

California Girls Flag Football

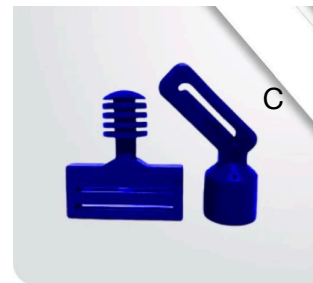
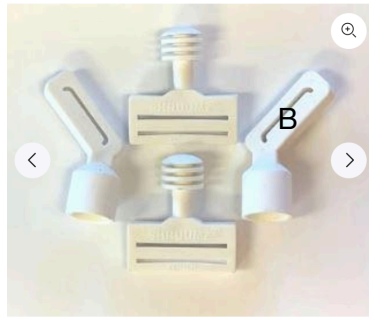
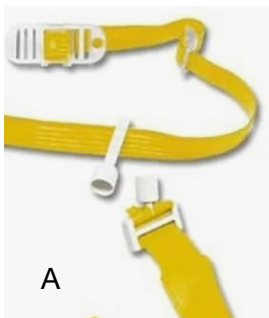
Mechanics Manual CFOA 2024

MECHANICS POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Quarterback passing clock
 1. R will have greater responsibilities with the the QB. This will leave more responsibilities at the LOS to the HL and more responsibilities down field to the RL.
 2. All officials need to have the ability to glance at the QB, read the play (pass-run) and turn their focus to the next responsibility.
 3. The R will count the 7 second passing clock. No stop watches or hand held devices will be allowed for use by the R for the 7 second QB clock. CFOA believes this will take attention away from the play. If a timing device is used it must be a vibrating device worn on the belt, not a timer to be looked at on a watch or clock. The R will give a arm slashing, visual representation of the QB clock even when a vibrating belt timer is used.
 4. We are to be less concerned with the accuracy of the passing clock than we are for the safety of the players.
 5. The visual count, **extending the arm, open hand, to the side of your body and flex and extend at the elbow with every count**, is to indicate to the sidelines that the passing clock is on.
 6. If necessary, to move with the QB as the play develops, the visual count with the arm may be stoped while the officials count continues.
 7. CFOA understands that not every officials count will be the same or an “exact” 7 seconds. The key is to be consistent throughout the game.
2. Legally equipped at the time of the snap
 1. All players, on the field must be legally equipped at the time of the snap
 2. R is responsible to insure all offensive players are legally equipped
 1. When counting the players, glance at the flags to insure they are in their proper place
 2. Signal the correct number of players and legally equipped at the same time with an arm extended and a closed fist.
 3. HL and RL are responsible to insure all defensive player are legally equipped
 1. When counting the players, glance at the flags to insure they are in their proper place
 2. Signal the correct number of players and legally equipped at the same time with an arm extended and a closed fist
 4. Early in the season, it will be the CFOA philosophy to warn players and help them off the field to insure everyone is legally equipped at the snap. If this means holding up the snap and extending the play clock, we will do this. This practice should only be for the first 2 weeks of games to assist the players and coaches in becoming familiar with this rule and mechanic. After the first 2 weeks of the season this is to be a delay of game foul on the offending team should the play clock expire or be snapped prior to all players being legally equipped. ***We must be consistent*** early in the season to allow players and coaches to become familiar with this.
 5. It is CFOA’s philosophy that preventative officiating will give better results. When conducting your pregame coaches meetings remind the coaches and players that they will be sent from the field of play if not legally equipped and that if the ball is snapped without all players legally equipped a penalty may be enforced.

3. Contact
 1. This is a non-contact sport
 2. While some contact may happen, we want to call all contact that is avoidable by either the offense or defense
 3. There is to be no contact that alters a receiver's path moving down field and running their routes and no "bumping" at the LOS. The defense is responsible to avoid this contact.
 1. When calling this foul, be certain that it had an impact on the play.
 2. A hand reaching out, by a defender, to locate a receiver, as the defender turns to see the ball may not "rise to the level of a foul"
 4. The ball carrier is responsible to avoid contact with the defense.
 1. The ball carrier must change their path to avoid contact with the defense
 2. The defender must be attempting to de-flag the ball carrier. Remember, the flags are on the hips so contact to the front or back side of the ball carrier may be a foul on the defense.
 3. We understand that some contact may happen and do not want to have fouls on every play. Contact that is, in the judgement of the official, avoidable must be flagged
 4. Time and space to make a change of direction should always be taken in to consideration when determining who was responsible to avoid the contact.
 5. The coaches and players will adjust their play to the game we officiate, therefore all officials in CFOA must be calling contact fouls where contact was determined to be avoidable.
 6. There will be more than one official seeing most contact fouls.
 1. When in question, throw a flag, but be humble and ready to wave off a penalty that another official with a different angle sees and believes that the contact was unavoidable or didn't rise to the level of a foul.
 2. Work as a team to get the call right.
 7. Unavoidable contact is possible and may not "rise to the level of a foul", however, rough play will not be tolerated and contact fouls should be called.
 8. When calling blocking fouls or contact with a legal blocker fouls, someone is always responsible to have avoided the contact.
 9. Any contact with the Passer is always a foul.
4. Coin Toss
 1. The winner of the toss will have first choice or elect to defer their first choice to the second half. Each team will make a choice in each half.
 2. The choices are- offense/defense; or end zone to defend.
 3. The loser of the toss will have first choice in the half that the winner does not select.
 4. It is CFOA's philosophy to ensure that teams have, and know they have these choices. Please don't take for granted that they will always choose offense. This game is not the same as the tackle game and there will be situations where coaches strategies may lead them to make a choice of end zone to defend as their first choice rather than always taking offense.
 5. In your pregame conference with the head coach, instruct them of the options and note their decisions on your game card. Ultimately the captains will choose at the coin toss, however, it is CFOA philosophy to help guide them.
5. Illegal flags-
 1. All flags will be checked by the officials prior to the start of the game to insure that players are wearing their flag belt correctly prior to taking the field. It is acceptable to do this during warmups and not require a line up for pregame equipment checks.
 2. All flags must be designed by the manufacture to be used in youth/student sport.

3. It is the philosophy of CFOA (and CIF) that games can and should be played, even if a team is using illegal flags. An incident report will be filled out by the R and submit to CIF reporting the team using illegal flags. While we hope and want that all teams will move to flag belts with removable flags, we are aware that there will be some schools that do not. The reports that are submitted will be directed to the school administrators in hopes that they will comply with the rule of removable flags. CIF wishes that all contest be played as long as both teams are willing to accept the illegal flags and file a report.
4. Flags using velcro to attach to the belt are legal.
5. All flags must be removable from the belt. In an instance a team has tear away (triple threat) flag belts, An incident report will be filled out by the R and submit to CIF reporting the team using illegal flags.
6. Shruumz flags that are designed for “youth” are white in color. Any other color of popper (the removable portion) should be checked to insure it is legal.



Hollow pop flags that are unaltered are legal (A)
 Pop flags with grip (Shruumz) that have 4 grips are legal (B)
 Pop flags with more than 4 grips are **illegal** (C)

6. Conduct, Character and Ethics
 1. Officials shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all officiating obligations.
 2. Officials shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally and shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the highest standards of the profession.
 3. Officials shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interactions with the student-athletes, coaches, school administrators, colleagues and the public.
 4. Officials shall work with each other and their governing bodies in a constructive and cooperative manner.
 5. Officials shall master both the rules of the game and mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, and shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm and controlled manner.
 6. Officials will use language such as athlete, player or coach when addressing participants at all times.
 7. Officials should never do anything to draw undue attention to themselves or the crew.
 8. Officials will use supportive language when addressing fellow officials, athletes, coaches, administrators, and game operations personnel.
 9. Officials will never use a “senior” position to embarrass another official, player, coach, administrator, or game operations personnel.
 10. Officials shall bear a great responsibility for engendering public confidence in sports.

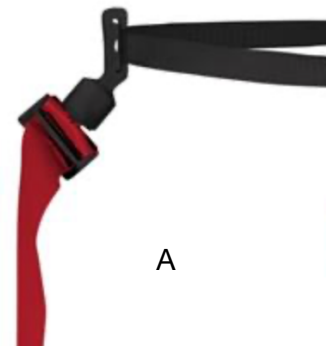
11. Officials will work to become leaders. If you adopt a philosophy that you're going to help others reach their goals, you will reach yours too.
12. Officials will be passionate about integrity, honesty and professionalism.
13. Officials will be courageous. Doing what's right- versus what's popular or safe- takes strong will and conviction.
14. Officials working together are a team. All officials will place aside personal feelings and allow the crew to work as a team. No one official is above another when it comes to getting the call right.

ON FIELD PRE-GAME DUTIES

All officials will arrive onsite 30 minutes prior to game time and assume responsibilities on the field of play no less than 15 minutes prior to game time. Insure that contact with the school administrators and/or coaches is conducted 5-7 days prior to the contest. In this communication you should confirm the game date and time as well as any specifics related to your arrival to the school or event space. Should you require a changing room, you must organize this with the school personnel 5-7 days prior to the contest.

- Referee will confer with coaches, check game balls and confirm with the coaches that all players are and will remain "legally equipped". It is CFOA's philosophy that preventative officiating will give better results. When conducting your pregame coach meetings and player equipment checks, remind the coaches and players that they will be sent from the field of play if not legally equipped and if the ball is snapped without all players legally equipped a penalty may be enforced.
- Be businesslike and cordial but not overly friendly with the coaches.
- Remind coaches of the restricted area that is around the entire field. Instruct them to be helpful in keeping players, assistants and game personnel out of the restricted area.
- Note on your game card the coaches wishes for the coin toss. Use these to assist the captains at the coin toss, however the decision is ultimately made by the captain at the toss.
- Rush Line Judge instructs the person responsible for the down marker on specifics of their duties throughout the game. Having a written list of instructions will help insure that nothing is forgotten.
- Head Line Judge meets clock operator and instructs them on specifics of clock operation. Having a printout of the timing procedures will insure that nothing is forgotten.
- The HL is responsible to keep secondary game clock during the game and insuring that the game clock is correct. All officials should be checking the game clock during the final 2:00 of the half.
- The RL is responsible for the play clock and should have a watch or "ready ref" to keep time for the play clock.

- All officials check the field for holes and unsafe conditions.
- Head Line and Rush Line Judges meet and bring captains from respective sidelines to the 40 yard line for coin toss.
- As a crew, pregame the communication procedures to be used related to QB eligible to run, coverage at the LOS, penalty enforcement, no run zone, etc.
- Asking coaches if there are specific plays they run, that they want to be aware of, as to not be caught off guard is always a good idea. The more prepared the officials are, the better the game.
- While players are warming up, observe uniforms, flags, players wearing jewelry and mouth guards. Instruct players and coaches as necessary if the uniform is not correct (shirts tucked) jewelry that needs to be removed, or the flag belt is not worn correctly.
- All pop flags must be worn as pictured (A). **The elbow must be pointing out and angled down.** If the belt is on incorrectly the elbow will point in and down.
- All players and coaches will be reminded that the players are responsible to ensure that their flags are in place as designated by rule and their shirts tucked in at all times. Any player found in violation of this rule will be removed from the field for at least one (1) down and a delay of game penalty may be given to the offending team . The play clock will not be adjusted to accommodate removing any player from the field for a violation of equipment rule.
- It is CFOA's philosophy that preventative officiating will give better results. When conducting your pregame coach meetings and player equipment checks while you observe warmups, remind the coaches and players that they will be sent from the field of play if not legally equipped and that if the ball is snapped without all players legally equipped a penalty may be enforced.
- No jewelry is allowed by rule 1. 11. 8 (see exception for medical and religious medallions). This includes ALL JEWELRY. Jewelry that is covered with tape is still jewelry being worn and is illegal. We do not allow players to "cover" their jewelry with tape. (Exception - 1. 11. 8)
- **At the officials discretion**, Flag checks after scoring plays will be conducted on all players involved in the scoring play by the official nearest the player(s). **A flag check is not necessary after every scoring play. Coaches do not have the right to stop the game and ask for a flag check (exception- if they wish to use a timeout).**



- At the officials discretion, a flag check on the entire team may be conducted after a scoring play. We do not want to have unnecessary time run off the game clock for a flag check to occur. The crew may elect to stop to game clock to conduct a flag check if they choose.
- For all flag checks, you will ask the player to remove the flags from the belt and hand them to you for physical inspection.

COIN TOSS PROCEDURES

- Rush Line and Head Line Judges will escort captains to the center of the field on the 40 yard line, meeting the Referee in the center of the field.
- Referee will face the game clock.
- Referee will introduce the crew.
- The Referee will remind the captains that they are the team representative on the field and will be responsible for the other players on their team being legally equipped and playing according to the rules.
- Referee will instruct the visiting team to call the toss. The call will be made before the toss.
- Referee will instruct the team winning the toss that they will have the choice of (1) offense or defense, (2) choose which ends of the field they wish to defend, or they may defer their choice to the second half. The loser of the toss will have first choice in the half that the winner of the toss does not elect first choice.
- After the coin toss the Referee will face the press box and indicate which team will take possession of the ball and at which end of the field.
- Immediately after the coin toss the Rush Line and Head Line Judges will return to their sidelines.
- Immediately after the coin toss the Referee will get and spot the ball of the team that is to take possession first.

TIME OUT

- Each team will have two (2) time outs per half with one carry over.
- Each team will receive one (1) time out per overtime period with no carry over.
- The Head Line Judge will cover the team on their sideline.
- The Rush Line Judge will cover the team on their sideline.
- The Referee will time the timeout and give a warning whistle at 45 seconds followed by a second whistle at 60 seconds to call the players to the field.
- All Officials will record the timeout and confirm with each other the number of remaining timeouts for each team.

HALFTIME

- Before teams and coaches gather at their sideline, the HL and RL will gather necessary information from the coaches for starting the second half of play; Direction of play and which team is receiving the ball.
- As soon as teams have gathered at their respective sidelines the Referee will look to the timer and wind to start the five (5) minute clock for halftime.
- The Rush Line Judge will also start a five (5) minute clock on their watch.
- All officials will meet to review the first half of play, confirm which team will have first choice in the second half, the direction of play and ready the ball for play at the correct end of the field.

CALLING FOULS

- Do not pick up or move a flag (unless necessary to mark a spot foul) until it has been enforced.
- During the first 22 minutes of each half (running clock), be quick and precise about your penalty enforcement. At the officials discretion, the game clock may be stopped to enforce a penalty if and when the officials need additional time to properly administer the penalty. The CFOA philosophy is to not take playing time away from the athletes unnecessarily.
- During the final two minutes of each half, the clock will stop for penalty enforcement. If the game clock was stopped for any reason other than the penalty, the clock will start on the snap. In all other situations, the the game clock will start on the ready for play signal. All officials need to be aware of clock status during penalty administration and know if the the clock will start on the snap or the ready for play.
- Make certain that the down indicator/line of scrimmage box does not move until the penalty has been enforced.
- The official calling the foul will relay information regarding the result of the play and the foul to the Referee.
- The Referee will relay the result of the play and the penalty to the offended team's coach to accept or decline the penalty.
- The Referee will relay penalty enforcement information to the non-calling official for enforcement of the penalty.
- The non-calling official will enforce the penalty by moving the ball and line of scrimmage to the appropriate location on the field.

- The Referee will face the press box and relay the penalty and the appropriate enforcement. Use the team name, player number and proper signal for the penalty.
- All officials will confirm the down, the line to gain and the rush line set by the Rush Line Judge before the ball is made ready for play and the whistle is blown to start the play clock.
- Call only the fouls you actually see, not the fouls you think may have happened.
- Insure the foul being called has an impact on the play.
- Officials must call fouls related to safety. Athlete safety is foremost in officiating. Set a standard for safety early in the contest and hold to it throughout the game.
- If a player is disqualified, the official making the call will accompany the Referee to the player's sideline to inform the coach of the ejection and the reason for the ejection.
- All officials will record any ejections and the calling official will file the CIF ejection report.

Three Official Mechanics

The Referee and Crew are responsible to designate the official responsible for the Rush Line and the Line of Scrimmage. At the discretion of the Referee, the RL and the HL may switch positions and sides of the field at half time.

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

• Referee

- Signal upcoming down to the Head Line Judge and the Rush Line Judge.
- Retrieve and spot the ball, in the center of the field, on the line indicated by the Head Line Judge.
- At the request of the offense, the ball may be spotted no more that 4 yards to the left or right along the LOS. The Referee moving the spot of the ball for the offense will not effect the play clock once the play clock has started. If the request to move the ball causes a delay of game the offense will be penalized.
- Make visual contact with the Rush Line Judge, to insure they are in place, before signaling the ball ready for play. The ball will not be made ready for play until the rush line has been set.
- Signal the ball ready for play with a chop and a short whistle (the whistle is optional).
- Verify all players equipment (flags, mouthguard and shirt tucked) are legal, signal correct number of and all players are legally equipped with an extended arm at shoulder level and hand in a fist. Send any player who is not legally equipped to the sideline.
- The play clock will not be adjusted or reset to accommodate players who are not legally equipped and being removed from the field of play.

- Count Team A player and indicate correct number of players with a closed fist arm extended from the body to the front (the arm extended with a fist only needs to be signaled once to indicate **both** that players legally equipped and correct number of players.)
 - Assume a position in the offensive backfield, 10-15 yards behind the line of scrimmage to either side of the quarterback.
 - Identify quarterback and players lined up in the backfield. Watch for false starts and illegal motion from offensive players lined up off the line off scrimmage.
 - Determine if the quarterback is eligible to run the ball. Be ready to call a foul if they are not eligible and they cross the line of scrimmage with the ball during the play. The HL is responsible for the ball crossing the LOS, the R is responsible to know if the QB is eligible to run with the ball.
 - Communicate with the Head Line Judge if the quarterback is not eligible to run to insure they are on alert for illegal quarterback run. (“QB run is off” “QB run is on”)
 - Determine if the ball is in the “No-Run Zone” and verbally remind Team A that they are in the No-Run Zone.
 - Confirm with the head line judge if the ball/line of scrimmage is in the no-run-zone. The HL is responsible for the ball crossing the LOS.
 - Prior to and at the snap — The initial keys for the R are the QB and any players lined up in the backfield. You are to observe for false starts and illegal motion.
- **Head Line Judge**
 - Signal the upcoming down to the Referee and Rush Line Judge.
 - Glance at the game clock to insure the clock is running or stopped according to the rules indicated in 2:00 Minute Timing Rules. HL is responsible for the game clock.
 - Using your down field foot, indicate the line of scrimmage for the Referee to spot the ball.
 - Assume a position straddling the neutral zone on the **press box sideline facing the down marker. If a down marker is not provided, use a beanbag to mark the LOS.**
 - Use a bean bag or marker to mark the line of scrimmage as necessary to allow movement off the line of scrimmage.
 - Count Team B players.
 - Verify all players equipment (flags, mouthguard and shirt tucked) are legal and send any player who is not legally equipped to the sideline. **Indicate 7 legally equipped defensive players are on the field with an extended, shoulder height arm with a closed fist. Confirm this with the Rush Line Judge.**
 - Visually identify all players lined up on the line of scrimmage and be ready to watch for false start, illegal motion and identify illegal formation.

- Head Line Judge is responsible for all motion at the line of scrimmage.
 - Glance at the players lined up in the defensive backfield as legal rushers. Identify the most likely rushers and be alert to fouls for illegal rushing.
 - Prior to and at the snap - the initial keys for HL are all players on the LOS, observing for false starts and illegal motion.
 - Prior to and at the snap - the secondary keys for HL are receivers in motion and determining if that motion is legal.
- **Rush Line Judge**
 - Signal the upcoming down to the Referee and the Head Line Judge.
 - Glance at the game clock to insure the clock is running or stopped according to the rules indicated in 2:00 Minute Timing Rules.
 - Visually identify the line of scrimmage from the Head Line Judge's down field foot. If the previous play was more than 15 yards down field the RL may mark forward progress and the spot where the ball became dead.
 - Insure that the box is moved correctly and the HL is holding the spot prior to moving to mark the rush line
 - **Move the down indicator/line of scrimmage box as necessary for the correct down and distance.**
 - From the line of scrimmage walk off 7 yards in to the defensive backfield and indicate to the defense the 7 yard rush line for legal rushers per rule 2. 7 -Defense-Rushing.
 - After setting the rush line look to the R for indication of ready for play and begin the play clock on the R's signal. The RL is responsible for the play clock.
 - Take a position straddling the defensive rush line on the side line **opposite** the press box.
 - Use a bean bag or a marker to mark the rush line if necessary.
 - Visually identify the players behind the legal rush line that has been set and be ready to call fouls for illegal rushing.
 - Count Team B players.
 - Verify all players equipment (flags, mouthguard and shirt tucked) are legal and send any player who is not legally equipped to the sideline. **Indicate 7 legally equipped defensive players are on the field with an extended, shoulder height arm with a closed fist. Confirm this with the Head Line Judge.**
 - Remember, legal rushers may reset to 7 yards if drawn forward prior to the snap. Only the position at the time of the snap AND then crossing the LOS are to be considered a foul.
 - The countdown for the play clock will be hand raised over your head at 10 seconds remaining and arm extended to the side of the body and arm slashing motion in and out

from 5 - 0 seconds. Arm motion only, no verbal count. The R has the right to reset the play clock with a pumping motion even if the RL has begun the countdown.

- Prior to and at the snap - The initial keys for RL are players lined up on the rush line and determining if the rushers are legal at the time of the snap.
- Prior to and at the snap - The secondary keys are receivers toward your side line assisting with false start.

- **All officials**

- In-between scrimmage plays is the most important time in a game. All officials have many responsibilities in-between downs and prior to the snap. Everyone must fulfill their responsibility to insure a properly officiated game.
- Know your responsibilities at the snap and have a pre snap mental routine to remind yourself i.e. - RL, move the down indicator, insure the correct down is indicated, mark the rush line, confirm the down with your partners, count, check equipment and signal the defense is legal, identify the legal rushers and key in on them pre snap, identify receivers nearest your sideline and prepare yourself to watch for contact, etc.

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP

- **Referee**

- Observe the snap, momentarily read the action of the quarterback to determine the type of play.
- **Begin the 7 second Passing Clock count at the snap by extending the arm, with open hand, to the side of your body and flex and extend at the elbow with every count. The count should be audible and visual. Once any player, other than the QB has possessed the ball, tuck your arm behind your back to clearly indicate that there is no longer a passing clock.**
- Maintain primary focus on the action with the quarterback while observing rusher(s). Watch for blocking at and behind the line of scrimmage.
- Watch for contact with the quarterback.
- Move with the quarterback while continuing to observe rushers and watching for contact on the quarterback. Be alert for illegal quarterback run and communicate with the head line judge as necessary if the runner is close to crossing the line of scrimmage.
- Hustle to the end of the play to assist in retrieving the ball while maintaining a wide field of vision to watch for any contact or unnecessary roughness during and after the play.

- Referee is responsible for—
 - False Start
 - Illegal Shift
 - Illegal Motion
 - Blocking around the runner by team A
 - Contact with the quarterback
 - Jumping, leaping spinning with the ball
 - Flag Guarding
 - Illegal Flag Pulling
 - Illegal Quarterback Run
 - Runs inside the No Run Zone
 - Illegal Formation in the No Run Zone

- **Head Line Judge**
 - Identify defenders that are lined up as legal rushers
 - Observe the snap
 - Maintain focus on the line of scrimmage watching for contact at the line by either team.
 - Maintain focus at the line of scrimmage watching for contact by either team as Team A receivers begin to run their routes.
 - Glance at the quarterback, read pass or run and be ready to react as necessary.
 - The Head Line Judges' primary responsibility will be at the line of scrimmage. Be ready to rule if defensive player cross the LOS illegally and know when the ball crosses the LOS.
 - If a pass play, glance down field at the receiver(s) nearest your sideline and be ready to rule catch/no catch, DPI/OPI and other passing or down field fouls.
 - After the play, hustle to the line of scrimmage and indicate the new line of scrimmage with your down field foot.
 - Inside the “No Run Zone” the Head Line Judge is responsible for the line of scrimmage and being alert to the ball crossing the line of scrimmage with out a pass, toss or pitch first being thrown. When the ball crosses the LOS the HL can release to the line to gain or the goal line.
 - Head Line Judge is responsible for —
 - False Start
 - Illegal Shift
 - Illegal Motion
 - Encroachment
 - Illegal Formation

- Illegal Rush
- Illegal Forward Pass
- DPI/OPI on the receiver(s) to your side of the field
- Runs inside the No Run Zone
- Ball crossing the LOS
- Flag guarding
- Spinning and diving
- Illegal contact and Blocking
- Illegal flag pulling

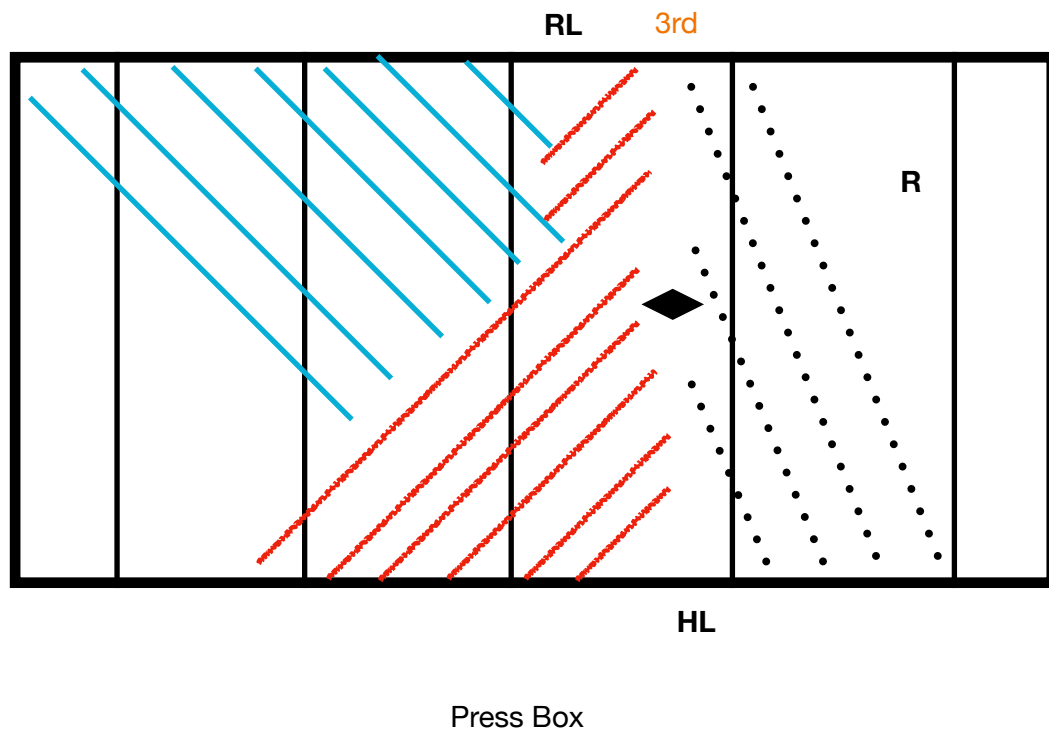
- **Rush Line Judge**

- After setting the Rush line and identifying the legal rushers, feel free to move down field as the game dictates and become a Back Judge.
- Observe the snap.
- Watch the Team B players that are not legal rushers and observe for contact with Team A as the receivers begin to run their routes.
- Glance at the quarterback and read the play (pass or run).
- If pass play, glance down field at the receiver(s) nearest your sideline and midfield and be ready to rule catch/no catch, DPI/OPI and other passing or down field fouls.
- The Rush Line Judge is responsible for most to the play down field, including away from your sideline.
- Observe the defense for Illegal Contact.
- Observe the offense for Illegal Blocking/Screening
- Inside the No-Run-Zone the RL is responsible to move to the line to gain or the goal line to rule on 1st down or scores. The HL is responsible for the ball crossing the LOS legally. In scoring situations, the RL must also be alert to receivers at the back of the end zone and insuring those receivers do not step out of bounds. Keep a wide angle at the line to gain or the goal line and be alert to all action in the defensive backfield.
- Rush Line Judge is responsible for —
 - Illegal Rush
 - Flag guarding
 - OPI/DPI
 - Hurdling/Spinning/Diving
 - Illegal Contact/Blocking
 - Illegal Flag Pulling

- Defensive Holding
- Sliding

- **All officials**

- Many fouls are only fouls when a player or the ball cross the LOS. The HL must remain at the LOS until the ball has crossed.
- It will often take two officials to determine if a foul occurred. I.e. - a rusher is drawn forward off the legal rush line by the cadence of the QB. It is only a foul if that player crosses the LOS. There is no foul on the defense until the illegal rusher crosses the LOS. The RL and HL may need to come together to share information about whether a rusher was legal at the snap and/or crossed the LOS. Throw a flag if you have a penalty, but be ready to wave off the penalty if another officials brings you other information.
- The easiest way to identify players is by number. In your pre snap routine identify, by number, your keys pre snap. I.e - HL, identifies B25 and B33 as the players lined up on the 7 yard rush line. As the HL monitors action at the LOS they know if any player other than B25 and B33 crosses the LOS, while the QB possess the ball, there may be a foul for illegal rushing.
- Only when safety is a concern are officials to stop play for a foul. Give your self the benefit of having multiple officials seeing a foul. I.e - HL sees flag guarding at the A-33 yard line and places a flag there. The R from the center of the field sees that the defenders hand was not near the flag and there was no contact blocking the defenders ability to pull the flag. After discussion, the flag is waved off and the result of the play stands.



Two Official Mechanics

Two officials mechanics for 7 vs 7 flag football is difficult. As a general rule, the R is responsible for all play at the LOS and in the offensive back field. The RL is responsible for everything in the defensive backfield. The R must be on the sideline to rule on ball crossing the LOS and the RL must set their line and officiate receivers and defenders moving down field. A through pre-game between officials is very important when working two official mechanics. It is important that both officials understand who is responsible for what and that you trust each other. You must divide the pregame responsibilities of the HL.

PRE-SNAP MECHANICS

• Referee

- Signal upcoming down to the Rush Line Judge.
- Retrieve and spot the ball on the line gained in the previous play.
- Make visual contact with the Rush Line Judge, to insure they are in place, before signaling the ball ready for play. The ball will not be made ready for play until the rush line has been set, and all officials are in position.
- Signal the ball ready for play with a chop and a short whistle.
- Start the play clock (25 seconds by rule Misc. Rules-Play Clock).
- At the request of the offense the ball may be spotted no more that 4 yards to the left or right along the LOS. The Referee moving the spot of the ball for the offense will not effect the play clock once the play clock has started. If the request to move the ball causes a delay of game the offense will be penalized.
- **Position yourself on the press box sideline facing the down marker.**
- Verify all players equipment (flags, mouthguard and shirt tucked) are legal, signal all players are legally equipped with an extended arm at shoulder level and hand in a fist. Send any player who is not legally equipped to the sideline.
- Count Team A player and indicate correct number of player with a closed fist arm extended from the body to the front. (One signal for both legally equipped and player count)
- Identify quarterback and players lined up in the backfield. Watch for false starts and illegal motion from players lined up off the line off scrimmage.
- Determine if the quarterback is eligible to run the ball and be ready to call a foul if they are not eligible and they cross the line of scrimmage with the ball during the play. (Rule II-Rushing)
- Determine if the ball is in the “No-Run Zone” and verbally remind Team A that they are in the No-Run Zone.
- Visually identify all players lined up on the line of scrimmage and be ready to watch for false start, illegal motion and identify illegal formation (Rule Penalties - Offense - Illegal Formation).
- The referee will be responsible for all motion, legal or illegal by the offense and encroachment by the defense in two official mechanics.

• Rush Line Judge

- Signal the upcoming down to the Referee.

- Glance at the game clock to insure the clock is running or stopped according to the rules indicated in 2:00 Minute Timing Rules.
- Visually identify the line of scrimmage from the Referee.
- **Move the down indicator/line of scrimmage box as necessary for the correct down and distance.**
- From the line of scrimmage walk off 7 yards in to the defensive backfield and indicate to the defense the 7 yard rush line for legal rushers per rule II-Defense-Rushing.
- Take a position straddling the defensive rush line on the side line opposite the press box.
- Use a bean bag or a marker to mark the rush line if necessary.
- Visually identify the players behind the legal rush line that has been set and be ready to call fouls for illegal rushing.
- Count Team B players and indicate correct number of players on the field with a closed fist and extended arm to the Team B side of the field.
- Verify all players equipment (flags, mouthguard and shirt tucked) are legal and send any player who is not legally equipped to the sideline. **Signal all players are legally equipped with an extended arm at shoulder level and hand in a fist. One signal for both legally equipped and 7 players on the field of play.**
- The countdown for the play clock will be hand raised over your head at 10 seconds remaining and arm extended to the side of the body and arm slashing motion in and out from 5 - 0 seconds. Arm motion only, no verbal count. The R has the right to reset the play clock with a pumping motion even if the RL has begun the countdown.

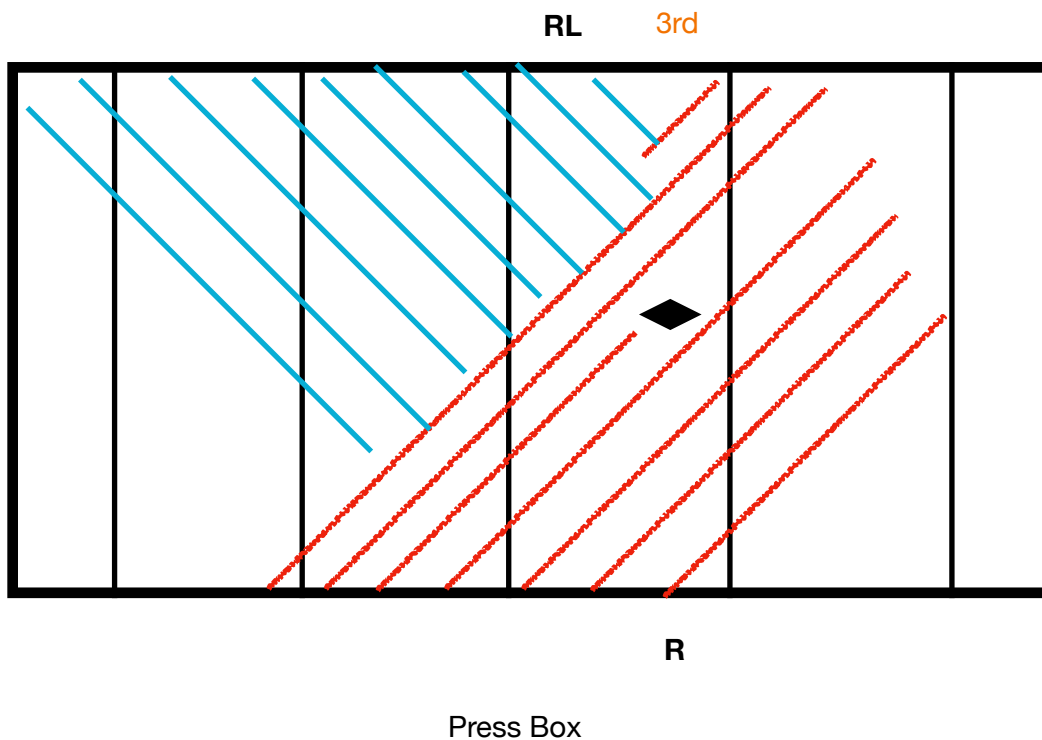
RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SNAP

• Referee

- **Begin the 7 second Passing Clock count at the snap by extending the arm, with open hand, to the side of your body and flex and extend at the elbow with every count. The count should be audible and visual. Once any player, other than the QB has possessed the ball, tuck your arm behind your back to clearly indicate that there is no longer a passing clock.**
- Observe the snap, momentarily read the action of the quarterback to determine the type of play.
- Maintain primary focus on the action with the quarterback while observing rusher(s). Watch for blocking at the line of scrimmage
- Watch for contact with the quarterback.

- Do not move from the LOS until the ball has crossed the LOS, while continuing to observe rushers and watching for contact on the quarterback. Be alert for illegal quarterback run if the quarterback is close to crossing the line of scrimmage.
- Be alert to illegal run in side the no-run-zone.
- Hustle to the end of the play to assist in retrieving the ball while maintaining a wide field of vision to watch for any contact or unnecessary roughness during and after the play.
- Responsibilities —
 - False Start
 - Illegal Shift
 - Illegal Motion
 - Blocking around the runner by team A
 - Contact with the quarterback
 - Jumping, leaping spinning with the ball
 - Flag Guarding
 - Illegal Flag Pulling
 - Illegal Quarterback Run
 - Runs inside the No Run Zone
 - Illegal Rush
 - Illegal formation in the no run zone
- **Rush Line Judge**
 - After setting the Rush line and identifying the legal rushers, remain on the sideline, however move down field as necessary to maintain an angle on the players and officiate the goal line.
 - Observe the snap.
 - Watch the Team B players that are not legal rushers and observe for contact with Team A as the receivers begin to run their routes.
 - Identify any illegal rushing and be ready to help with that call.
 - Glance at the quarterback and read the play (pass or run).
 - If pass play, glance down field at the all receiver(s) and be ready to rule catch/no catch, DPI/OPI and other passing or down field fouls.
 - The Rush Line Judge is responsible for most to the play down field, including away from your sideline.
 - Observe the defense for Illegal Contact.
 - Observe the offense for Illegal Blocking/Screening
 - Responsibilities —

- Illegal Rush
- Flag guarding
- OPI/DPI
- Hurdling/Spinning/Diving
- Illegal Contact/Blocking
- Illegal Flag Pulling
- Defensive Holding



MAKING THE CALL —

- Flag guarding is a difficult call to make. Everyone must be vigilant in watching for it. Angles matter a lot when it come to flag guarding so when in doubt, get the crew together and discuss. Flag guarding is a live ball penalty. Use a yellow flag to mark the spot where the flag guarding occurred and allow the play to continue. This will allow the crew to make a change to the call if another official has a better angle or different information. The natural motion of the arms when running may cause a ball carrier to unintentionally commit flag guarding. This is still a foul. Flag guarding is still flag guarding even if unintentionally committed.

- When the ball is turned over on downs it is always left at the spot the ball became dead. In other rulebooks the ball is can be and often is moved to the line the team starts after a punt. We do not change the spot when the ball is turned over on downs.
- Rushing — all defensive players can be legal rushers. Only 2 defensive players are allowed to cross the line of scrimmage on any play. A legal rusher must start at least 7 yards off the line of scrimmage. A defensive player is not considered to be a rusher by their starting positions, but rather they are considered to be a rusher once they cross the line of scrimmage. A rusher who begins 7 yards off the ball however, moves forward a yard before the snap of the ball, has not committed a foul unless they cross the line of scrimmage. As long as the quarterback has possession of the ball, only 2 defensive players who start 7 yards off the line of scrimmage may cross the line of scrimmage. Be alert to this on option plays. Defenders who did not start at least 7 yards off the line of scrimmage can not move across the line of scrimmage after the quarterback who still has possession of the ball, even if the quarterback is in motion and perhaps attempting a run. Also, only 2 defenders may cross the line of scrimmage when the quarterback is in possession of the ball. If more than 2 defenders cross the line of scrimmage, regardless of where they begin, while the quarterback maintains possession it is an illegal rush/blitz foul.
- Bumping at the line of scrimmage is not allowed. It is the defenses responsibility to avoid the offense when receivers are in the act of running their passing routes. However, the offense should not be allowed to run directly in to a defensive player in an attempt to draw a foul. Be alert and know for certain who caused the contact and with whom the responsibility to avoid contact lies.
- As a general rule — it is the responsibility of the offensive player *with the ball* to avoid contact with the defense. Do not allow the runner with the ball to cause contact as the defense is making an attempt at de-flagging the runner. The runner with the ball can not simply “run through” a defensive player in an effort to extend forward progress of the ball.
- On all fumbles, a dead ball is called as soon as the ball hits the ground.
- Leaping, spinning and diving are never allowed in an attempt to advance the ball. These actions can end the play at the discretion of the official for safety reasons. The best practice may be to throw a flag, allow play to continue and involve the other officials in decisions about these safety fouls. Be alert as athletic players will sidestep or “juke” a defender to avoid a flag pull. Please allow them to make athletic moves. A spin must be a greater than 360* turn without a change of direction. A change of direction, even after a 360* turn is legal. The ball carrier must make 2 or more rotations with out a change of direction for spinning to be a foul.
- Defensive holding occurs when the defender, in an effort to grasp a flag, grabs the ball carriers shirt or shorts and restricts their ability to move. There must be a restriction of movement to call defensive holding. Simply tugging on the ball carriers shirt or shorts in an effort to grasp the flag is not defensive holding. Any other restriction of movement by the defense on the offense away from the ball should be Illegal Contact
- Punting— Team A must declare they are punting prior to the play clock expiring. The ball will be moved to Team B’s 20 yard line and a change of possession will be declared and a new play clock started. Be aware of teams huddling on the sideline as you move the ball. This is not a time out and teams should be on the field, ready for play as soon as the ball is declared ready by the Referee.

- As stated in the the rules— the position of the ball at the time the players flag is pulled determines the spot of the ball. Be alert to this and spot the ball appropriately. This includes extending the ball for a score or a first down.
- A ball carrier going to the ground while a defender is attempting at their flag is not always a tackle. At the officials discretion, if the momentum of the the ball carrier takes them to the ground, there could be no foul on this play.
- Incidental contact, as a reason to not call a foul, is rare in flag football. Yes, we want to let them play, however, most of the time someone is responsible for the contact. It is at the discretion of the officials on the field as to whether the contact is a foul. Contact with a ball carrier, even in a legitimate attempt to pull a flag, can be a tackle or illegal contact foul.
- Knocking, punching, stripping or slapping at the ball in an attempt to dislodge it from the ball carrier's grasp is against the rules. This can be an illegal contact foul and/or can be considered unsportsmanlike conduct. It is always a foul. If it is called as a UNS it should also be noted on the officials game card with team, player #, and game time. The second offense for UNS by a player will be disqualification.
- Blockers must be set 1 yard prior to the defense arriving. It must e clear that they are stationary. Any movement within 1 yard is an illegal blocking foul.
- While the rule book indicates that the QB must be two (2) yards behind the line of scrimmage to receive the snap, the intent of this rule is not to require all snaps to be in shotgun formations. The rule intention of the rule is to keep the offense from crowding the center with multiple players in order to deceive the defense (and the officials) as to who received the snap. In a normal, under center formation the center should occupy about one (1) yard of space and the QB will be about one (1) yard behind them. This will be legal and officials will not require that all snaps be taken in shotgun formation.

Two minute timing rules —

In the final two minutes of each half the clock will stop for — Change of Possession, Incomplete Pass, a play that finishes out of bounds, penalty enforcement, a score and point after try, safety, a team trying to conserve time illegally, and other official purposes. After the two minute warning all start and stop clock signals will come from the officials on the field. All officials need to be alert to the status of the clock in the last two minutes of each half.

Defensive Pass Interference

In addition to the rule book, actions that constitute defensive pass interference include, but are not limited to, the following six categories:

- Early contact by a defender is defensive pass interference provided the other requirements for defensive pass interference have been met, regardless of how deep the pass is thrown to the receiver.
- Playing through the back of a receiver in an attempt to make a play on the ball.
- Grabbing and restricting a receiver's arm(s) or body in such a manner that restricts their opportunity to catch a pass.

- Extending an arm across the body (arm bar) of a receiver thus restricting their ability to catch a pass, regardless of the fact of whether or not the defender is looking for the ball.
- Cutting off or riding the receiver out of the path to the ball by making contact.
- Hooking and restricting a receiver in an attempt to get to the ball in such a manner that causes the receiver's body to turn prior to the ball arriving.

Offensive Pass Interference

In addition to the rule book, actions that constitute offensive pass interference include but are not limited to the following four categories:

- Initiating contact with a defender by shoving or pushing off thus creating separation in an attempt to catch a pass.
- Driving through a defender who has established a position on the field.
- Blocking downfield during a pass that legally crosses the line of scrimmage. (This may also be Illegal Contact)
- Picking off a defender who is attempting to cover a receiver. (This may also be Illegal Contact)

Penalty Enforcements









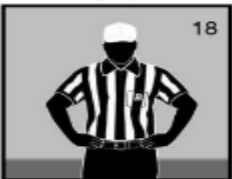



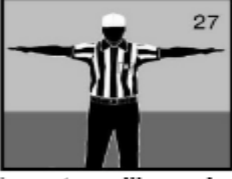

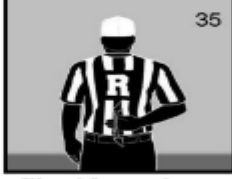





For the purposes of penalty enforcement, the "down counts" and "loss of down" are the same. The enforcement of most penalties require the replay of the down, unless indicated by "down counts" or "loss of down"

Uniform—

- 2 1/4 inch striped football officials shirt, or CFOA approved shirt. It is acceptable for members of the crew to be in different shirts, but all must be either 2 1/4 strip or CFOA approved.
- Football official pant with white leg stripe or black official shorts. The crew must all be wearing the same, either pants or shorts.
- Black belt
- Yellow penalty flags
- Wrist or other down indicator
- Whistle
- Pen and note card

PreGame instructions for RL and Down Indicator

- Keep it short and simple
- Instruct the person responsible for the down indicator is not to move until instructed to do so by the RL
- Use their name when giving instructions
- Be cordial and friendly, but firm with your instructions
- Be certain that they understand how you will communicate with them the down that is to be on the indicator and insure that they know to not change it until instructed to do so
- Be sure that they understand that the official responsible for the Rush Line will not be on the LOS with the down indicator, but that they (the down indicator) will be on the same line, across the field from the HL
- Show them how it will work during the game by putting them on a line as if it were the LOS, make sure the down indicated on the box is correct and then walk off the 7 yards to the rush line and take your position as you would in a game
- Insure they understand their responsibility is to give attention to the officials and the game, no phones allowed and no cheering for either team.

<p>S 1</p>  <p>1</p> <p>Ready for play</p>	<p>S 3</p>  <p>3</p> <p>Stop the clock</p>	<p>S 5</p>  <p>5</p> <p>Touchdown</p>	<p>S 6</p>  <p>6</p> <p>Safety</p>
<p>S 8</p>  <p>8</p> <p>First Down</p>	<p>S 9</p>  <p>9</p> <p>Loss of down</p>	<p>S 10</p>  <p>10</p> <p>Incomplete pass</p>	<p>S 14</p>  <p>14</p> <p>End of period</p>
<p>S 18</p>  <p>18</p> <p>Offside Defense Illegal Blitz</p>	<p>S 19</p>  <p>19</p> <p>False start Illegal procedure</p>	<p>S 21</p>  <p>21</p> <p>Delay of game Delay of pass</p>	<p>S 22</p>  <p>22</p> <p>Illegal participation Illegal substitution</p>
<p>S 27</p>  <p>27</p> <p>Unsportsmanlike conduct</p>	<p>S 33</p>  <p>33</p> <p>Pass Interference</p>	<p>S 35</p>  <p>35</p> <p>Illegal forward pass Illegal backward pass</p>	<p>S 38</p>  <p>38</p> <p>Illegal contact</p>
<p>S 43</p>  <p>43</p> <p>Illegal block</p>	<p>S 47</p>  <p>47</p> <p>Disqualification</p>	<p>S 51</p>  <p>51</p> <p>Leaping Diving</p>	<p>S 52</p>  <p>52</p> <p>Flag guarding Illegal Flag pull</p>



Roughing passer



Stripping



31
Illegal batting/kicking
(Followed by pointing toward toe for kicking)



42
Holding/obstruction
Illegal use of hands/arms



20
Illegal shift
(2 hands)
Illegal motion
(1 hand)



Ready for play