

21. USE OF BEAN BAGS

21.1 – General principles

1. All officials shall carry at least one bean bag to use to mark spots other than spots of fouls. [BACK JUDGE] [ON A 4-MAN CREW] [LINE JUDGE] You are particularly likely to require more than one.
2. Never throw a bean bag overarm. If possible, run to the approximate yard line level with the spot and *drop* it. If this is not possible, toss it underarm.
3. Note the yard line whenever possible.
4. If the bean bag falls on the wrong spot, move it to the correct spot. Move the bean bag with authority – don't try to nudge it with your foot in the hope that no one will notice.

21.2 – Marking spots

1. The Coverer (and no other) shall use a bean bag to mark:
 - (a) the end of a scrimmage kick in bounds. This is the postscrimmage kick enforcement spot.
 - (b) the spot where possession was lost on a fumble. This is the end of the related run and may be the succeeding spot if the ball goes out of bounds, or the basic spot for fouls occurring during the run or while the ball is loose.
 - (c) the spot where a backward pass or handoff occurs beyond the neutral zone or when there is no neutral zone. This is the end of the related run and the basic spot for fouls occurring during the run.
 - (d) the spot where an eligible pass receiver goes out of bounds voluntarily. Dropping your hat is an alternative to using a bean bag in this case. This is an indication that a foul will occur should he touch a forward pass in bounds before it has touched an opponent.
 - (e) the spot where a Team A player goes out of bounds during a free or scrimmage kick voluntarily. Dropping your hat is an alternative to using a bean bag in this case. This is an indication that a foul will occur if he returns in bounds. (If the player comes back in bounds immediately after going out of bounds a bean bag is unnecessary and the official need only drop his flag to mark the spot of the foul.)
 - (f) all spots where a Team A player illegally touches a free or scrimmage kick. These are the spots where Team B may elect to take the ball as the result of the violation. Multiple spots may need more than one bean bag, or use your bean bag to mark the most advantageous of these spots.
 - (g) the spot where a player catches or recovers a kick, pass or fumble between his 5-yard line and goal line when the momentum exception rule applies. This is the dead-ball spot if the player's momentum carried him into the end zone and the ball subsequently becomes dead in the end zone in his team's possession.
 - (h) the spot of forward progress when the ball carrier is driven back (but not routinely – only if there is a problem forming in the pile and you need to leave the forward progress spot to deal with it). This is the dead-ball spot.
 - (i) the spot of forward progress if the quarterback is sacked. This is the dead-ball spot.
 - (j) the dead-ball spot if the official has to leave the spot to recover the ball or to observe action. This should be a rare occurrence - do not do it routinely. This may include the spot of recovery of a kick by Team A if the recovering player attempts to advance the ball.

2. Unless the spot is also one of the spots listed above, bean bags should *not* be used to mark:
- (a) the spot where an interception is made
 - (b) the spot where a free kick ends – give the start the clock signal (S2) if appropriate
 - (c) the spot where a fumble is recovered
 - (d) the spot where a kick or pass hits the ground
 - (e) the spot where a kick is muffed by a Team B player – use the legal touching signal (S11) instead
 - (f) the spot of a backward pass or muff in the backfield
- None of these can be possible enforcement spots.