

RTO Video Clip Observation Notes 10/20/2019

Play #1 The first Observer's Play of Interest is a run up the middle with a fumble. The crew is quick to accordion in on this fumble – almost too quick as the R passes players of opposing teams. The entire crew is focused on the fumble and it appears that no one has stayed back a bit to dead ball officiate, the logical one to keep back on this play would be the BJ. The LJ dropped a beanbag on the fumble yard line, we cannot tell if the umpire dropped a bean bag, but that is the first thing that the closest official should do. If the players form a pile as they try to get the ball, the covering official becomes the digger. If necessary, another close official can assist the digger. The other officials should remain clear of the players and dead ball officiate. The Head Linesman stopped the clock when there was no clear change of possession and no indication that the players were going to be slow to unpile. On fumbles, we only stop the clock when we have a change of possession or the players are very slow to unpile. It appears that the R is not aware of the clock being stopped because he never restarts it, probably because he was focused on the fumble spot as he raced in. We have to remember that all 5 officials cannot be focused on the same spot of the field, dead ball officiating by the crew members away from the action is essential in these kinds of plays.

A side note on this play, the U becomes part of the action and ends up too close to be effectively officiating. His starting position is as deep as the MI book allows, as the play comes towards him, he backs downfield instead of pivoting with the play and letting it pass.

Play #2 This play is a great example of using good judgement deciding whether to throw a flag or not. The play is a run up the middle which ends quickly with a small loss. However, the center, #75, continues his block down the line after the play is over. As the play ends, the Referee quickly goes over to where #75 is and appears to talk to him. A personal foul could have easily been called on #75, but the Referee considered that the play was over and the continued block had no effect on the play. So rather than throw a flag, he used good judgement and gave #75 a talk-to.

Play #3 Our last play in this series is a good example of a crew making sure their communications are spot on. The Umpire, Head Linesman, and Line Judge all throw a flag for a pre-snap foul. Watch what they don't do: They don't try to signal the foul to the Referee, they don't point at the offending team; instead they all come within speaking range of the Referee to ensure that they are all reporting the same thing. This extra effort by the crew in this situation to come together and verify what each flag is for will make sure that they call the right foul. The crew then completes the enforcement flawlessly, each official doing his job exactly as the MI book describes. WELL DONE!