

# Notes for Linesman Breakout Meeting, 8/13/07

## Scrimmage Kicks

### Before the Snap

#### Substitution Issues (3-5-2)

- requirements for being inside 9-yard marks: carryover players, substitutes
- 12 *in the huddle* mitigated by 3-second grace period for replaced players to leave
- 12 *breaking the huddle* always a violation
- Substitutes who become players must stay in game for the down.  
Substitutes become players when they ... (2-27-9)
  - communicate with a teammate
  - communicate with an official
  - enter the huddle
  - take a position in a formation
  - participate in a play
- Replaced players must remain out of the game for the down.  
Players are replaced when they ... (2-27-10)
  - have participated in the previous down
  - are replaced by a substitute
  - leave the field
- Team A may not, while subbing or simulating subbing, rush to the line of scrimmage to create a disadvantage for Team B.  
Three possible dead ball delay fouls (3-5-2-e):
  - Team B delay of game for not promptly completing their reactionary substitutions
  - Team A delay of game for 25-second violation as U stands over ball to allow B to complete its substitutions
  - Team A unsportsmanlike conduct if they try the tactic again

#### Formation Issues (1-4-2)

- Exceptions to 50-79 numbering  
A player whose initial position, when the snapper assumes his position and touches the ball (or hands go below knees), makes him a 50-70 exception ...
  - remains ineligible during the down
  - must be positioned on the line between the end players
  - is restricted in the same fashion as any interior lineman
- Scrimmage kick formation (2-15-10) has three characteristics:
  - At least one player is positioned at least 7 yards behind the neutral zone.
  - No player is positioned for a hand-to-hand snap.
  - It is obvious that a kick may be attempted.
- Upbacks: while at least 7 players must be on the line of scrimmage, remaining players must be *either* on the line or in the backfield, not in no man's land. Often the protectors flanking the snapper or just outside the tight ends have their heads breaking the plane of a line through the snapper's waist. We may choose to ignore

the illegal formation, but if there's a fake or a failure, we should probably consider the mugwumps as on the line, making them restricted, ineligible, or covering up players closer to the snapper.

- The swinging gate presents several issues:
  - legality of the shift
    - not simulating start of play
    - one-second pause by everyone before snap
  - legality of the formation, especially if 50-79 exceptions are created
  - linemen actually get on the line of scrimmage?
  - legality of the snap

### **At the Snap**

- Is there a false start by A or encroachment by B?
- Is A's foul a dead ball false start or a live ball illegal motion or illegal shift?
- Which players are eligible to clip and crackback?
- Who are eligible receivers, especially when 50-79 exceptions are involved?
- Signal, even though J is under goal post on FG and PAT, when end man is off the line on either side.
- Note U signal of three linemen on his side, but don't be distracted from responsibility for neutral zone activity and illegal shifts.
- Note yard line for line of scrimmage and for line to gain.

### **After the Snap**

- Kick loose, has not yet crossed neutral zone
  - Remember: this is a scrimmage kick play even if the ball doesn't cross the neutral zone. All scrimmage kick play rules apply until the kick ends.
  - Remain on neutral zone despite temptation to leave for backfield.
  - Allow either team to catch, recover, and advance ball.
  - Be aware of muff vs. fumble.
  - If possession is gained by anyone, the kick play is over; begin working a run play.
  - If possession by A, normal run play coverages are available. Be at goal line or pylon.
  - If possession by B, L must help R all the way to the goal line; expect little help from U, J, or BJ.
  - If ball becomes dead, stop the clock.
  - If A is to next put ball in play, clock starts on the snap.
- Kick loose, crosses and remains beyond neutral zone
  - Look for first touching: legal by B, illegal by A, ball remains alive
  - After touching occurs, work as a scrimmage kick.
  - Be aware of muff vs. fumble.
  - After possession occurs, work as a run play.
- Typical kick in air beyond neutral zone
  - Shanked kick, or PAT or short FG

- Rule on out of bounds.
  - Rule on illegal touch by A.
  - Rule on touch by B (if FG, ball no longer to return to spot of kick if outside 20).
  - Rule on muff or fumble.
  - Rule on kick catch interference.
  - Be alert for fair catch signal.
  - Be alert for kick untouched by B touching ground in end zone—dead immediately.
  - Be alert for upfield B player far from deep kick signaling fair catch; be ready to whistle play dead when another B player possesses the kick.
- Kick return
    - Be alert for blocking below the waist.
    - Be alert for blocking in the back and clipping.
    - Be ready to put a bean bag down if the ball comes loose.
    - Be attentive to the spot of fouls.
    - Be attentive to forward progress or out of bounds spots.