

PIAA Football Officials

Lancaster Chapter

BACK JUDGE RESPONSIBILITIES

Arrive at the game site 1 ½ hours before game time. Locate official's locker room.

Locate visiting team locker room and route you will take the team to the field pre-game.

Locate game manager and find out where visiting team and officials will be located at half time.

Conduct pre-game discussion with linesman and line judge while referee/umpire are meeting with coaches. Discuss keys, receiver coverage, pass coverage, positioning at goal posts during field goal/extra point kicks, and coverage on punts. Discuss hands/feet on sideline pass plays and end zone/end line coverage.

You may also be asked/expected to discuss your responsibilities during referee's pre-game.

Kickoff:

You have the ball. Locate the ball boy for the kicking team and get the ball being used for kickoff before the teams take the field for play. You should have the ball by the coin toss and before you take the field for the national anthem.

Give the kicker instructions to raise his hand when he is ready to kick and to wait for the referee's whistle. Count kicking team players before you hand off the ball to the kicker and then exit field opposite the pressbox side. Wait for the kicker to raise his hand before you raise yours.

Punt:

Take a position on linesman's sideline 2 – 3 yards behind the deepest receiver. The deepest receiver is your responsibility. Watch for muffs, fumbles, illegal blocks, fair catches, etc.

Runs:

Take a position approximately 20 yards behind the line of scrimmage. Stay between the hash marks and favor the strong side of the formation. Your first step at the snap should be back and then react to the play. Keep players in front of you. Follow the play and help with the sideline. If the linesman/line judge goes out of bounds with the play, watch for any action on/near the sideline. Come up and help relay the ball to the umpire after the play.

Return promptly to position after the play and signal down. Make eye contact with the referee and chop in play simultaneously. Start the 25 second clock.

Pass:

Take a position approximately 20 yards behind the line of scrimmage. Stay between the hash marks and favor the strong side of the formation. Your first step at the snap should be back and then react to the play.

Know your receiver responsibility. This should have been discussed pre-game with get with the line judge and linesman. Keep players/receivers in front of you and don't get beat deep.

First down measurements:

Proceed to the head linesman's sideline and stand near the forward stake. This will allow for chains to be quickly reset at first down. Return to position promptly.

Between Quarters:

You are responsible for the team on the head linesman's side of the field. The HL will be busy with the chain crew and setting the chains. Keep 1 minute time between quarters and signal to referee when game should resume. Bring team back to field of play timely.

Field Goals/Trys:

You will be under a goal post. The referee will discuss his preference of which wing official will join you under the posts. This will be discussed pre-game. You have the whistle. Watch the ball from the kick and to/through the goal posts. Be sure you and other official agree – yes or no – BEFORE you signal. Step forward and signal simultaneously. Whistle play dead when ball crosses line of scrimmage on extra point plays and NOT UNTIL ball crosses goal line on field goal kicks. Ball is live on field goal plays until it crosses the goal line.

Timing:

You are responsible for bringing the visiting team on the field before the game and after halftime. Have the team on the field 5 minutes before start of game and half.

Communicate with a COACH in the locker room pre-game/half and let them know how much time they have left to BE ON THE FIELD. When you bring the visitors on the field at the start of the game, you will stay on the line judge side of the field. Wait until the coin toss at the middle of the field and then proceed to the middle of the field with the line judge.

Timing of 25 seconds after the referee signals ready for play and team timeouts are your responsibility during the game. Be sure you have a working watch and/or 25 second timer. Raise hand at 20 seconds and be sure you are visible to the quarterback. Be consistent.