



# NEW YORK STATE HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL OFFICIALS' INTERPRETATION

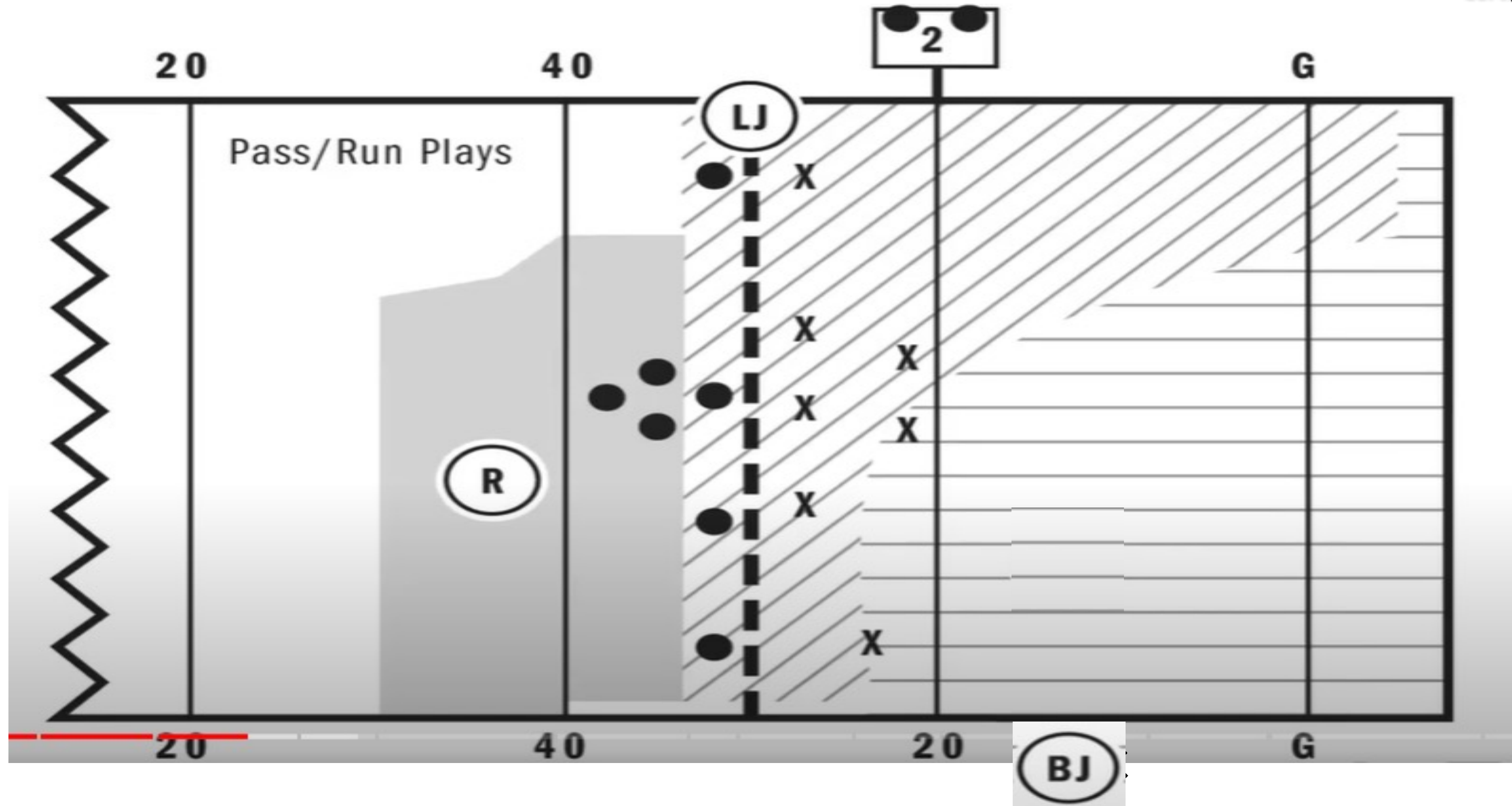
(updated 3-3-24)

New York State Association  
of  
Certified Football Officials, Inc.

# Officiating Philosophies

- **Always box in the play. When in doubt take a position wider and deeper.**
- **Signal and verify the down with other officials. Check the down box for accuracy.**
- **Communicate the clock status as necessary, especially under 2 minute.**
- **Be familiar with the concept of player, zone, ball.**
- **Use preventative officiating when possible and avoid game interrupter calls.**
- **Make the call when it involves player safety.**





# Pre-Snap Referee:

- Set the ball spotters to create the neutral zone
- Announce down/distance/ LTG, mark the ball 'Ready for Play' by blowing it in with signal
- 'Ready for Play' procedure should not prevent a Team from snapping the ball quickly
- Start the timing of the play clock (R is responsible for play clock)
- Initial position should be approximately 7 yards wide and 7 yards deep from the deepest offensive back and on the opposite side of the field as the Line Judge and same side as the Back Judge
- Positioning should be able to see the center, players near the center and backs in your sightlines.  
Alert to false starts and illegal shifts
- Communicate when play clock gets to 10 seconds with signal and chop out 5,4,3,2,1
  - verbal count is **optional**



## Pre-Snap Line Judge:

- **Upon conclusion of the previous play, mark forward progress spot with downfield foot and signal next down. Upon giving the R the spot, communicate down and distance to the down box**
- **Take initial position between the neutral zone on the boundary opposite the R and BJ. Widen position as players press the boundary in their pre-snap alignment**
- **Sightlines: neutral zone, players on both sides of the LOS. Be alert for players entering and exiting (be aware of substitutes)**
- **Alerts: encroachment, false starts, illegal snaps, illegal formations, illegal shifts, illegal motions. Take responsibility for players in motion**

## Pre-Snap Back Judge:

- Upon conclusion of the previous play, if necessary, mark the forward progress spot and pass on to the LJ for the next LOS
- Initial position is opposite boundary of the LJ at least 20 yards downfield and 5 yards deeper than the deepest defender.
- Initial position is ON the boundary NOT 5 yards on the field of play.  
**Wider is better and can press the play as it dictates following your reads**
- Be alert for players entering and exiting (be aware of substitutes)
- Communicate the clock status when needed

# Reading and understanding initial keys:

## Referee:

- QB, players and blockers in the backfield.
- Dead ball equipment enforcement.

## Line Judge:

- Snapper, all players lined up on their respective LOS and receivers on your boundary.
- Dead ball equipment enforcement

## Back Judge:

- Receivers on your boundary and field side of the snapper.
- Dead ball equipment enforcement

## 4-Person Crew:

### Field Judge:

- Receivers on your boundary and field side of the snapper.
- Dead ball equipment enforcement

### Back Judge:

- Receivers to both boundaries.
- Dead ball equipment enforcement

# Passing and Running Plays Referee:

- **Be ready to rule on snap if it strikes the ground. After the snap, observe action behind the neutral zone with your eyes on the QB and blockers around the QB/ runner**
- **Mark forward progress if play ends behind the LOS**
- **Assist the BJ with runners going out of bounds on your boundary**
- **Once ball is advanced beyond the LOS, remain near the neutral zone to rule on plays from trailing position behind the ball. Once the ball is dead, be ready to retrieve the pucks.**
- **Remain wider and deeper than the QB, aware of potential backward passes to another passer. If pass is not thrown immediately, you're responsible for ruling on all passes behind the LOS. If in doubt, the pass is backward**
- **When forward pass is thrown announce "Ball is Away" with eyes on the passer until no threat of a foul**
- **Primarily responsible for roughing the passer and intentional grounding**
- **Press the LOS with the passer to rule on the legality of the pass. If in doubt, the pass is legal**

# Passing and Running Plays Line Judge:

- **Post snap, hold your position for 1 count to observe initial charge of the line players to rule on contact created by either team.**
- **Run read: Hold at the neutral zone and observe blockers and defenders around the ball.**
  - **If pass is thrown immediately rule on the direction.**
- **Pass read: Move downfield 3-5 yards with your eyes on the middle of the field and receivers pressing your boundary**
- **Once the forward pass is thrown work to a position between the receiver and defender, keeping 'outside in' look of the play**
- **As the runner crosses the LOS, stay parallel with the runner to rule on all backward passes beyond the LOS. Mark forward progress past the neutral zone and be responsible for your sideline from end line to end line**

## Passing and Running Plays Back Judge 3-Person:

- After the snap, hold your position for a 1 count to observe movement of initial keys
- Run read: Observe blockers around runner and retreat to boundary as the ball presses your sideline
- Pass Read: Retreat as receivers establish patterns. Don't allow players to get behind you. Once the pass is thrown, work to get in position between the receiver and the defender

## Passing and Running Plays Back Judge 4-Person

- ~~After the snap, hold your position for a 1 count to observe movement of initial keys~~
- ~~Run read: Observe blockers around runner and retreat as the ball presses your position~~
- ~~Pass Read: Retreat as receivers establish patterns. Don't allow players to get behind you. Once the pass is thrown work to get in position~~

## Field Judge:

- ~~Field Judge: Position, coverage and responsibilities are the same as back judge 3-person on other scrimmage plays~~



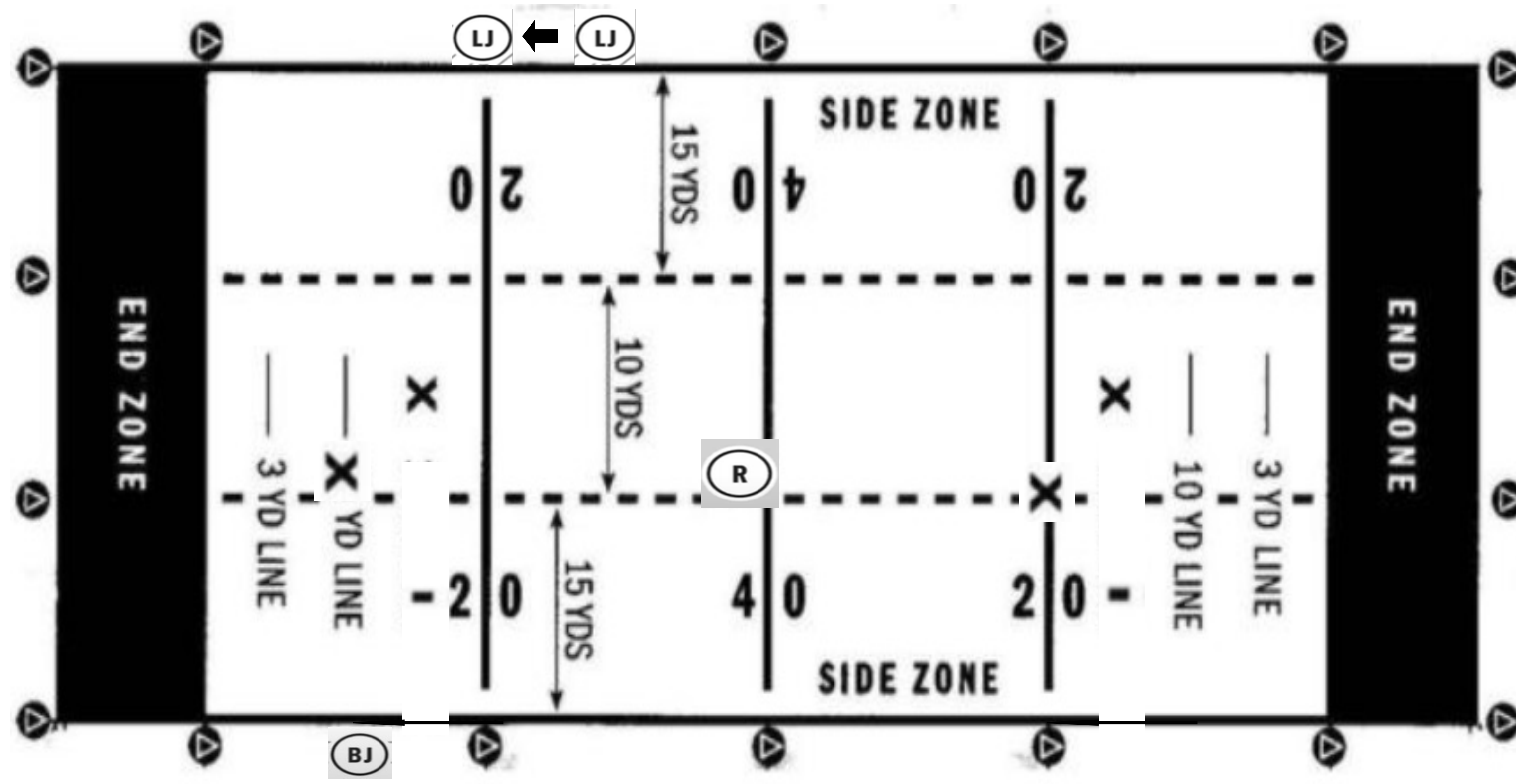
## 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Down Line to Gain coverage 3-person

- Referee: Position, coverage and responsibilities are the same as other scrimmage plays
- Line Judge: Pre-snap position and keys remain the same. If the ball is snapped 10 yards or less from the line-to-gain move quickly to LTG. Hold there to rule of 1<sup>st</sup> down or forward progress short. Travel as the runner travels beyond the LTG to dead ball.
- Back Judge: Position, coverage and responsibilities are the same as other scrimmage plays

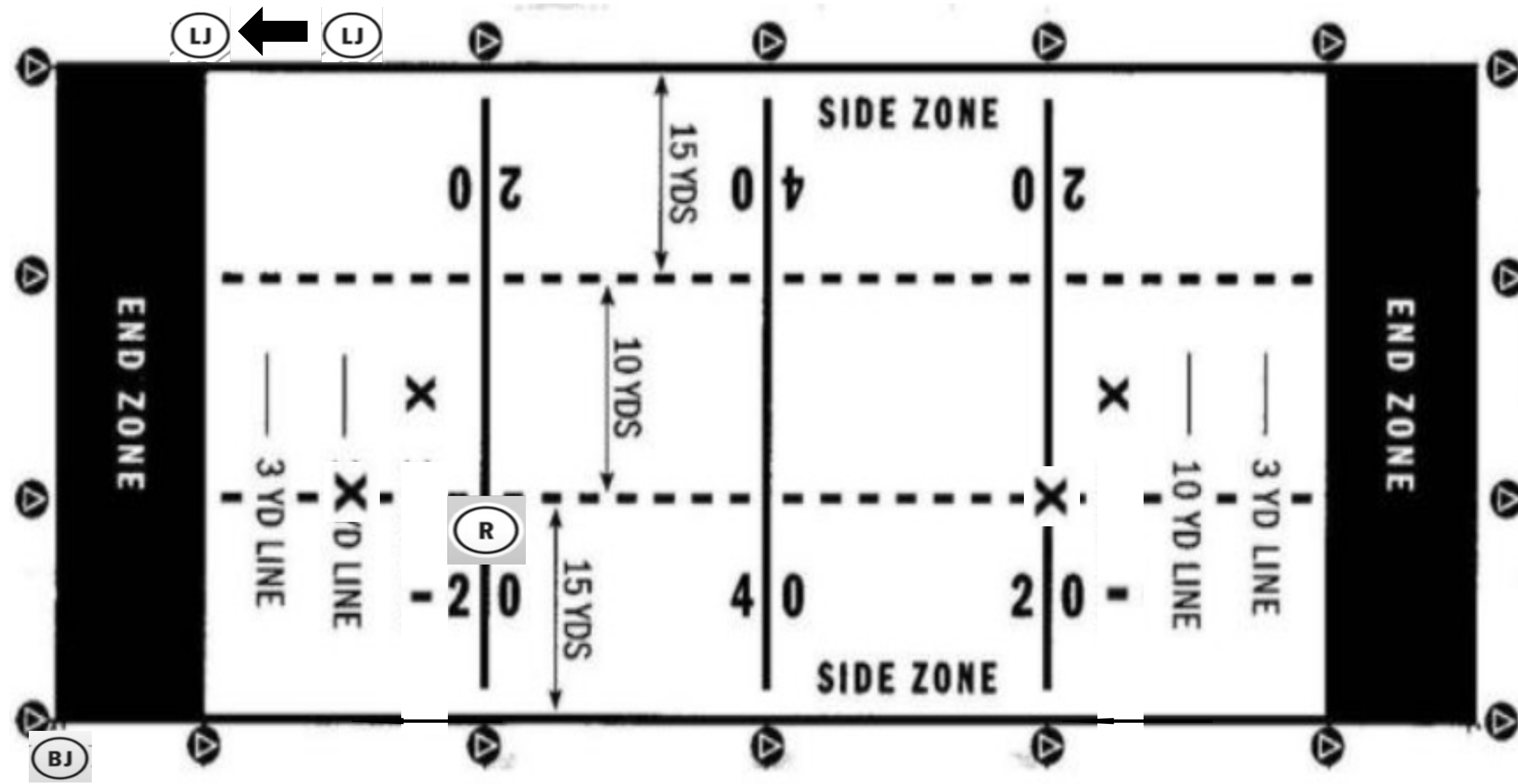
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# 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Down Line to Gain coverage **3-Person**



# Goal Line and PAT Conversion 3-Person



## Goal Line and PAT Conversion coverage: 3-Person

- Referee: Pre-snap position, keys and coverage responsibilities are the same
- Line Judge: Pre-snap position and keys remain the same. If the ball is snapped on the 10 yard-line or inside move to the goal line immediately to rule on plays from there.
- Back Judge: Pre-snap position remains the same. If the ball is snapped on the 10 yard-line or in position on the end line and off the boundary. Hold position until dead ball or change of possession.

## Goal Line and PAT Conversion coverage: 4-Person

- ~~Referee: Pre-snap position, keys and coverage responsibilities are the same~~
- ~~Line Judge: Pre-snap position and keys remain the same. If the ball is snapped on the 10 yard-line or inside move to the goal line immediately to rule on plays from there.~~
- ~~Field Judge: Hold the goal line and off the boundary~~
- ~~Back Judge: Pre-snap position remains the same. If the ball is snapped on the 10 yard-line or in position on the end line in the **middle** of the field. Hold position until dead ball or change of possession.~~

## Punt Plays Referee:

- **Prior to 4<sup>th</sup> down plays ask the team captain or coach do they want to punt or play. Communicate the decision, mark and signal the ball 'Ready for Play'.**
- **Notify all players to stay out of the neutral zone until the ball is punted**
- **Initial position and keys remain the same**
- **Watch for the snap hitting the ground and the punter kicking the ball**

# Punt Plays Line Judge:

- Initial position and keys remain the same
- Post snap hold your position to rule on the play from there eyes on neutral zone infraction before the kick
- Rule on if the kick crosses the LOS
- If kick is short mark the spot with bean bag where the kick touches the ground
- Assist with the spot if the ball goes out of bounds
- Kick in the air move downfield and observe blockers and runner maintaining your boundary

# Punt Plays Back Judge:

- Initial position the same but move at least 3-5 yards behind the deepest receiver
- If that is on or inside the 10 move to the goal line
- After the snap keep your angle with the receiver. Once the ball is caught mark the kick end spot with bean bag. Observe blockers and responsible for the goal line to rule on touch backs and balls hitting the ground
- Balls out of bounds on the ground or in flight mark the spot

# Approach to Penalty Enforcement

- **Be professional and courteous at all times**
- **Know the rules and penalty enforcement**
- **Take into account the age and skill level.**
- **Be proactive in communication with coaches and players**
- **Enforce the rules with eye on player safety**
- **Make the call when it involves player safety**
- **Avoid 'By the Book' or game interrupter calls**
- **Have a defined penalty announcement progression in place**
- **What? Who? Result. Verbal and by signal**