

RTO Video Clip Observation Notes 9/29/2019

Play #1 The first Observer's Play of Interest is on a change of possession down where the play ends close to but short of the line to gain. The LJ is behind the play and isn't in the ideal position to mark the player's forward progress spot, given the situation. He marks the dead ball spot at the 30 yard line and the R determines that the spot is short, and signals for a new series for team B. As the U receives the new ball and without acknowledging the LJ, flops the position of the ball and places it inside the 30 yard line. It now appears that the spot should have been, or is much closer to the original line to gain spot. In this instance, the U should take his time to ensure his spot is accurate by verifying with the side officials that the spot is correct prior to placing the ball. Also, the LJ should know prior to the snap, where the line to gain is and be ready to move as quickly as possible to have the best view on progress.

Play #2 On this passing play, watch the defender quickly rush and hit the QB. Did the QB release the ball prior to the hit? Did the defender have time to avoid contact with the QB? Does the defender hit the QB with his shoulder or arms, or does he use his helmet as a weapon? The R appears to have a good angle and is focused on the QB throughout the action; however, he is moving quickly toward the QB rather than stationary at the moment of the hit. Upon close review, the defender appears to lower his head and make contact with the crown of his helmet on the QB. It is the R's sole responsibility to maintain close observation on the QB prior to, during and after a pass is thrown to protect the vulnerability of the passer. The R should strive to maintain the best possible angle(s) throughout the passing play in order to protect the passer.

Play #3 On this scrimmage kick play, watch the BJ. The kick return player gives a fair catch signal and after the ball hits the ground and rolls toward the end zone, the returner uses his body to keep a kicking team player from downing the ball short of the goal line. Is this "screening" contact legal? Is it considered a block? Is contact without arms, hands, or shoulders considered a block? The BJ should maintain proper angles to observe the receiver and the kicked ball during the play. Once the ball hits the ground and moves toward the goal line, that should be the priority for the BJ in order to be able to rule on a touchback or other spot close to the goal line. On this play, the receiver does impede the advance of the kicking team. The BJ should have moved quickly to cover the goal line, ready to mark the end of the kick and rule on whether or not there was an illegal block.

Rule 2.3.1 defines Blocking as: "Contacting an opponent with any part of the body". Rule 9.3.3 is also applicable: "A receiver who has given a valid or invalid fair catch signal cannot block an opponent until the kick has ended".

Play # 4 On this passing play, keep an eye on the positioning of the HL. At the snap, the HL should key the tackle on his side to determine "run/pass". If "pass" is the read, he should begin to move down the sideline keeping the receivers in his area in view. On this particular play; however, the HL stays at the LOS after the receivers in his area have gone downfield. He does hustle down the sideline as the play is ending, but in his haste to catch up, cuts up into the field to mirror his partner. We would like to see the HL initially somewhere near the 31 yard line in order to be in position to cover the receivers on his side of the field. In addition, as the play ends, the trailing side official should move quickly down the sideline, keeping players in view and square up to the new line prior to coming onto the field, mirroring his partner.