

# Running Plays



**Dallas Football Officials Association**  
**New Members Training**



# Objective

The intent of this training session is to help you understand and familiarize you with the rules pertaining to Football.

It's important you also read and study the NCAA Rules, UIL Exceptions and TASO mechanics manuals outside of training sessions to get the best understanding possible on football officiating.

## Disclaimer

The information covered has been condensed and paraphrased to help you understand both the intent and the philosophy of the rules. The current NCAA Rule Book & UIL Exceptions are the final authority.

# Lineman & Backs - *Let's Recap*

## LINEMEN

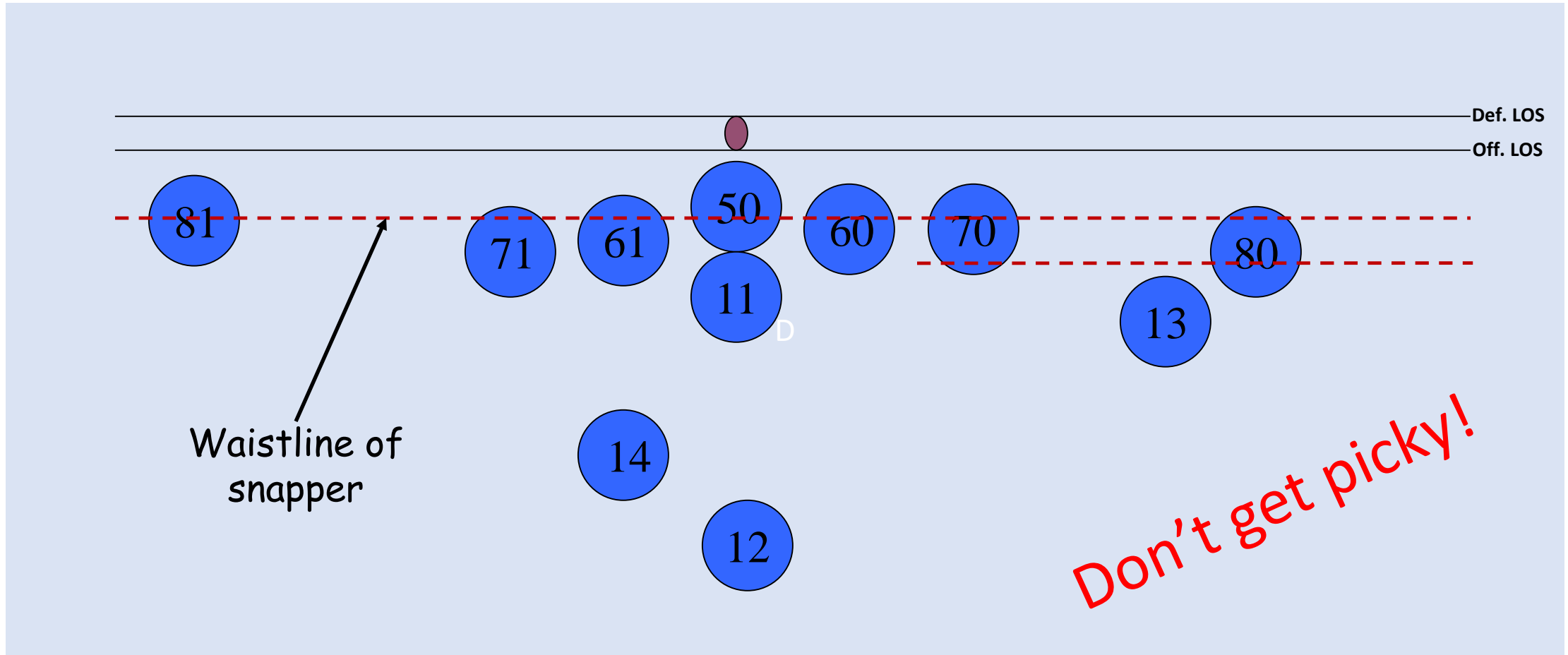
- For a **TEAM A** player to be considered “on the line of scrimmage”:
  - They must be the snapper or
  - Their head must break the plane of a line drawn through the waistline of the snapper.
- All **LINEMEN** must face their opponent’s goal line.
- Their shoulders must be approximately parallel to the LOS.
- **Interior Linemen**: Not on the end of his scrimmage line.
- **Restricted Linemen**: Interior or numbered 50-79.

## BACK

- A **BACK** is any **TEAM A** player who is not a **LINEMAN** and whose head or body doesn't break the plane of a line drawn through the waistline, of the nearest **TEAM A LINEMAN**.
- The player in position to receive a hand to hand snap.
- A lineman becomes a **BACK** before the snap when he moves to a position as a **BACK** and stops.

*There cannot be more than 4 BACKS  
in the backfield at the snap.*

# Linemen & Backs *Let's Recap*



# Ready For Play - RECAP

A dead ball is **READY FOR PLAY** when the referee...

- With the 40-second play clock running, an official places the ball at a hash mark or between the inbounds marks and steps away to his position.
- With the play clock set at 25 seconds, or at 40 seconds after an injury to or loss of helmet by a defensive team player, the referee sounds his whistle and either signals to **start the game clock** [S2] or signals that the ball is **ready for play** [S1] - *Do not signal both!*

# Dead Ball Fouls

- **Dead Ball Fouls:** Foul that a team **CANNOT** correct. Throw Flag into the air and blow whistle to get the play shut down. Avoid further problems by reacting quickly.

## Dead Ball Fouls by **TEAM A:**

- Illegal Substitution
- Delay of Game
- Offensive Encroachment (lined up in NZ)
- Illegal Snap
- False Start – such as:
  - Simulating Start of Snap
  - Motion Man Turning up Early
  - Restricted Lineman picking up his hand
  - Lineman Shifting into a 3 or 4-point stance at the snap
  - All players not set for at least 1 second before snap

## Dead Ball Fouls by **TEAM B:**

- Defense Offside (w/ contact)
- Defense Offside (**TEAM B** player in NZ...Causing **TEAM A** player to Respond)
- Defense Offside (Unabated to the QB)
- Unnatural movement trying to create a False Start on **TEAM A**
- Illegal Substitution – 12 men in formation w/ snap imminent

# Live Ball Fouls

- **Live Ball Fouls:** Fouls that do NOT occur until you have a **SNAP**. Teams can correct before the **SNAP**. Throw your Flag into the air and **CONTINUE** to OFFICIATE...

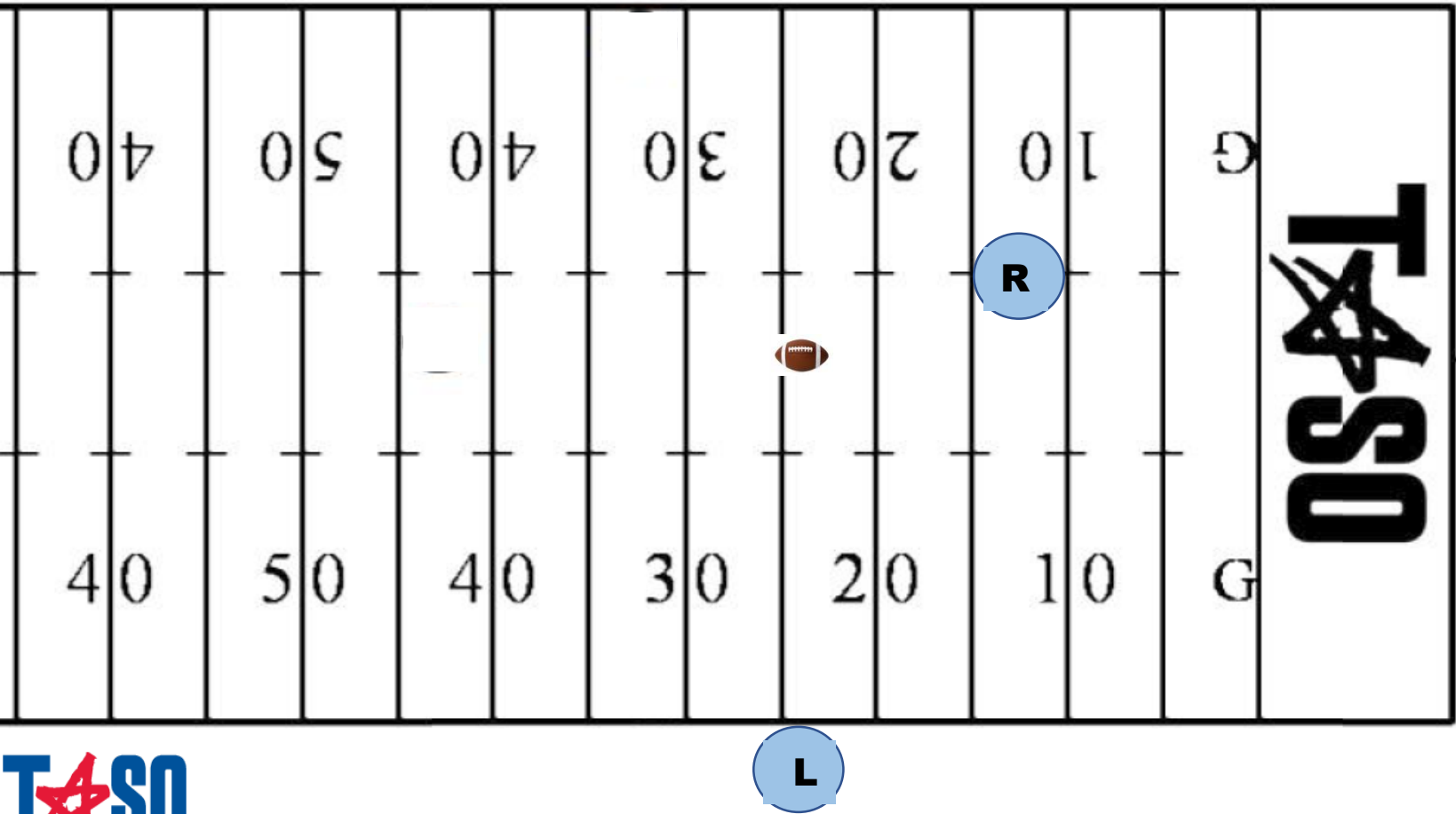
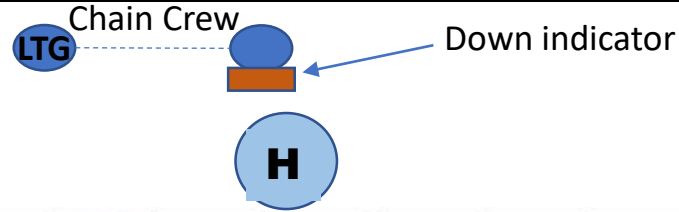
## Live Ball Fouls by **TEAM A:**

- Illegal Formation
- Illegal Motion
- Illegal Shift

## Live Ball Fouls by **TEAM B:**

- Defense Offside (Lined up in the NZ)

# Pre-Snap – Basic Positions(3-Man Crew)



**R** After making the ball ready for play, be in a position to see the ball and the backs, 11 to 15 yards behind the LOS. Initial position is near the center of the field.

**H, L** Be on or outside the sideline at LOS. Indicate offensive LOS by an extended foot to wide offensive players.

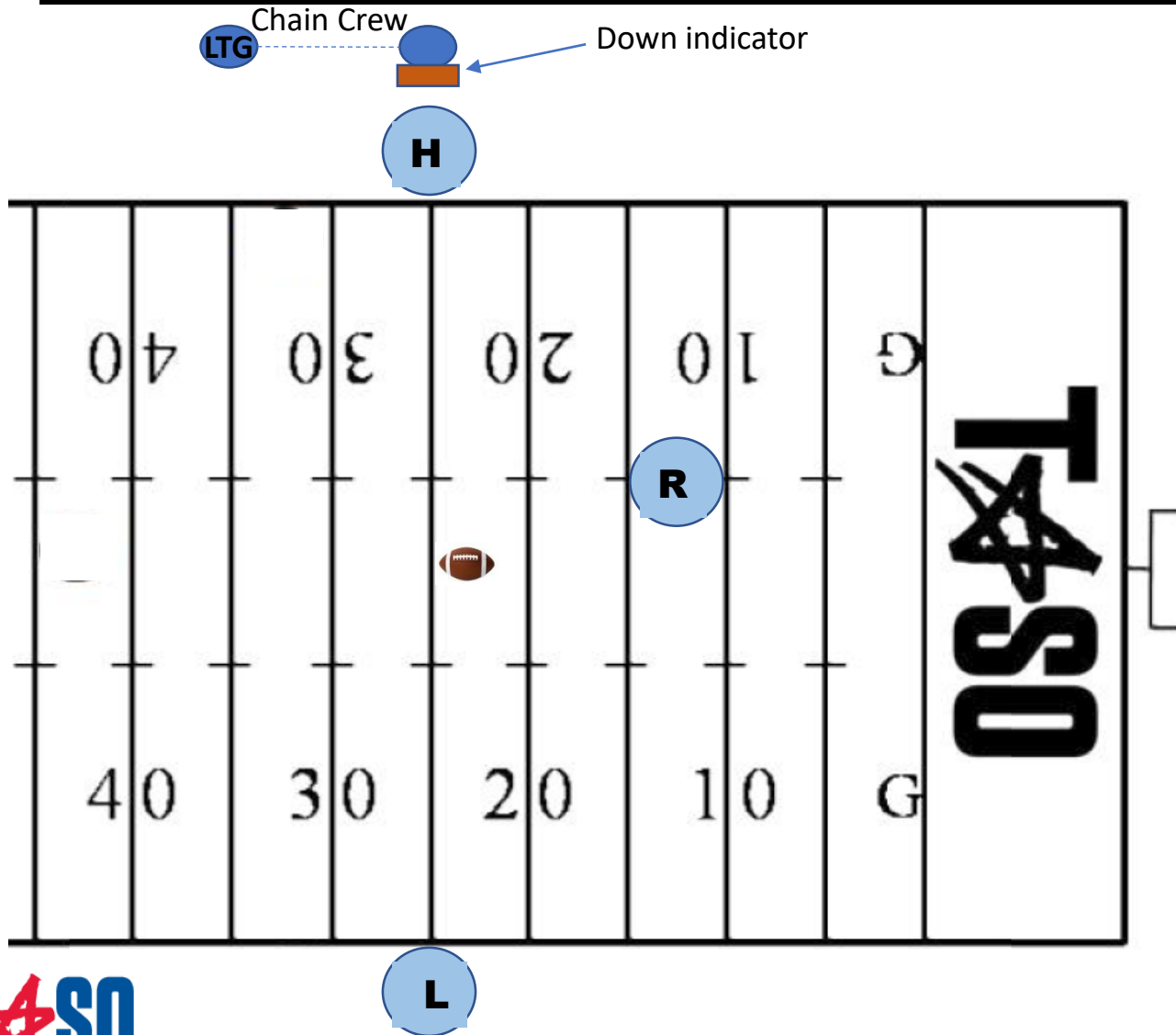
**H** Be opposite press box, on the LOS. Ensure chain crew is in position.

**ALL** Check down & distance; verify clock status

- R is primary on play clock
- L is primary for game clock



# Pre-Snap – Routine (3-Man Crew)



**H, L** Verify legal offensive formation. If wide man nearest you is in the backfield extend arm toward backfield. Know eligible receivers. Responsible for motion man on your side of the snapper. Indicate offensive LOS by an extended foot to offensive players.

**L** Responsible for the correct number of players on defensive team.

**R** Verify 5 offensive players on LOS numbered 50-79. Responsible for the correct number of players on the offensive team.

Position yourself where you have continuous view of the ball. Know backs eligible for a forward pass. Responsible for legality of defensive signals.

**ALL** Ensure clock status is correct. Verify chains. Watch for false starts, illegal shifts & other fouls.

# After the Snap - Referee (3-Man Crew)

## Referee (R)

- Observe initial charge of lineman for infractions by players of either team.
- Watch for illegal action by blockers leading the runner.
- Make sure all blocks and play are legal behind scrimmage line.
- Follow the runner to the sideline behind the line of scrimmage.
- Watch for fouls behind runner after he crosses neutral zone.
- If play goes away from you, trail behind and observe action behind runner and behind flank official. Be in position to cover runner if he returns into your area.
- Retrieve ball if runner's forward progress is stopped and driven back (H/L will hold forward progress spot)

Once ball is dead and it is safe to do so retrieve it for placement at succeeding spot and ready for play— ***don't stop dead ball officiating!***

H/L will place the ball at dead ball spot if in their side zone. If dead ball spot is close to line to gain make ruling if 1<sup>st</sup> down or not.

# After the Snap – H & L (3-Man Crew)

## H, L

- Responsible for NZ infractions.
- Responsible for blockers and action on ends and linebackers.
- Be alert to cover forward progress of runner. Opposite side officials should assist with forward progress if the covering official is not in position to rule.
- If play goes away from you, observe action in offensive backfield behind runner and behind **R**. Be in position to cover runner if he returns into your area.
- Pinch in when necessary, especially on short yardage for first down and if possible on every play within 10-yard line and goal line. Be prepared to rule on forward progress.
- On plays into your side zone area and on wide offensive plays, be prepared to take runner and ball to goal line. **R** covers behind you. You are responsible for your sideline, end line to end line.
- Responsible for clipping and illegal blocks below the waist blocks (**R** can assist).
- For out of bounds plays on your sideline, hold spot, another official will retrieve ball. Clean up out of bounds. Do not get boxed in or turn your back to the ball.
- When ball becomes dead in your area, relay ball to **R** if possible.
- Watch for any illegal action around runner when the ball is declared dead by another official, then assist in spotting ball. If ball goes out of bounds, or clear that a 1<sup>st</sup> down is made, signal time out immediately. Assist **R** in starting game clock after awarding **TEAM A** first down if it is to be started. (Only **R** should signal)

# After the Play (3-Man Crew)

- **H** and **L**, do not jump over players as you mark progress with downfield out thrust foot (unobtrusively, not making a production of it). If necessary, come into the field (“pinch in”) as necessary. Hold spot with foot until you are sure **R** or other official has spot.
- **R** should go quickly to the approximate position of the dead ball spot, check the down and distance with the **H** and **L** and announce and indicate the new down.
- **R** is primarily responsible for lateral placement of the ball at the previous spot after an incomplete pass, penalty, etc. **H** and **L** should assist with relaying ball as much as possible.
- **H** - ensure chains & down-box are moved to correct position. Other officials should verify a well.
- If the play clock is to be started on **R**'s signal, **R** should declare the ball ready for play by blowing his whistle and giving ready signal (or wind the clock). Under unusual circumstances this procedure may vary and require discretionary action by **R**.
- If the game clock should be started after **TEAM A** is awarded a first down, **R** will start the clock with a winding signal and soft whistle when the point of the new series of downs has been established by **H**.

# Recap – Plays from Scrimmage (3-Man Crew)

## R

- Counts offense
- Responsible for play clock

## L

- Counts defense
- Responsible for game clock

## H

- Not primary for counting players or for either clock
- But you can help, don't ignore it. You can be a crew saver.

## Counting Players

- If you have 11 players on team you are counting. extend arm to side with **closed fist**
- If you have less than 11, then extend arm to side with **open hand**
- If you have 12 or more players, then be prepared to rule on if it is a foul. Remember, in some cases team can correct before the snap.

# Common Live Ball Fouls

- Holding
- Illegal Formation
- Offside
- Illegal Motion
- Illegal Shift
- Illegal block below the waist
- Illegal block in the back
- Face mask
- Illegal hands to the face
- Chop Block
- Horse Collar Tackle

**Throw flag and continue to officiate.  
Stop clock at end of play if running.**

# Holding

**HOLDING** – Using the hand(s) and arm(s) to grasp, pull, hook, clamp or encircle in any way that illegally impedes or illegally obstructs an opponent.

## Holding Categories

1. Grab and Restrict
2. Hook and Restrict
3. Jerk and Restrict
4. Turn and Twist
5. Tackle
6. Take down

# Holding (cont'd)

Point of Attack.



*Effect the play.*

*Outside the frame.*

*Make it HUGE!*

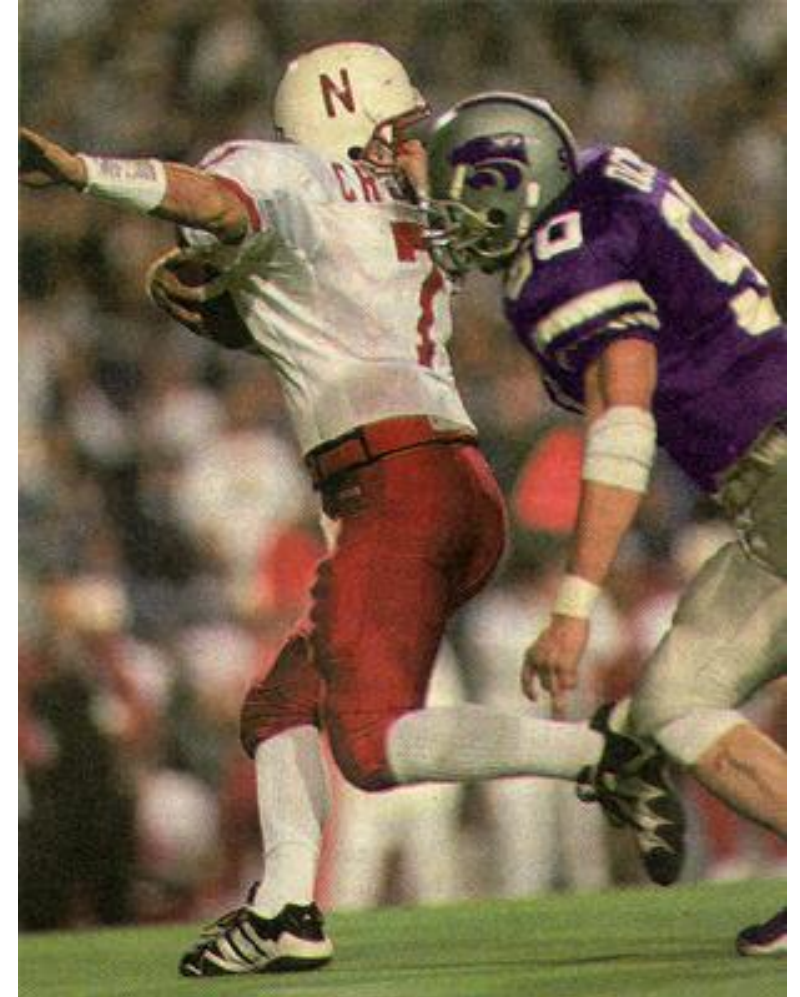
*Watch the feet.*

*Are they moving?*



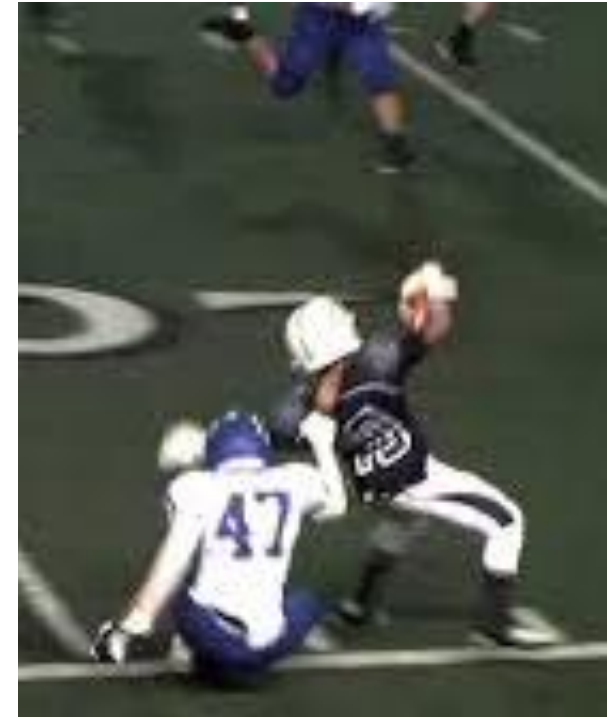
# Helmet and Face Mask Fouls (9-1-8, FR-90)

- No player shall continuously contact an opponent's face, helmet (including the face mask) or neck with hand(s) or arm(s) (***Exception:*** By or against the runner).
- No player shall grasp and then twist, turn or pull the face mask, chin strap or any helmet opening of an opponent. It is not a foul if the facemask, chin strap or helmet opening is not grasped and then twisted, turned or pulled. When in question, it is a foul.



# Horse Collar Tackle (9-1-15, FR-91)

- All players are prohibited from grabbing the inside back collar of the shoulder pads or jersey, the nameplate area, or the inside collar of the side of the shoulder pads or jersey, and **immediately pulling the ball carrier down.**
- This does not apply to a ball carrier, including a potential passer, who is inside the tackle box. (Note: the tackle box disintegrates when the ball leaves it)



# Common “After the Play” Dead Ball Fouls

- Late Hit
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct
- Personal Foul – Unnecessary Roughness

**Throw flag.  
Stop game clock if running.**

# Fumble - Mechanics

- When an official actually sees a live ball fumbled they will DROP their bean bag to mark the approximate yard line where fumble occurred. **NOT WHEN THEY SEE THE BALL LOOSE BUT ONLY IF THEY ACTUALLY SEE THE FUMBLE OCCUR!**
- When recovered, the nearest official should point in the proper direction, no matter who recovers. **R** will then signal the next down when he makes the ball ready for play.

# Digging out Fumbles

## DIGGING OUT FUMBLES

- Nearest official digs for the ball,
- Next official stops clock. The stop the clock signal should be relayed by rest of crew,
- 2<sup>nd</sup> official should assist removing players from the pile,
- 3<sup>rd</sup> official controls other players and watches for a player escaping from the pile with ball.
- When the digging official determines possession he should verbally relay possession information to the nearest standing official, normally the **R**, who will then signal the proper direction. The digging official should press the ball into the recovering player's stomach and stand up together. If possible, the signaling official will point to the recovering player to assist the press box. Only the **R**, if he is not the signaling official, should relay the direction signal.

# Signals

## DEAD BALL SIGNAL:

Covering officials will use the dead ball signal (S7) when the play ends and there is no other reason to stop the clock.



## START THE CLOCK:

A winding signal (S2) is used by the R to start the game clock.



## STOP THE CLOCK:

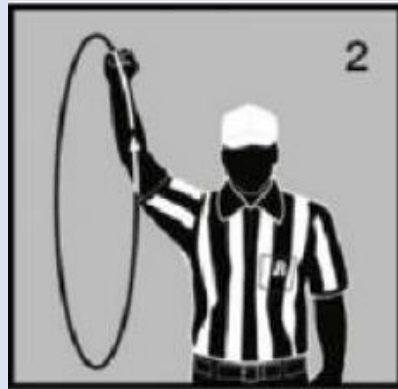
Signal time-out (S3) when the rules provide for stopping the clock or when timeout is charged to a team or to the R. Repeat time-out signal of other officials.



# Signals

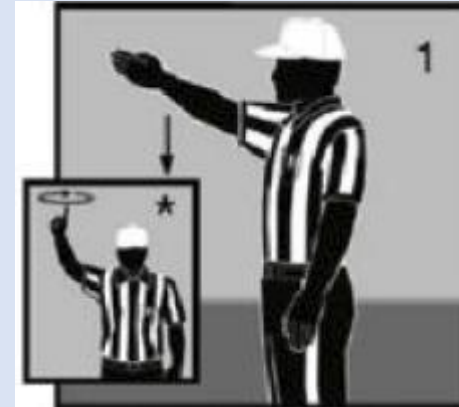
## WINDING SIGNAL:

A winding signal (S2) may be used when the ball becomes dead close to the sideline and the covering official rules that the ball remained inbounds. When the covering official uses a winding signal, make only two complete rotations of the arm.



## READY FOR PLAY:

If the game clock is NOT to be started on R's signal, R should declare the ball ready for play by blowing his whistle and giving the ready for play signal (S1). Also used to start a 25-second play clock.



# Mechanics

**It is not possible to cover all mechanics in this session it is important for you to continue to read & study the following:**

- TASO Mechanics for 3-Man crews
- TASO Mechanics for 4-Man crews
- TASO Mechanics for 5-Man crews
- No need to review 7-Man crew mechanics as you will not work them your first year
- NCAA Rules
- UIL/TAPPS exceptions