

## 9. REFEREE

### 9.1 – Free kicks

#### 9.1.a – Priorities

Prior to the kick:

1. Determining whether, based on the state of the game, an onside kick is likely. (An onside kick is likely if the team kicking off is behind in the score late in the game.) If it is, discreetly instructing the crew to switch to onside-kick positions by pointing first to the official who needs to shift their position and then to the spot they should move to.
2. Counting Team B players and signalling the count (one of signals Sup3, Sup4 or Sup24) to colleagues. Noting count signals from colleagues. Recounting if your count differs from that of colleagues.
3. Checking side and end zone areas to ensure that all non-players are out of the restricted areas, that non-participants are off the field of play, and that all team personnel are within the team area.
4. Ensuring that the chain crew (and the alternate down box and line-to-gain marker operators, where provided) have moved themselves and their equipment well out of the way and that the equipment has been placed on the ground outside the team areas and behind the limit lines. Checking that the ball persons are in position.
5. Monitoring the 25-second clock and penalising the kicking team if it runs out.

During the kick play:

6. Observing whether a free kick goes out of bounds nearest you without being touched by the receiving team. Ruling whether a Team B player near the sideline touches the ball while out of bounds.
7. Watching players for a fair catch signal, and being prepared to rule on any interference with the opportunity to catch the kick.
8. Giving the start the clock signal (S2) only if the ball is first legally touched in the field of play in your area of responsibility.
9. Ruling whether the ball becomes dead in the end zone or not.
10. [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW] Marking the forward progress or out of bounds spot if the ball becomes dead on your side of the field. This responsibility extends up to Team A's 2-yard line.
11. Marking the spot with a bean bag of any backward pass, handing<sup>§</sup> or fumble in your area.
12. Observing fouls by all players generally in your area, but particularly:
  - (a) illegal use of the hands and holding fouls at the point of attack
  - (b) blocks below the waist
  - (c) illegal wedge formations
  - (d) safety-related fouls such as face masking, tripping or chop blocks
  - (e) late hits by any player after the ball is dead
  - (f) any player of the kicking team who enters the field of play after the kick or who voluntarily goes out of bounds during the kick

#### 9.1.b – Initial positioning

Normal kicks:

1. [ON A 6/7-MAN CREW] Be in position A (see 26.1) on Team B's goal line near the centre of the field, staying clear of any players in the vicinity. If you expect the kick to go deep into the end zone, adopt a deeper initial position.

2. [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW] Be in position C (see 26.1) on Team B's goal line outside the sideline opposite the press box side of the field.

Onside-kicks:

3. [ON A 6-MAN CREW] Remain in the normal position.
4. [ON A 7-MAN CREW] Move to position C (see 26.1) on Team B's goal line outside the sideline opposite the press box side of the field.
5. [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW] Move to position A (see 26.1) near the centre of the field on Team B's goal line or deeper than the deepest returner.

Free kicks after a penalty or safety:

6. When a free kick is taken following a penalty or a safety, the same relative positions should be taken, moving up or down the field as appropriate.

### 9.1.c – Response to what happens (movement and signals)

Prior to the kick:

1. When all players are in position and ready for play, check that all officials have signalled their readiness. Give the ready for play signal (S1) and sound your whistle for the start of play.

During any kick play:

2. If you see any player of the kicking team voluntarily go out of bounds during the kick, drop your bean bag or hat to mark his exit, and your flag if he returns.
3. If the clock should start when the ball is first legally touched in the field of play, give the start clock signal (S2) if you are the nearest official or the one with the best view.

During a kick play that goes deep:

4. After the ball is kicked, observe the players in your area of responsibility (see 26.1).<sup>λ</sup> After checking its initial trajectory, do not watch the flight of the ball.
5. [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW] If the kick threatens to go into the end zone, stay on the goal line (out of the way of all players) to rule on a touchback. If the ball threatens the pylon, be there to be able to rule on whether the ball goes out of bounds in the field of play or the end zone.
6. If the ball and at least one player go deep into the end zone, move to cover the end line.
7. If a touchback occurs, move infield ahead of any receiver who has the ball, give the touchback signal (S7) and sound your whistle to prevent further action.
8. On a deep kickoff, follow the ball carrier and keep him bracketed between you and the upfield officials.
9. [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW] If the ball goes out of bounds in your area go to and hold the spot, dropping your flag if appropriate. Place a ball or flag at the spot and ensure that another official relays a ball to the Spotter.

During a kick play where the kick is short:

10. Stay deep so that you get a long view of the action. You may be the only official who observes:
  - (a) that Team A did not have at least 4 players on each side of the kicker at the kick
  - (b) a fair catch signal
  - (c) kick catch interference
  - (d) unnecessary roughness or a late hit

### 9.1.d – Advanced techniques

1. If there is a touchback, continue to watch the receiver in case he is fouled.
2. The deep officials may adjust their position according to such factors as the wind and the known strength of the kicker's foot. However, it is important to be on the goal line (and particularly, at the pylon) before the ball gets there in crucial situations.

## 9.2 – Basic scrimmage plays

### 9.2.a – Priorities

1. Knowing the down and distance, and signalling the down to your colleagues. Noting the down signals given by colleagues. Checking that the down box displays the correct number. Not allowing play to start if there is a dispute about the down number.
2. Counting Team A players and signalling the count (one of signals Sup3, Sup4 or Sup24) to your colleagues. Noting count signals from colleagues. Recounting if your count differs from that of colleagues.
3. Observing false starts in general and by backs and the quarterback in particular.
4. Warning Team A verbally ("10 seconds" or "hurry")<sup>λ</sup> when there are 10 seconds left on the play clock,<sup>®</sup> and [ON A 4-MAN CREW]<sup>§</sup> penalising them if the play clock<sup>®</sup> runs out.
5. Observing illegal shifts (Team A never set, or no 1-second pause after simultaneous movement by more than one Team A player).
6. Observing the legality of the snap.
7. If there is a pre-snap foul, stopping all action by tooting on your whistle and giving the timeout signal (S3).
8. Determining whether the play is a run or a pass by reading the initial action of the interior linemen. If they move backwards it is likely that a passing play will develop. If they charge forwards or pull, it is likely that a running play will develop.
9. Being aware of where the line to gain is in relation to the line of scrimmage so that you don't have to look at the chain to know if the dead-ball spot is close to the line to gain.
10. Observing substitution infractions by Team A, for example:
  - (a) replaced players not leaving the huddle within 3 seconds of an incoming substitute entering it
  - (b) substitutes coming on to the field, communicating, and then leaving the field
11. Noting the jersey numbers of eligible receivers in the backfield.
12. Observing the legality of the formation, in particular the requirement for 5 players numbered 50-79.

### 9.2.b – Initial positioning

1. Be where you can see the ball at the snap.
2. Normal scrimmage down position is 5-7 yards behind the deepest offensive back (or 13-15 yards behind the line of scrimmage), normally at least as wide as the tight end.
3. Be on the throwing arm side of the quarterback so that you are more likely to be able to see his arm when he starts his passing motion.

### 9.2.c – Response to what happens (movement and signals)

1. If Team A players adjust their position, ensure you can still see the ball at the snap.
2. Keep out of the way of players shifting or in motion.

### 9.2.d – Advanced techniques

Reasons for varying (or not) your initial position:

1. Generally, the higher the standard of play and the faster the players, the deeper and wider you need to stand. (Compare with the position adopted by NFL referees.)
2. Be deeper and wider if your mobility is hindered either by your condition or ground conditions (e.g. mud or uneven surface).
3. There is no need to coordinate your position to the position of the Umpire.

Signalling the player count:

4. The latest time to make the player count signal is when the offensive team breaks its huddle (but it can and should be done earlier if possible).

## 9.3 – Running plays

### 9.3.a – Priorities

1. Observing the ball carrier and action around him until the ball crosses the neutral zone.
2. Observing any fumble where you are the nearest official or have the best view, and marking the spot with a bean bag.
3. Ruling (with help on a quick pass from the wing officials) whether a pass is backward or forward, and signalling a backward pass (Sup5) immediately if the pass is clearly backward. Noting any backward pass signal from the wing officials.
4. [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW] Marking the dead-ball spot (with the possible assistance of the wing officials) if the quarterback is tackled or goes out of bounds behind the neutral zone.
5. Observing fouls by all players generally in your area, but particularly:
  - (a) illegal use of the hands and holding fouls around and slightly in front of the point of attack, especially those made by a back, tight end or pulling lineman
  - (b) safety-related fouls such as face masking, tripping or chop blocks
  - (c) late hits by any player after the ball is dead
  - (d) unnecessary roughness against the quarterback after he has handed off the ball

### 9.3.b – Response to what happens (movement and signals)

1. If the action comes towards you, backpedal to keep clear, but keep the players in view at all times.
2. Don't turn your back on the play.
3. If the play goes up the middle, follow safely behind while observing players making lead blocks and those behind the play who may be in danger.
4. If the play goes to one side or the other, move laterally to be able to observe critical blocks for legality.
5. Normally, at the end of the play, close in on the action to deter dead-ball fouls. This is particularly the case on short runs into a side zone or out of bounds where you may be the second nearest official. However, on long runs, hang back so as to observe players who have been left behind by the play for unnecessary roughness.

### 9.3.c – Advanced techniques

1. Don't blow your whistle when the ball carrier's back is toward you or you are obscured by other players (or officials) – he may have fumbled the ball without you seeing it. See leather! Be certain that the ball is dead.
2. If a pile-up of players forms, give the timeout signal (S3), converge on the pile and determine who has possession (Mechanic 5.11).
3. If you're not the nearest official to the dead-ball spot, observe for late hits and other illegal acts. It is particularly your responsibility to observe action close to the wing officials as they are concentrating on the forward progress spot.

Particular types of running play:

4. Quick handoffs that result in short yardage gains will be the responsibility of the Umpire or wing officials with the Referee concentrating on action behind the ball.
5. On plays into the line, if the ball carrier is driven back after his forward progress is stopped, retrieve the ball from the ball carrier and relay it to the Spotter.

6. On pitchout option plays, when the quarterback turns up field with the ball, observe threats of fouls against the trailing back.
7. If the quarterback keeps the ball, there is no need for you to cover him beyond the neutral zone.

## **9.4 – Passing plays**

### **9.4.a – Priorities**

1. Ruling whether the passer has passed or fumbled the ball. If it is a fumble, marking the spot with a bean bag.
2. Ruling (with help on a quick pass from the wing officials) whether a pass is backward or forward, and signalling a backward pass (Sup5) immediately if the pass is clearly backward. Noting any backward pass signal from the wing officials.
3. Observing fouls by all players generally in your area, but particularly:
  - (a) intentional grounding or any other illegal pass by the passer
  - (b) roughing the passer
  - (c) illegal use of the hands and holding fouls by linemen and backs protecting the quarterback
  - (d) safety-related fouls such as face-masking, tripping or chop blocks
  - (e) late hits by any player after the ball is dead

### **9.4.b – Response to what happens (movement and signals)**

1. When a potential passer drops back, backpedal to remain wider and deeper than him. If he rolls out to either side, go the same way, ensuring that you stay on his throwing arm side. Remain behind the line of scrimmage to observe the legality of the throw, the pass protection blocking and any action against the passer, particularly after he has thrown the ball and until there is no threat of a foul.
2. Verbally alert defenders when the passer has released the ball (e.g. "ball's gone").
3. Maintain a position to observe offensive and defensive action behind the line after the ball has gone downfield.
4. On a sack or tackle behind the line of scrimmage, get to a position level with the ball carrier. Sound your whistle to stop play, and [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW] use your bean bag to mark forward progress if you have to go with the ball carrier as he is driven back. Keep watching the ball carrier until any threat of a continuing action foul against him has passed.

### **9.4.c – Advanced techniques**

1. If you believe the passer intentionally grounded the pass, consult with other officials about the position of eligible receivers and/or whether the pass crossed the neutral zone in flight. It is permissible to drop your flag at the spot of the pass while you do this. An official may inform you that an eligible receiver was in the area of the pass, or that the pass (from outside the tackle box) crossed the neutral zone. It is appropriate to wave a flag off if this happens, but ensure that players and head coaches (and spectators, if possible) are informed of the reason.
2. If you observe the pass being tipped, give the tipped pass signal (S11). The signal should normally be used on passes tipped in the offensive backfield, but inconspicuous (to the spectators) touching downfield could be signified in this way too. It is not necessary to give it when the pass is obviously touched (e.g. when a defensive lineman bats it into the ground).
3. [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW OR IN GOAL LINE COVERAGE] If there is a possibility that the pass was thrown from beyond the neutral zone, move to the spot of the pass and drop a bean bag there. Keep officiating until the play is over, then come back and check the

position of your bean bag in relation to the neutral zone. Consult with colleagues who may also have had a view of the location of the pass. If the pass was illegal, throw a flag at the position of the bean bag. If you are confident the pass was illegal, it is permissible to drop the flag rather than the bean bag. [ON A 6/7-MAN CREW] This responsibility is primarily the Line Judge's (except if he has moved to cover the goal line).

4. Do not watch the ball after the pass is thrown. Concentrate on the passer until there is no threat of further action against him.

## 9.5 – Goal line plays

### 9.5.a – Priorities

Same priorities as on other scrimmage plays.

### 9.5.b – Initial positioning

1. [IF THE BALL IS SNAPPED FROM OUTSIDE TEAM A's 10-YARD LINE] If your normal position would be NEAR Team A's goal line, take up position ON the goal line, moving wider than normal if necessary. You also have responsibility to cover Team A's end line.
2. [IF THE BALL IS SNAPPED FROM BETWEEN TEAM A's 5 AND 10-YARD LINES] Take up a position wider than normal and be prepared to move to the goal line to rule on a possible safety. You also have responsibility to cover Team A's end line.
3. [IF THE BALL IS SNAPPED FROM INSIDE TEAM A's 5-YARD LINE] Take up a position on the end line (the wing officials have responsibility for the goal line.)
4. [OTHERWISE] Adopt the same position and coverage as for any other scrimmage play.

### 9.5.c – Response to what happens (movement and signals)

1. Respond to the play as you would normally do for a run or pass.
2. When an official gives the touchdown (S5) or safety (S6) signal, check that no penalties have occurred, step clear of the players, and signal the score to the press box.

### 9.5.d – Advanced techniques

When there is a score:

1. Should any doubt exist about the score, consult all the officials concerned before signalling your decision.
2. Hold the touchdown (S5) or safety (S6) signal for approximately 5 seconds.
3. Only be the first official to signal a touchdown or safety if you are the primary Coverer on the goal line. Give a preliminary signal while continuing to monitor players in your area of responsibility, then drop the signal while you check for flags. Once you have ascertained that the score is valid, give a second, final signal to the press box and hold it for approximately 5 seconds.

## 9.6 – Returns

### 9.6.a – Priorities

1. Observing the ball carrier and action around him while you are the nearest official.
2. Observing any fumble where you are the nearest official or have the best view, and marking the spot with a bean bag.
3. Observing any illegal forward pass, especially if you have a view that is level or nearly level with the ball carrier.

4. Observing blocks by players in your area of responsibility ahead of and around the ball carrier, particularly:
  - (a) illegal block in the back and holding fouls at the point of attack
  - (b) illegal block below the waist fouls anywhere
  - (c) safety-related fouls such as face masking, tripping or chop blocks
  - (d) illegal forward handing
  - (e) contacting an opponent with the crown of the helmet or targeting a defenseless opponent above the shoulders
  - (f) late hits by any player after the ball is dead
5. Observing any hand-off or backward pass where you are the nearest official or have the best view, and marking the spot with a bean bag.

### 9.6.b – Response to what happens (movement and signals)

1. Keep out of the players' way.
2. Backpedal towards Team A's goal line ahead of the play. If it is no longer possible to backpedal, turn and watch the play over your shoulder.
3. If the play advances far enough to threaten Team A's goal line, be there before the ball carrier.
4. If you are watching a block develop, stay with it before switching to the ball carrier or another block. Even if you expect another official to take responsibility for it, stay with the block until you are confident it is legal.
5. If the ball becomes dead in your area of responsibility, blow your whistle, give the time-out signal (S3), and then signal first down (S8) to show which team is in possession.
6. If you are not the nearest official to the dead-ball spot, nevertheless move towards it and observe the continuing action after the ball becomes dead. On plays when the ball carrier goes near the sideline or out of bounds, move laterally to cover the area around him for extra-curricular activity. If you are the second official to the area, go out of bounds after the ball carrier and watch for and prevent fouls on him (Mechanic 5.9).

### 9.6.c – Advanced techniques

1. Do not get too close to the play – move away from it if necessary to maintain a safe position, especially on the goal line.

## 9.7 – Punts

### 9.7.a – Priorities

Before and during the kick, applying the same priorities as on basic scrimmage plays (above), plus:

1. If the punter is in his end zone, observing whether he steps out of bounds prior to the snap or between snap and kick.
2. Observing fouls by all players generally in your area, but particularly:
  - (a) any action against the kicker that might be roughing or running into
  - (b) blocking below the waist, especially by backs
  - (c) before the kick, illegal use of the hands and holding fouls by linemen and backs protecting the kicker, especially the end and/or wing back on the side opposite you
  - (d) safety-related fouls such as face masking, tripping or chop blocks
  - (e) unnecessary roughness fouls away from the ball
  - (f) late hits by any player after the ball is dead
  - (g) illegal formation
  - (h) Team A players going out of bounds during the down

3. Responding to bad snaps or blocked kicks by first observing the ball or the kicker (whichever is deeper) and action around them, and then adopting run, pass or return priorities as appropriate.
4. Directing (using signals Sup17, Sup18 and Sup19) a downfield official to the out of bounds spot if the kicked ball goes out of bounds in flight.

During a punt return, applying the same priorities as on returns (above).

### 9.7.b – Initial positioning

1. Take a position deeper than the kicker and wider than the tight end position.
2. [ON A 4-MAN CREW] Favour the Line Judge's side of the field, and be alert for illegal movement of interior linemen on the Line Judge's side. [OTHERWISE] Favour the side of the field of the kicker's kicking foot.
3. Be in a position to see the ball from snap to kick, and to be able to see the blockers and the kicker at the same time.

### 9.7.c – Response to what happens (movement and signals)

1. Verbally alert defenders when the kicker has kicked the ball (e.g. "ball's gone").
2. If the trajectory of the kick is towards a sideline, move quickly behind the kicker into line with the flight and be prepared to direct the official covering the sideline to the out of bounds spot using signals (Sup17, Sup18 & Sup19).
3. After the kick:
  - (a) [ON A 4-MAN CREW] Move out to cover play in the side area vacated by the Line Judge.
  - (b) [OTHERWISE] Move to the middle of the field (between the hashes) so as to best observe a return to either side of the field. Stay back after the players move downfield.
  - (c) In either case, be the deepest official covering the return run.
4. During the punt return, respond as for any other return play.
5. If the play turns into a run or pass, respond as you would do normally for that type of play.

### 9.7.d – Advanced techniques

1. Particularly check for the correct number of players on Team A. Teams get mixed up more often on punt plays than any other.
2. Warn the kicker if he is near, on or outside the endline prior to the snap.
3. Ideally, when the ball is kicked, you are at a 45-degree angle to the kicker and able to observe him, the ball and players trying to block the kick.
4. Watch the snap into the punter's hands, then look at the onrushing Team B players and focus on the ones who are most threatening to contact the punter.
5. If there is a bad snap or the kick is blocked, move away from the ball and players trying to recover it. Move to a position to cover any or all of the Team A goal line, the Team A end line, or [ON A 4-MAN CREW] the Line Judge's side line.
6. Be alert for blocked kicks and their recovery and advance. On fake kicks switch to normal run or pass coverage.
  - (a) While a kick is loose in the backfield, continue to watch the ball and players trying to recover it – other officials will watch the kicker. §
  - (b) If the ball is blocked and the kicker is roughed/run into, the Umpire may be able to help you determine whether it was the player who blocked the kick who contacted the kicker.
  - (c) If the ball is snapped over the punter's head, be particularly observant for players illegally kicking a loose ball, and for holding by players of either team trying to prevent opponents recovering the ball.



## 9.8 – Field goal & try attempts

### 9.8.a – Priorities

Before and during the kick, applying the same priorities as on basic scrimmage plays (above), plus:

1. Observing fouls by all players generally in your area, but particularly:
  - (a) any action against the kicker or holder that might be roughing or running into
  - (b) illegal use of the hands and holding fouls by linemen and backs protecting the kicker and holder, especially the end and/or wing back on the side opposite you
  - (c) safety-related fouls such as face masking, tripping or chop blocks
  - (d) late hits by any player after the ball is dead
  - (e) illegal formation
  - (f) [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW] false starts by interior linemen, ends and backs on the Line Judge's side of the formation
2. Responding to bad snaps or blocked kicks by first observing the ball or the kicker, whichever is deeper, and action around them, and then adopting run, pass or return priorities, as appropriate.

During a field goal return, applying the same priorities as on returns (above).

### 9.8.b – Initial positioning

1. Be 5-10 yards wider and 3-7 yards deeper than the kicker and holder.
2. [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW IF THE LINE JUDGE IS BEHIND THE POSTS] Be on the Line Judge's side of the field. [OTHERWISE] Normally be on the side of the field opposite the kicker's kicking foot.
3. Ensure that you are facing towards the kicker and holder, and that you are able to observe both the snap and the holder.

### 9.8.c – Response to what happens (movement and signals)

1. Maintain a position where you can see the kicker, holder and players threatening them.
2. Wait until the ball is dead and there is no threat to players in your area before looking to the official(s) at the goal posts to find out the result of the kick.
3. Once all the players are completely separated, step away from players and signal the result of the play to the press box.

### 9.8.d – Advanced techniques

1. If the kick is good, hold the signal (S5) for approximately 5 seconds.
2. Be alert for blocked kicks and their recovery and advance. On fake kicks switch to normal run or pass coverage.
  - (a) If there is a bad snap or the kick is blocked, move away from the ball and players trying to recover it. Move to a position to cover any or all of the Team A goal line and end line, and [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW] the Line Judge's side line.
  - (b) While a kick<sup>§</sup> is loose in the backfield, continue to watch the ball and players trying to recover it – other officials will watch the kicker and holder.
  - (c) [ON A 4/5-MAN CREW] On a play that develops into a run to the Line Judge's side of the field, attempt to get to the goal line ahead of the ball carrier if you can.
3. If Team A attempts a surprise drop goal (i.e. there is no official behind the goal), your priority is to rule on the success/failure of the kick rather than stay with the kicker (roughing the kicker cannot by rule occur if it is not obvious a kick will be made). Run after the ball towards the goal and get the best view you can of whether the kick is successful or not. Consult with other officials (e.g. the Back Judge) who may have been in position to assist before signalling the outcome.

## 9.9 – After each down

### 9.9.a – Priorities

1. Observing dead-ball action by players of both teams.
2. Encouraging the players to unpile safely, and either return the ball to an official or leave it near the dead-ball spot, as appropriate.
3. Checking whether the line to gain has been reached or is close, and signalling appropriately.
4. Checking whether any penalty flags have been thrown, and, if so:
  - (a) Giving the timeout signal (S3).
  - (b) Finding out what fouls have been called and administering them according to the procedures in chapter 19.
  - (c) Keeping the Umpire informed.
  - (d) Ensuring that all penalties are enforced correctly.
5. Determining whether a new series is to be awarded, based either on a colleague's signal that the ball definitely has reached the line to gain, your own visual inspection of the ball in relation to the line to gain, or after a measurement you have ordered.
6. Checking for injured players or other occurrences that may delay play.
7. [ON-FIELD PLAY CLOCK OPERATOR] Starting the play clock when necessary, giving a 10-second warning, and throwing a delay of game flag if the clock reaches 0 before the ball is put in play.
8. Allowing legitimate requests for timeouts. Checking that a request coming from the coaching box or team area was made by the head coach. <sup>◇</sup>
9. Echoing all timeout signals (S3) of your colleagues.
10. Assisting in relaying the dead ball or a new ball to the succeeding spot.
11. Spotting the ball at the succeeding spot if you are nearer to it than the Umpire.
12. Ensuring all officials are in (or near) position for the next down before allowing the ball to become <sup>◇</sup> ready for play.

### 9.9.b – Initial positioning

1. Shortly after the end of the previous down, you should be in a position in the vicinity of the succeeding spot. The precise position will depend on what happened on the previous play.

### 9.9.c – Response to what happens (movement and signals)

1. [WHEN A 40-SECOND PLAY CLOCK IS BEING USED] If you are the Coverer, signal that the ball is dead. This will be using the dead-ball signal (S7) unless the timeout signal (S3), touchdown/field-goal signal (S5), safety signal (S6) or incomplete pass/unsuccessful field-goal signal (S10) is appropriate instead. Give only *one* signal.
2. If a penalty flag has been thrown, follow the procedure in chapter 19. If a team or injury timeout has been called, follow the procedure in chapter 17. If a period has ended, follow the procedure in chapter 20.
3. [ON-FIELD PLAY CLOCK OPERATOR] If a 40-second clock should start by rule:
  - (a) If there is a stadium play clock, check that it started shortly after the end of the play.
  - (b) If there is no stadium play clock, start a 40-second count shortly after the end of the play.

Spotting the ball for the next down:

4. Assist in relaying a ball to the Umpire or spot the ball that he has relayed to you (Mechanic 5.8).

5. If you are spotting the ball:
  - (a) take the forward progress from a wing official and place the ball at the succeeding spot
  - (b) following an incomplete forward pass, penalty, etc., verify with the Umpire that the lateral placement of the ball is correct.

Getting ready for the next down:

6. If you are certain the line to gain has been reached, give the first down signal (S8) and ensure that the Linesman has seen it and that the chain crew are responding to it.
7. If you are unsure whether the line to gain has been reached, move to the dead-ball spot and either make a decision based on your view of the ball in relation to the line to gain, or order a measurement by repeating the timeout signal (S3) and tapping your chest. Ensure that all your colleagues are aware of your decision.
8. Make sure that you are in a position to see the ball, the Umpire and both wing officials.
9. Check with the Linesman the number of the next down. Indicate and announce the new down and (if unusual or unexpected) the approximate distance to the line to gain. It is sufficient to use one of the following terms (in increasing order): "inches", "short", "long", "ten", "two stakes".
10. Check that all other officials (particularly the Umpire) are in or near their position for the next down and are ready to officiate.
11. Move into position for the next down. Backpedal if necessary to keep your eyes on the ball. Do not take your eyes off it in case the play starts while you are not looking.
12. If necessary, check with the on-field timekeeper the status of the clock.

Ready for play:

13. If the 40-second play clock is already running:
  - (a) If the ball is not ready for play 20 seconds into the play count (Rule 3-2-4-b-3):<sup>†</sup>
    - (i) Signal that the play clock be reset to 25 seconds (Sup29).
    - (ii) If that happens immediately, then proceed as normal, otherwise:
      - (1) Declare a timeout (S3).
      - (2) Signal again that the play clock be reset to 25 seconds (Sup29) and continue to signal until the clock responds.
      - (3) When the ball is ready, continue as below.
  - (b) If the game clock should start on the "Ready", give the start the clock signal (S2). Only blow your whistle if needed to attract the attention of the clock operator. This is a so-called "silent wind".<sup>†</sup>
  - (c) Otherwise, there is no need to give a ready-for-play signal.<sup>®</sup>
14. If the 40-second play clock is not running:<sup>§</sup>
  - (a) If the clock was stopped for a player injury, give either signal Sup29 or Sup30 to indicate whether the play clock should be set to 25 or 40 seconds.<sup>§</sup>
  - (b) If the clock should start on the "Ready", blow your whistle and give the start the clock signal (S2).
  - (c) If the clock should start on the snap, blow the whistle and give the ready for play signal (S1).
  - (d) [ON A 4-MAN CREW] Unless there is a stadium play clock, start your 25-second clock when you declare the ball ready.
  - (e) In 10-second subtraction or unfair clock tactics situations, make sure that the timekeeper (or stadium clock operator) knows that the clock is not starting normally.
15. If there are stadium game and/or play clocks, check to see that they have started correctly.

Play clock warning:

16. [ON A 5/6/7-MAN CREW] When you see [ON A 5/7-MAN CREW] the Back Judge or [ON A 6-MAN CREW] the Side Judge raise their hand, give a verbal warning to Team

A ("10 seconds" or "hurry" if you are not sure how many of the 10 seconds have expired).<sup>®</sup>

17. [ON A 4-MAN CREW]<sup>◇</sup> When approximately 10 seconds remain on the play clock, give a verbal warning to Team A ("10 seconds" or "hurry" if you are not sure how many of the 10 seconds have expired).

### 9.9.d – Advanced techniques

1. The priority at the end of a play is to get into position ready for the next one. Only if a serious incident occurs (such as a foul or misconduct, an injury, or a breakage of the chain) should your routine be interrupted.
2. If Team A makes substitutions while the snapper is at, near or moving towards his position at the line of scrimmage:<sup>§</sup>
  - (a) Check whether Team B responds to Team A's substitutions.<sup>†</sup>
  - (b) If so (or if in doubt for up to 3 seconds after a Team A incoming substitute enters the field of play or end zones),<sup>†</sup> signal (Sup36) to [ON A 8-MAN CREW] the Centre Judge [OTHERWISE] the Umpire to get over the ball and prevent the snap.
  - (c) Drop the signal (Sup36) once it is clear that Team B has completed its substitutions (or does not make any).
3. If Team A is attempting to make a quick start to the play, inform both teams that the ball must not be snapped until the whistle is sounded. Move quickly to your position, indicate to the Umpire that he may move to his position, check that all other officials are ready, and then blow your whistle.
4. If you want to speak to a player on the field (e.g. to warn him that he was close to fouling), it often saves time to relay the message via the Umpire or Back Judge (for a Team B player). Don't delay the game unnecessarily by entering either team's huddle, unless a timeout is still in progress.
5. Maintain your concentration, and think about the next play.