

LINESMAN H / DJ

Your spot, your keys and your reads, situation by situation. You work the sideline opposite the press box. You are the white marker on every diagram.

R

Referee

U

Umpire

LM

Linesman (H/DJ) — you

LJ

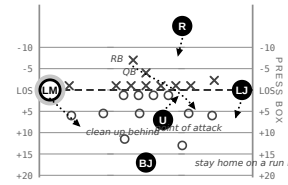
Line Judge

BJ

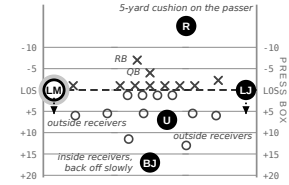
Back Judge

RUN & PASS ▶snap between the -10 and the +10

RUN



PASS



WHAT YOU DO

- Ten yards outside the widest A player, never inside the numbers. If A is near the sideline, take steps out of bounds.
- Know the line to gain before the snap. Count the players on the line on your side of centre and signal the Line Judge.
- Show A where the line is with your backfield foot, then set your feet parallel and stand up straight.
- Motion on your side of centre is yours, and so is getting substitutes off on your sideline.

LM YOUR KEYS

- Run — snap · line play · blocks downfield · the runner.
- Pass — snap · player(s) · QB · zone · ball. The outside receivers are yours.
- Read the guard and tackle first: do they stand up? Then read the quarterback's eyes.
- The sideline is yours, goal line to goal line.

THE THREE PASS READS, IN ORDER

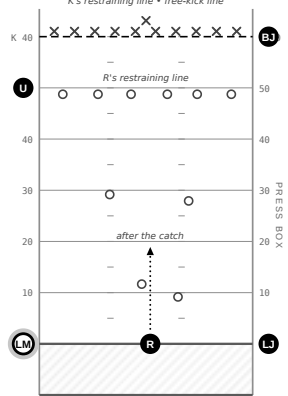
- 1. Flat / bubble** Stay home. Be ready to open the door if the runner comes at you. Don't move until this read is done.
- 2. Short / medium** Move downfield five, shoulders parallel, then stop. Over 75% of passes go 15 yards or less.
- 3. Long** Turn and burn. Read the receiver running hard or the stop-and-go.

ON A RUN

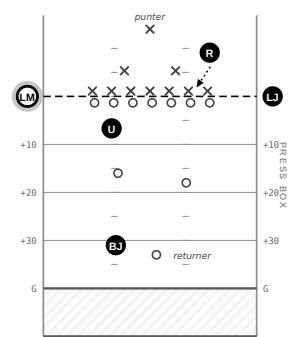
- Point of attack** Line play there, and receivers ahead of it.
- Crossing over** Runner to the far side zone: come in to the near hash at 45° and clean up behind the Umpire.
- Progress** Downfield foot in front, square off, no angling in.
- Never** Hug the sideline all night. Get off it without running through players.

KICKS ▶free kick and scrimmage kick

KICKOFF



PUNT



WHAT YOU DO

- Kickoff: the goal line on your sideline. Move up to the 10 if that team's first kick fell short of the 15.
- Stay on the sideline until the kick ends, and watch for a fair catch signal.
- Trail the runner by at least five yards and watch the blocks. Do not hurry to the dead-ball spot.
- Punt: stay on your sideline. Pause before moving downfield and read whether the kick could be blocked.

LM YOUR KEYS

- Kickoff — R touching the kick · wind · K out of bounds · blocks immediately ahead of the returner.
- Punt — snap · the kicker's catch · line play · the wide out.
- Wind the clock only if the kick is caught or touched in your side zone.
- Snap over the punter's head: move into the backfield and help the Referee.

YOUR SPOT

- Kickoff** Goal line, sideline opposite the press box.
- Onside** Up to the 50, your sideline. Officiate it as a plane.
- Punt** Your sideline at the line of scrimmage.
- Short kick** Starting at the 10 and it goes toward the goal line? Hustle back outside the pylon.

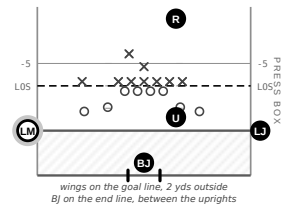
AFTER THE PUNT

- 30 yards or less** Jog downfield 10, then stop and watch.
- More than 30** Jog downfield 15 to 20, watching both teams.
- Out of bounds** Jog beyond the spot, turn with your arm up, walk slowly back, wait for the Referee to chop.
- Never** Overrun the play. Blocks ahead of the returner matter more.

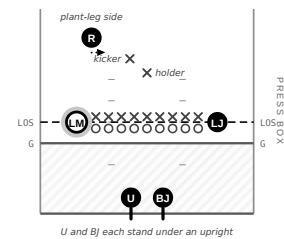
GOAL LINE & PLACE KICKS

▶snap on or inside the +10 · tee on the field

GOAL LINE



FIELD GOAL & TRY



WHAT YOU DO

- Goal line: two yards outside the sideline, on the restraining line. You must be standing on the goal line before the ball gets there.
- From the +10 to the +5, start moving at the snap. From the +5 in, hustle straight there, two yards outside the pylon.
- Runner dives at the pylon: back out so you can see the whole play. Never mirror a touchdown signal.
- Field goal and try: stand on the field numbers at the line of scrimmage.

LM YOUR KEYS

- Place kick — snap · **fake** · the near tight end or wingback block.
- Know it's a touchdown, run in on the goal line. Not sure, run in short of it and find the ball first.
- Make eye contact before signalling. If anyone has an incomplete pass, that comes out immediately.
- Fake on a try short of the goal line: mark forward progress only.

YOUR SPOT

- Goal line** 2 yds outside the sideline, on the goal line.
- Field goal** On the field numbers at the line.
- Try** Same. Muddle huddle: 2 yds out of bounds, then hustle to the numbers if they shift.
- Fake** Move immediately to the goal line, 2 yds outside the pylon.

SELLING IT

- Be patient** Find the ball first. Better late and right.
- Signal** Stop at the goal line, signal, pivot 90° and follow the runner.
- Long FG** Move downfield when it's kicked. Short and made: hustle in toward the linemen.
- Backside** Runner goes to the far pylon — pinch in.

BETWEEN DOWNS, CLOCK & FOULS

▶every down, all night

WHAT YOU DO

- Do not look over your shoulder on a close first down. Hold your spot and let the Line Judge rule it.
- Never spot the ball in the side zone. Mark it with your downfield foot and hold it for the Umpire.
- Runner out of bounds: stop the clock twice immediately, then turn and watch. Swivel and watch them come back in.
- You work with the chain crew. Both wings walk off penalty yardage.

LM YOUR KEYS

- Wind twice when the spot is inbounds between the numbers and the sideline, unless it's an obvious first down.
- Close to a first: sprint in until you meet resistance. Whoever can see leather yells for the ball.
- Cross-field help: move into the field toward the hash so your partner can actually see you.
- Hat, not flag, when an A or K player goes out of bounds on his own.

FOULS

- Walk-off** Both wings walk it. Tell the head coach the down and distance both ways.
- Chain** Five-yard walk-off near a first down: check the tape.
- Sidelines** Yours in a fight. Keep non-players off the field.
- Spot foul** Cover it.

HOUSEKEEPING

- Out of timeouts** Tell the head coach.
- Substitutes** Off the field on your sideline before the snap.
- Line to gain** Point it out to the Line Judge on third and fourth down.
- 5 yards or less** Move to the line to gain at the snap, like goal line mechanics.

WHEN YOU WORK A CREW OF 4 — what changes for you

- 01

Kickoff: you're at the receivers' 10 opposite the press box, not on the goal line — and the Referee mirrors you at the 10 on the press box side.
- 02

Pass: every receiver on your side is yours, and the middle of the field is dual coverage with the Line Judge. Talk across before the snap.
- 03

Goal line: step into the end zone to see a catch near the end line. There is no Back Judge on it.
- 04

Field goal and try: if you're the wing looking at the Referee's back, you release to the end line and take an upright with the Umpire.
- 05

Run: you get downfield blocks on your half with nobody behind you. Stay wider and longer before coming in to clean up.

Built from the OHSAA Gold Book *Brief & Concise* mechanics for a crew of 5, which follows the NFHS Officials Manual. Associations amend these, so check Vermont's guidance before teaching it. Print at 100% on Letter, two-sided, flip on the long edge.