

# SCRIMMAGE KICKS THE PUNT



**Conversation 22 - Rule 10-2-5.a with Big12 FJ Matt Mills**  
Rule 11 Podcast: College Football Officiating Conversations

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## SCRIMMAGE KICKS (PUNTS)

A Scrimmage kick is

- A Play that starts with a snap
- Kicked from in or behind the NZ
- Usually from a scrimmage kick formation, but not required

What is scrimmage kick formation?

- kicker and holder 7 yards behind LOS
- kicker 10 yards behind LOS
- obvious a kick will be attempted

Team B restrictions during scrimmage kick?

- If field goal formation then 3 linemen shoulder to shoulder against 1 player illegal
- both field goal and punts formations must be outside frame of snapper

### Officiation Philosophies Section 3

- Illegal block in the back can be called on fair catches.
- Personal fouls should always be called, as should forcible contact that involves player safety.
- It shall always be roughing the kicker when contact is made to the plant leg, whether or not that leg is on the ground.
- It shall be running into the kicker if a defender simply “runs through” the kicking leg and there is no forcible contact.
- On kicks into the end zone, when in question, during the return the ball has not left the end zone.
- When in question, a foul occurs after the ball is kicked.
- When in question, the kicker is outside the tackle box.

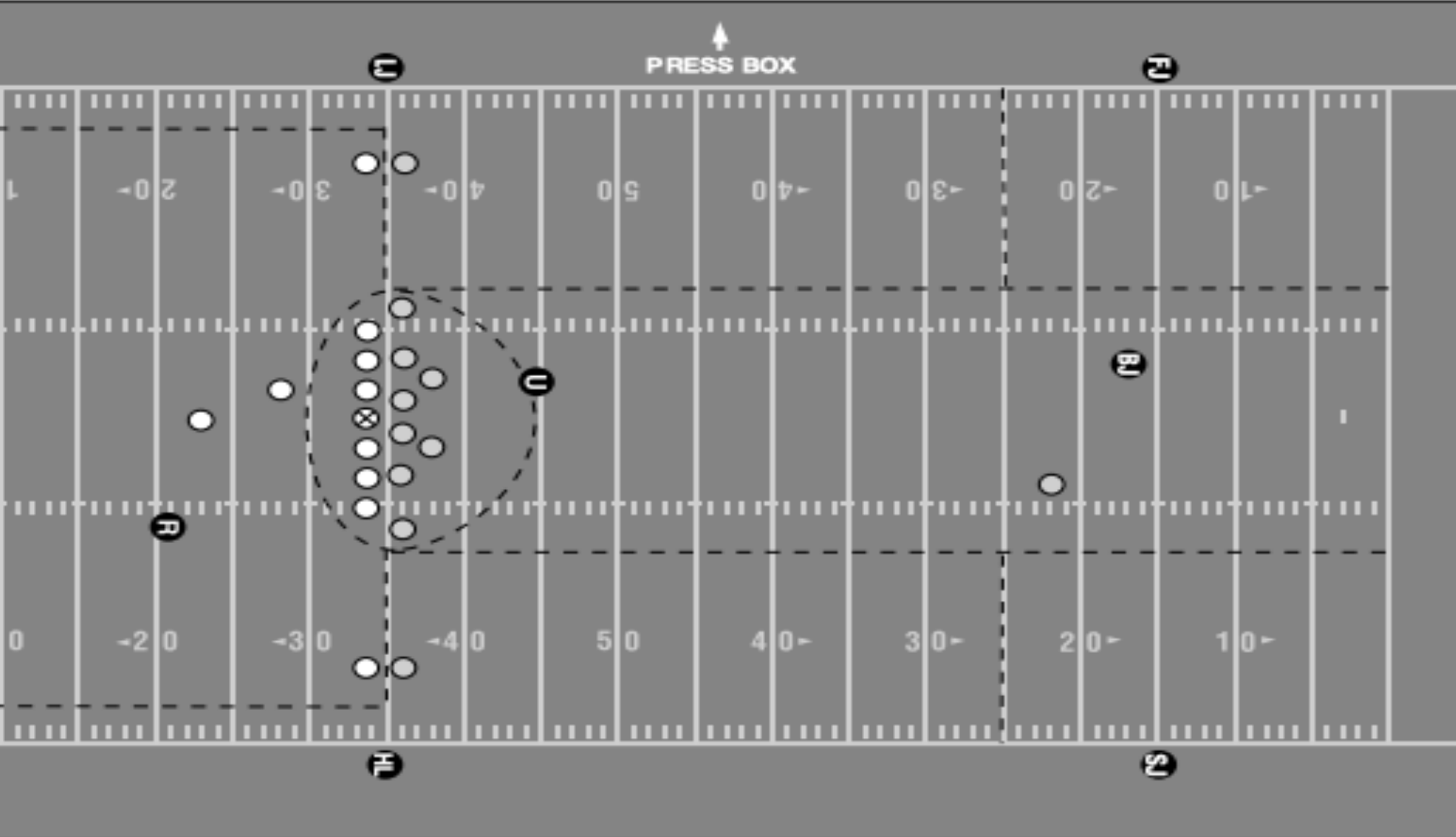
## Positioning and Zones

### *Referee:*

- Take a position slightly behind and to the side of the kicker, outside TE
- See the ball from snap to kick
- If the kicker is near the end-line, straddle the end-line

### *Umpire:*

- Position is approximately 10 yards off the line. (NE10 will be different)



### Head Line-Judge and Line Judge:

- Take your basic position and officiate as on a scrimmage play.

- Hold your position until the ball crosses the line.

### Field Judge and Side Judge:

- Take a position on your sideline no less than five yards behind the deepest receiver.

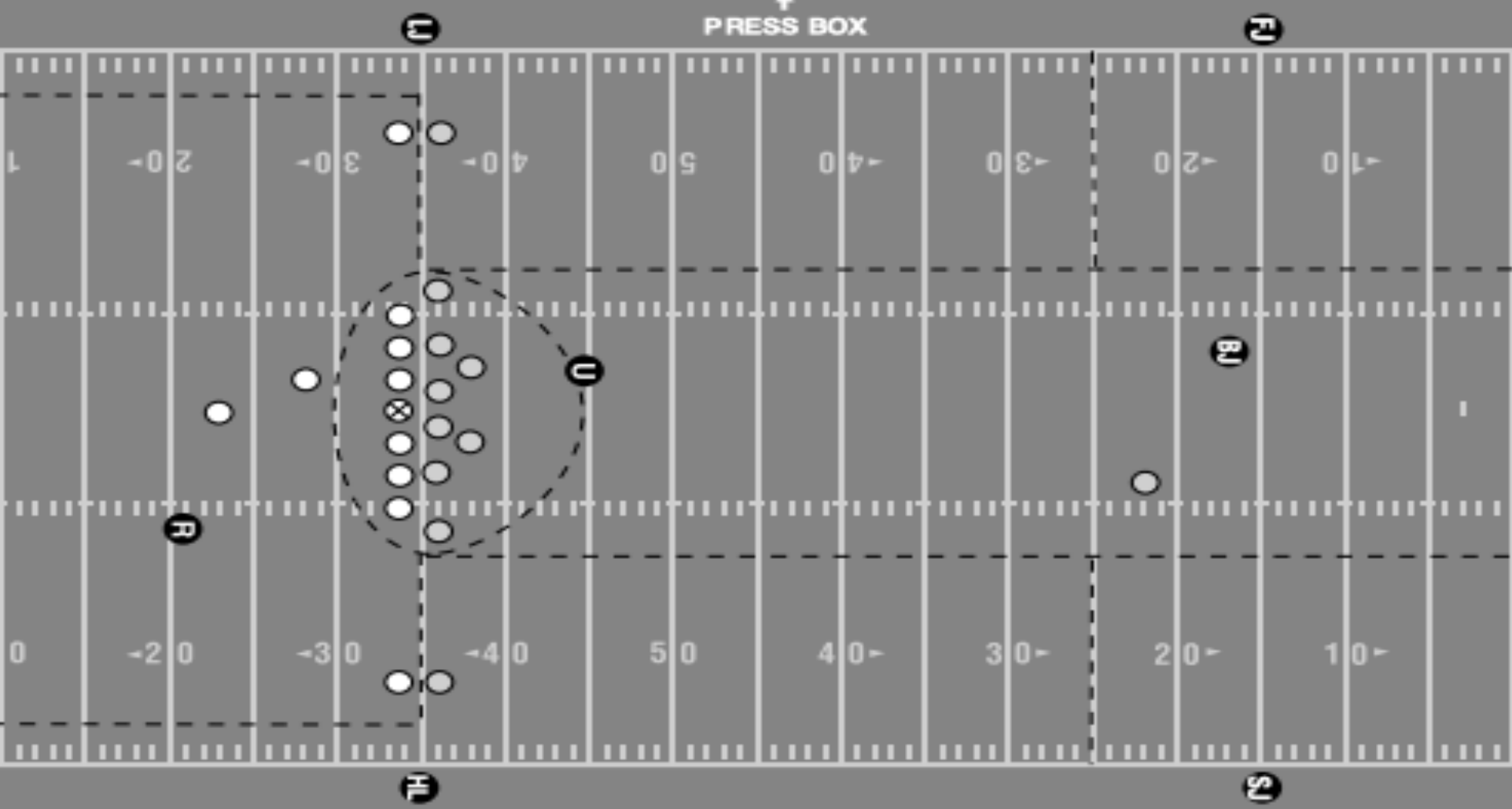
- Go to the Goal line when the ball is kicked from Team A's

45

## Back Judge:

- Basic position is no less than five yards behind
- Favor the wide side of the field.
- Line up on the goal line if the receiver is inside the 10
- Maintain a 45-degree angle with the receiver

↑  
PRESS BOX





## When Ball is kicked

### Referee:

- Observe action on the kicker and watch flight of the ball
- Responsible for observing blocking by the shield.
- Proceed slowly downfield if the kick remains inbounds.
- If ball is kicked OOB, Chop the FJ/SJ in where ball went out
- Be alert for action on the kicker and targeting fouls at all times and illegal blocks of players clearly out of the play.

## REFEREE'S - REMEMBER:

- It shall always be roughing the kicker when there is forcible contact to the plant leg, whether or not that leg is on the ground.
- It shall be running into the kicker if a defender simply "runs through" the kicking leg and there is no forcible contact

## Umpire:

- Observe the blocks of Team A and action by Team B players.
- Pay attention to Team B player over the snapper.
- Turn and move toward the return when the first wave reaches you.



## Head Line-Judge:

- Hold your position, after snap until the ball crosses the NZ
- Signal if the kick is tipped.
- Primary responsibility for observing blocking by the shield.
- Covering play, or ahead of the runner
- You have goal line responsibility on long returns.

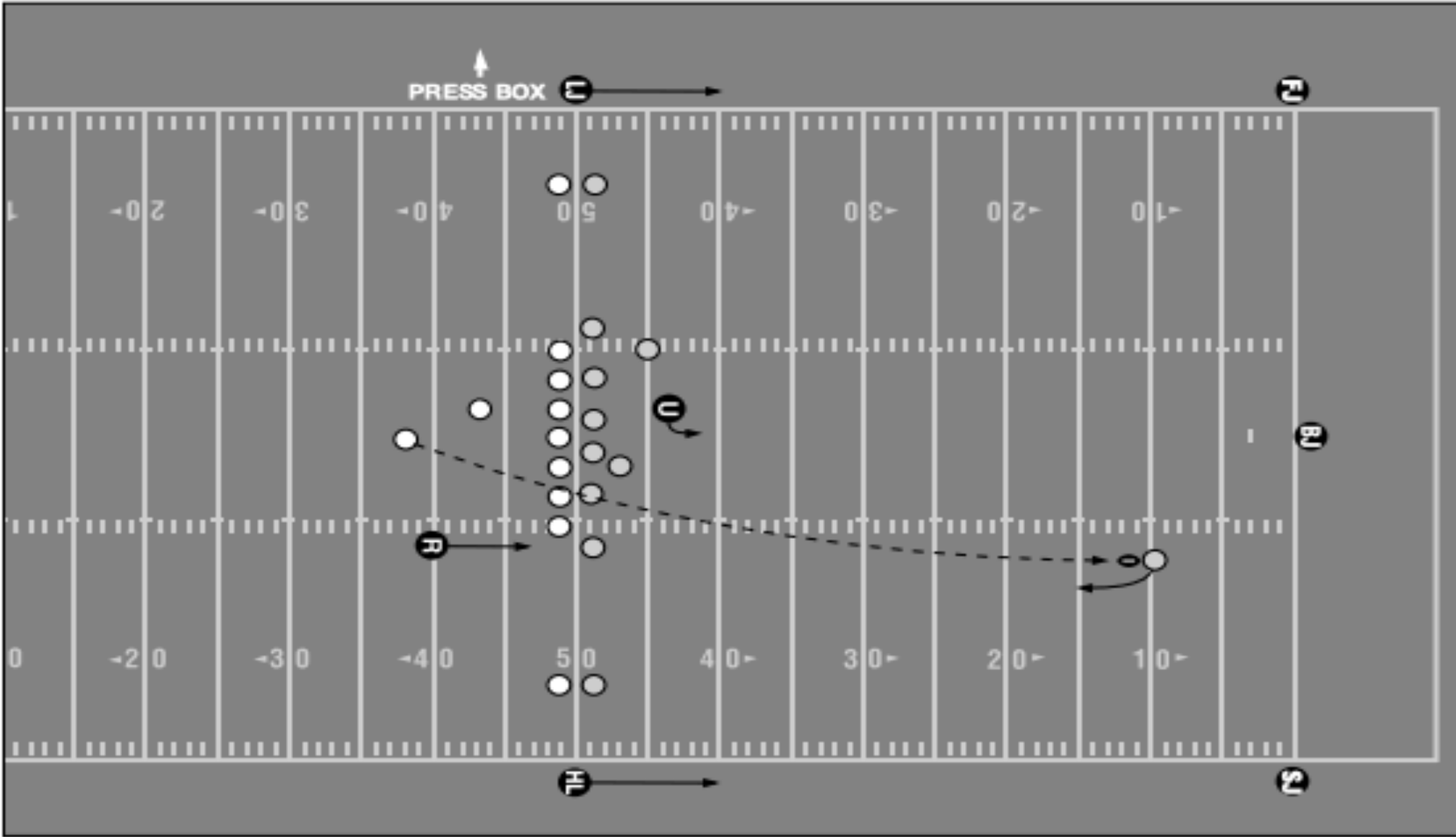
## Line Judge:

- Primary responsibility for observing blocking by the shield.
- When the kick crosses the line, move downfield, covering play, or ahead of the runner
- You have goal line responsibility on long returns.



## Field Judge and Side Judge:

- Primary coverage of the gunner on your side of the field.
- Observe action in front of the receiver.
- If the return is to your side, take over the runner as soon as they start to advance the ball.
- Be alert for fair catch signals and the actions of players when a signal is given.
- Be prepared to rule on interference legality of handoffs
- Follow the ball if the receiver fails to field a kick in your area.
- Manage the GL, straddle the pylon



## Back Judge:

- Have a bean bag in hand.
- Work 45-degree angle with the receiver
- Be prepared to rule on the status of a ball that goes into the end zone and the validity of a fair catch signal.
- Primary responsibility for interference and handoffs
- Bag the spot of the catch or recovery
- Follow the ball if the receiver fails to field a kick.



- Observe blocking in the middle of the field in front of the runner and give up coverage to the Side Judge and Field Judge.

- If all deep officials are lined up on the goal line the Back Judge ha stays with the ball and must leave the goal line if necessary.



All: Be alert for blocked or fake kicks and for recovery and advance of blocked kicks. Don't hesitate to call a foul that occurs away from your position if you are certain a foul occurred.

#### Blocked Kick or Snap Over the Kicker/Holder's Head

The Referee and the wing official they are facing will retreat and box in the play. The wing official on the same side of the formation as the Referee will hold the line of scrimmage until it is no longer threatened. As the play develops, they must adjust to officiate the play

Barring a fair catch, any scrimmage kick can be caught or recovered by the receiving team and advanced.

There are several restriction on the kicking team. The key question to ask ourselves is....DID THE BALL CROSS THE NEUTRAL ZONE?

**If the answer is NO:**

- Either team may catch or recover the ball and advance it. If a Team A player gets it, he may run, pass, or even kick the ball again.
- The continuity of downs is not broken, even if Team B touches the ball.
- All rules pertaining to scrimmage kicks apply on unsuccessful field goal attempts.

If the answer is YES:

- The continuity of downs is broken, so there is no longer a line-to-gain or a NZ.
- If the ball is untouched by Team B after crossing the NZ on a punt and is declared dead, then the ball belongs to Team B at the dead ball spot or at the spot of any illegal touching by Team A.
- If Team B is the first to touch the kick, then Team A may catch or recover the ball and retain possession. Under no circumstances may Team A advance the kick. The ball is dead when Team A gets possession inbounds.
- Team A may not be the first to touch the ball. This is a violation for illegal touching
- Team B has the option to either have the penalty enforced at the previous spot and the down repeated or at the spot where the ball belongs to Team B.