as it develops into a run or a pass - your focus on running plays will be on the critical blocking out in front of the runner especially on runs that progress outside of either tackle position - any movement at this point will be laterally or backward depending on the progress of the runner - keep in mind that you must be prepared to cover B's goal line if there is a lengthy scoring threat or help with forward progress on lengthy break-away runs.

Remember that a clearly visible physical signal when the ball becomes dead is an absolute must!!!

RESPONSIBILITIES DURING A FORWARD PASSING DOWN

Referee - As a pass play develops, hold your position unless the passer moves in your direction and observe the pass blocking by your keys - stay with the blockers until the passer is clearly threatened or the pass is released - you are totally responsible for the safety of the passer until he is out of harm's way - you must be prepared for a possible pass/fumble decision when the QB is contacted and you are completely responsible for that decision - if you sense the possibility of intentional grounding, the use of the bean bag at the spot of the pass is suggested until you determine otherwise - if the passer has to scramble and crossing the LOS becomes an issue, the referee stays with the passer for protection and is then in a position to assist on an illegal forward pass decision by the LJ as a result of the pass being released beyond the neutral zone (this really needs to be a very crystal clear foul - let's leave that alone if it is a marginal possibility) - checking the down box location must be done clearly after the passer has released the ball and is no longer threatened - his protection is much more critical than a possible illegal forward pass!

Umpire - From your position 8 - 10 yards deep, observe the pass blocking by your keys and remain constantly aware of the ineligible linemen and their location in relation to the LOS - you have primary responsibility for ineligibles (the 5 interior linemen) downfield when the pass is released (a covered up tight end or wide receiver becomes the responsibility of either wing official) - as you are able, be prepared to take a look at and possibly rule on short passes over the middle and very near your location - keep in mind that history has shown that a majority of forward passes do not travel beyond 15 yards downfield - the umpire is not responsible for a passer releasing the ball

beyond the LOS and is not responsible for knowing whether the pass was caught behind or beyond the LOS – (you may be able to help with either call if asked.)

HL & LJ – you will both hold your position on the LOS and observe the action against eligible receivers as you determine that a pass play has developed - you both are responsible for an eligible end man on the LOS on your side in addition to a possible second eligible receiver that is nearer your sideline location than he is to the interior linemen near the location of the snap – the LJ will remain on the LOS in order to rule on forward / backward and whether a passer has thrown a forward pass from beyond the LOS. The HL will move approximately 5 yards beyond the LOS as the pass play develops to monitor any activity on crossing receivers inside the 10 yard belt just beyond the LOS - it is also critical to know where a forward pass is caught in relation to the LOS and the LJ is able to make this decision by holding your position on the LOS - most passes can be officiated from your LOS position since they travel less than 15 yards downfield - when a pass is thrown well beyond 15 yards and to your side, the wing official shall move down the field as far as you possibly can while the ball is in flight prepared to slow yourself down at the critical moment to rule on a catch/no catch or on an inbounds/out of bounds decision - although it is not your primary responsibility, the HL can certainly be prepared to assist on any pass play to the opposite side of the field from your location to determine a crystal clear ineligible downfield, a passer clearly beyond the LOS when the ball is released or the spot where the ball was caught in relation to the LOS - you both have primary responsibility for a covered up receiver on your side of the snap who does go downfield prior to the release of the pass - although we encourage you to hold your position as long as possible on forward pass plays, you are certainly free to move downfield quickly when the receivers and the flow of the play are clearly to your side - when you clearly determine the need to move downfield on your side, do not hesitate - GO!

BJ - you are responsible for initial action by and against eligible receivers located inside any wide out(s) to the strong side of the offensive formation and located nearer the interior linemen - this may include a tight end on the LOS that has 2 wide outs to his outside that do not have him covered up - as the pass play develops, begin to give ground remaining inside the hash marks as you observe your keys - it is important to keep any and all receivers in front of your location throughout the down and it is critical to remember that a potential receiver is a great example of a defenseless player while in the act of catching a pass and must be protected - you clearly have no responsibility for ineligibles downfield, for determining if the pass was caught behind the LOS or a passer who releases the ball beyond the neutral zone - stay deep, observe the play as it develops and certainly be prepared to assist with any catch/no catch decision on long passes downfield and also with forward progress on lengthy plays downfield!

EVERY official must be keenly alert for blind side blocks during an intercepted pass return as this is a prime spot for them to occur – DON'T be a ball watcher unless and until you clearly have forward progress responsibilities!!!

GOAL LINE MECHANICS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

GOING IN – Wing officials must be prepared for goal line mechanics if and when the LOS is inside team B's 10 yard line. The most important line on the field is the goal line and it must be covered when there is a ruling to be made.

Referee – make certain that the crew is aware of goal line mechanics. You are now responsible on forward/backward passes and you will determine whether the QB was beyond the LOS when a forward pass was released. Remember that your wing officials are no longer on the LOS following the snap.

Umpire – you now have more LOS responsibilities. Be prepared to assist with a QB who was beyond the LOS when a forward pass was released and was the pass caught behind or beyond the LOS. The wing officials are no longer available to make these decisions following the snap.

HL & LJ – the goal line is your responsibility. Make sure that all sideline personnel are clear of the area you need to work. At the snap, do not rush – go to the goal line at a 45 degree angle leaving plenty of room for you to make a judgement on a play at the pylon. If the runner is stopped short of the goal line, work your way back to the spot of forward progress and spot the ball there. On close plays at the goal line in the middle of the field, both wing officials should 'crash' to the point of resistance and signal. If you cannot see whether the ball crossed the goal line or not, 'crash' to the pile and find the ball. If the ball is across the goal line, it is a touchdown and if the ball is short of the goal line, spot the ball at that point. It is very important that on close plays at the goal line in the middle of the field that you do not stand on the sideline after the ball becomes dead. You must hustle to the point of resistance and make a ruling.

BJ – the back line is your responsibility. On a pass play, you must be aware if a player steps out of the back of the end zone and returns to participate. You must also be prepared to rule on any pass that threatens the back line. On a running play your focus must be on blocks at the point of attack especially on sweep plays.

GOING OUT – Wing officials must be prepared for goal line mechanics if and when the LOS is inside team A's 5 yard line. The most important line on the field is the goal line and we must have it covered when there is a ruling to be made.

Referee – make certain that the crew is aware of goal line mechanics. Your position is on the back line. You are now responsible for forward/backward passes and you will determine whether the QB was beyond the LOS when a forward pass was released. Remember that your wing officials are no longer on the LOS following the snap.

Umpire – you now have more LOS responsibilities. Be prepared to assist with a QB who was beyond the LOS when a forward pass was released and was the pass caught behind or beyond the LOS. The wing officials are no longer available to make these decisions following the snap.

HL & LJ – the goal line is your responsibility. Make sure that all sideline personnel are clear of the area you need to work. At the snap do not rush – go back to the goal line. Remember the runner must get the entire ball completely out of his end zone. If any portion of the ball does not clear the goal line coming out, the result of the play is a safety. On close plays at the goal line in the middle of the field, both wing officials should ‘crash’ to the point of resistance and sell their spot. If you cannot see whether the ball crossed the goal line or not, ‘crash’ to the pile and find the ball. If the ball is on or behind the goal line, sell your forward progress spot and let the referee know who will then signal the safety. If the ball is completely out of the end zone, spot the ball at that point. It is very important that on close plays at the goal line in the middle of the field that you do not stand on the sideline after the ball becomes dead. You must hustle to the point of resistance and make a ruling.

BJ – this situation is treated as any normal scrimmage down. Be aware that it may take either wing official longer to get to a dead ball spot. As always on deep passes or lengthy runs, be prepared to help with forward progress.

RESPONSIBILITIES DURING A 4TH DOWN PUNT SITUATION

Referee - your position should be behind the possible punter 3 - 4 yards and as wide as the normal TE position to the side of his kicking leg so that everything that you need to observe is in front of your position and you can hold your position during the kick or during a rugby style kick or during a fake - the kicker must be protected first and foremost - if he is not threatened, try to get a quick look at the kick to check on the possibility of a poor kick headed out of bounds - on normal kicks headed downfield, do not follow the ball but observe the K players as they begin to move downfield to observe all blocking while holding your spot as the play develops.

Umpire - hold your normal position at the snap to observe the protection blocking and then allow all players to move past your position headed downfield and simply turn to face the return of the kick and officiate from a normal vantage point as the return progresses back up the field.

BJ - determine if either side of the field is clearly a wider side depending on the placement of the ball prior to the snap - take a position 3 - 4 yards behind the deepest return man and well to his side toward this wide side of the field - make certain that the end of the kick is marked with a bean bag only if the kick is returned up the field (there is no real need for a bean bag on a fair catch, a kick out of bounds, a kick that rolls dead with no player in possession or if K downs the ball) - it is critical to remember that the return man is a great example of a defenseless player while he is in the act of receiving the ball and must be protected - if a return develops, observe the initial blocks

and be ready for a blind side block as they often happen when R players peel back to set up a blocking wall!

HL & LJ - prior to the snap from your normal position on the LOS, observe which side the BJ has taken and the wing official on the opposite side of the field from the BJ will hold until the potential kicker has cleanly possessed the snap and begins his kicking motion - then he shall begin to move down the field no more than half of the distance from the LOS to the spot where the deepest R player is positioned prepared to stop and observe the blocking that develops in the area in front of this R player - the wing official on the same side of the field as the BJ will hold your position on the LOS until the kick has clearly crossed the neutral zone and then move downfield as well no further than the same distance as your opposite wing also observing the developing blocks.

EVERY official must be keenly alert for blind side blocks during punt returns as this is a prime spot for them to occur - DO NOT be a ball watcher unless and until you clearly have forward progress responsibilities!!!

RESPONSIBILITIES DURING A TRY FOR POINT(S)

Referee - First and foremost, do not get in a big hurry to make the try down 'ready for play' - if the offensive team lines up in the normal kick try formation, make certain that all of your officials are in their correct spots before you blow the ready whistle - make certain that your own spot is facing the front of the holder and your alignment is 3 - 4 yards deeper than the holder and at least as wide as the numbers on your side of the formation - if the offensive team lines up in a different formation (likely a normal play from scrimmage set or possibly a swinging gate), it is more important to utilize your normal pace between the scoring play and the ready on the try as well as your normal alignment - remember that you must cover the goal line pylon on your side of the standard scrimmage kick formation on a fake or a busted play (help with forward progress at the goal line from the umpire is possible).

Umpire - take your normal spot for the try and be prepared to observe the linemen and their numbers to assist with any ineligible receiver issues on a trick play (keep in mind that you may not have any 50 - 79 numbers on the offense - on a normal kick, make certain to protect the snapper in addition to observing the interior blocking - if the play that develops is a fake and the run / pass goes wide to either side, take a position on the goal line to possibly assist with a runner breaking the plane of the goal line.

HL & LJ - your initial alignment should be to your normal LOS spots on the sideline until it is clear that the offensive team is lining up in the normal scrimmage kick formation for a kick try - a shift from a swinging gate to the scrimmage kick formation still gives you time to adjust your alignment for a kick try - the wing official that would be facing the front of the holder is the

official who will move to the upright position along with the BJ when the scrimmage kick formation is used - both wing officials along with the BJ must pay very close attention to eligible receivers prior to the snap and a possible passing down from the scrimmage kick formation – the wing official under the upright and the BJ must know the eligible receivers on their respective side of the formation - on a fake or busted play, the wing official who have moved to the upright position with the BJ must help with the back line, but do not try to get back to your LOS position.

BJ - your alignment will naturally be along the end line for a try taking one upright for a potential kick try - make absolutely certain to carefully observe eligible receivers prior to the snap to assist with any eligibility questions that could come up in a passing situation – the BJ and the wing official under the upright must know the eligible receivers on their respective side of the formation.

BALL MECHANICS

Getting the ball spotted and ready for play is a total crew responsibility. All officials must make every effort to quickly contribute and be in position to officiate with 30 seconds on the play clock as your goal. There are situations when this may not be possible. When these occur, the crew must be ready to adjust accordingly. Our observers will be watching for these mechanics.

Referee – Game flow starts with you. You must make sure that your crew is in position to officiate and you must help with these ball mechanics when necessary. With the umpire going at least to the numbers to retrieve the ball when necessary, there will be times when the Referee needs to spot the ball. After you spot the ball, get back to your position as quickly as possible and be ready for the next snap. When a team wants to snap the ball quickly, we do not want to hold them up, however all officials must be in position and out of harm's way. It is appropriate to use the 'stop' sign to communicate with your Umpire when all officials are not in position. If there is a delay in getting the ball spotted and for whatever reason we spot the ball with less than 25 seconds on the play clock, the Referee will 'pump' the play clock back to 25 seconds. This can be done by stopping the game clock and the play clock, setting the play clock to 25 and then restarting the clock(s). It is also appropriate as clock operators gain more experience to 'pump' the play clock for a reset and continue to let it run. It is important as a Referee to always be aware of your surroundings and to manage the game flow. The safety of your crew is paramount.

Umpire – There is no invisible wall at the hash marks to limit your coverage while retrieving the ball. You must be prepared to go at least to the numbers when it is necessary to help with the ball. You may then spot the ball or relay it to your Referee as the situation dictates. After the ball is placed on the ground, be sure to be aware of your Referee possibly using the 'stop' sign for a brief delay. Be prepared to communicate with your snapper also using the 'stop sign' and his first name to "wait until I drop my hand to snap the ball". Your communication with the snapper is critical

when these situations occur. Let him know when it is OK to proceed. If there is no delay from the Referee, spot the ball and quickly move to your position.

HL & LJ – Your role in ball mechanics is very important. If the chains are your responsibility, it is important to remember that we do not wait on the chain crew after a first down is gained. You also do not turn around to look at the chains to see if the runner has passed the line to gain. You must be aware of the down, distance and the line to gain before every snap. When the runner does cross the line to gain, you are able to continue to officiate the play and the players. The play clock restarts at the end of the down and your clearly visible physical signal is very important as the crew must get the ball ready for play and in position to officiate quickly. If your down box is not in position at the snap, the use of your bean bag to mark the spot of the new series is appropriate. Your communication with any ball boys is very important before and during the game. When a different ball is needed at the end of a down, do so as quickly as you are able. Remember that your dead ball responsibilities are always important and may have to be addressed even before you worry about another football on occasion.

Remember that a clearly visible physical signal when the ball becomes dead is an absolute must!!!

BJ – When it is necessary, you must be prepared to help the LOS officials with player control and these ball mechanics. There is no need to come up on every play, but there are times when your assistance will be necessary. You will also need to ‘suggest’ to your Referee if and when you feel there is reason to reset the play clock as a result of some type of delay. Your use of the ‘pumping your hand’ signal is appropriate as a suggestion for him to consider a reset. It is now the Referee’s decision to reset or not. As often as possible, stay aware of the status of the play clock to make certain that it is set correctly according to the game situation. The Referee will make any final decision at that point in terms of the status of either clock.

DEAD BALL SIGNALS

There must be a clearly visible physical signal by the covering official(s) at the end of every down for the benefit of the press box personnel, the coaches, the other officials and the players. All of these people may have critical decisions to make quickly.

These signals include:

Signal #3 (time out to stop the game clock)

Signal #7 (the ball is dead – one arm straight up)

Signal #10 (a forward pass is incomplete)

It is appropriate to use a ‘winding’ signal if and when a runner is extremely close to the sideline, but stays inbounds short of the line to gain.

There is no need for all officials to mirror the appropriate signal. The covering official needs to be responsible for the physical signal as we expect the other officials to be covering their areas of responsibility and must not be guilty of becoming a ‘ball watcher’. It is also important to remember that only one physical signal is necessary on each down.