

SYRACUSE CHAPTER – NYSCFO  
OBSERVERS GUIDELINES  
20 June 2006

**FOCAL POINTS**

SAFETY AND SPORTSMANSHIP

PENALTY ENFORCEMENT OF ALL UNSPORTSMANLIKE ACTS

**REFEREE:**

The primary area for observation is player safety, the pace of the game and overall administration of the game.

**1. Between Plays.**

**a.** Does he make the ball ready for play consistently with a clear, visible signal after the ball is placed on the ground? Does he attempt to maintain a consistent pace from the end of the previous down and the next snap?

**b.** Does he assist in spotting the ball?

**2. During Plays.**

**a.** Does he position himself on the passing arm of the QB at least as wide as the tackle and 15 yards from the line of scrimmage?

**b.** Does he protect the QB on sweeps by staying with him a bit longer as the ball carrier moves away? On pass plays does he stay with the QB? On scrambles does he stay with the QB even into the out of bounds area?

**c.** On punts does he position himself even with the punter and outside the TE? (NOTE: for 4 man game R is to be on LJ side of kicker; for 5 man game R is to be on kicking leg side of kicker). On Trys and Field Goals does he face the holder from a position approximately in line with the kicker and outside the end/blocking back?

**3. When Play Ends.**

**a.** Does he dead ball officiate?

**b.** Does he observe the substitution process?

**4. Penalty Situations.**

**a.** Are penalty signals clear, crisp and easy to see from the press box?

**b.** Are preliminary signals visible from the press box and coach's box?

- c. On false starts, delay of game, offside (etc.) He only needs to give one signal to the press box.
- d. On fouls during the play, does he give preliminary signal prior to talking to Captains and, then final signal after captain's option?
- e. After final signal does he hustle back to mark the ball ready for play?
- f. If field microphone is used, are his explanations concise and easy to understand?

### **5. Game Timing.**

- a. Does coin toss and Captains options occur approximately 3 minutes prior to start of each half?
- b. After signal for successful PAT, Field Goal or Safety, does the free kick occur within approximately 60-65 seconds? (except TV games)?

### **UMPIRE:**

The primary point of observation is the Umpires movement and control of the inside game -especially between plays.

#### **1. Between Plays.**

- a. Does he stay over the ball too long? He does not need to stay until the Ready for Play signal. On "Hurry Up" offenses does he stay on the ball until signaled off by the Referee?
- b. Does he communicate with other officials regarding the down?
- c. Is he positioned approximately 5-7 yards from the Line of Scrimmage prior to the snap? Does he coordinate his position with the Referee to provide best field coverage?
- d. Does he communicate with the Referee regarding 11 offensive players?

#### **2. During Plays.**

- a. Does it appear that he is always "dodging" players? Are his movements smooth?
- b. As play breaks up field, or goes wide, is he watching the blocking rather than the ball carrier?
- c. On "pass reads" does he move to the LOS?
- d. On punts, does he focus on interior line until the players have moved past him? Does he then turn and move toward the return area?

### **3. When Play Ends.**

- a. Does he move to the pile quickly, talking to players to avoid potential problems?
- b. On plays toward the side zone, does he move toward the hash marks/numbers (or beyond if necessary) to observe action around the runner or to receive relay of the ball.
- c. After obtaining the ball does he move smartly to spot the ball?
- d. After a change of possession does he first observe dead ball action then move to participate in ball rotation?

### **4. Penalty Enforcement.**

- a. Does he obtain Captain for penalty options as Referee is giving preliminary signals?
- b. When penalty is accepted does he mark off the penalty in a timely manner?
- c. Before spotting ball, does he check with HL to ensure correct yardage?
- d. Prior to Free Kick with penalty enforcement, are his signals clear and crisp and toward to press box.

### **FLANK OFFICIALS:**

(Head linesman and Line Judge). The primary area of observation would be movement to marking progress after a play is complete and moving towards the ball when the play is dead.

#### **1. Between Plays.**

- a. Prior to the snap, is positioned on the sidelines?
- b. Are sideline and coaches area kept clear?
- c. Are his signals clear to fellow officials for 11 man count and formation?
- d. Does the HL confirm down with Chain Crew? Are the chains kept 2 yards off the sidelines?
- e. During timeouts does he position himself near the sidelines if there is a conference with the coach and player(s)?

#### **2. During Plays.**

- a. Are forward progress spots (both beyond and behind the LOS) accurate?
- b. Does he mark progress by “squaring” off?

- c. Does he give appropriate “wind the clock” signals when ball becomes dead near the sideline and the line to gain has been made?
- d. On pass plays does he react appropriately?
- e. On completed passes does he move smartly to mark the forward progress spot?
- f. Do they provide good “clean up” officiating if play ends on opposite side of field?
- g. On goal line plays does he move to goal line if ball is snapped from inside the 5 yard line (to include reverse officiating when A has ball on or inside their 5 yard line).

### **3. When Play Ends.**

- a. Are incomplete and stop the clock signals sharp and easy to see. No more than twice.
- b. When play is over do they move toward the field until they encounter players? Do they dead ball officiate prior to becoming involved in ball rotation?

### **4. Penalty Enforcement.**

- a. If he has dead ball flag does he quickly shut play down? Does he hustle to check with Umpire? Should not give preliminary signal.
- b. As Umpire is marking off the penalty is the HL at the succeeding spot?
- c. Does the LJ hold the penalty enforcement spot until the umpire spots the ball?

## **DEEP OFFICIAL:**

(Back Judge) The primary area of observation is the cushion maintained using fade mechanics and closing after the play.

### **1. Between Plays.**

- a. Is he positioned 20 yards from LOS (but not nearer than the deepest back)?
- b. Gives clear, crisp signals to fellow officials concerning 11 man counts?
- c. On punts, is BJ positioned behind (preferred) or even with the deepest receiver and on linesman’s side?
- d. Is ball rotation smooth and with short soft passes.

### **2. During Plays.**

- a. Does he maintain proper spacing (at least 10 yards) with receivers on pass plays?

- b. On runs to the sideline, does he hustle into out-of-bounds to prevent problems?
- c. Are signals clear and crisp?
- d. If play starts between the 20 and 10 yard line, is he waiting at the goal line for the ball carrier?
- e. Does BJ hustle to participate in ball rotation? Are the passes short and soft?
- f. During kick downs is he watching the flight of the ball? Should be watching players.

**3. Penalty Enforcement.**

- a. When appropriate does he help in reporting fouls?
- b. Does he stay with his flag until covered by another official?

**GENERAL CREW OBSERVATIONS:**

**Fouls** – are fouls called at point of attack? Are fouls being called not at point of attack?

**Appearance** – Uniform, shoes shined, etc.

**Pre Game** – Participation in pre game discussion

**Flags** – Are flags covered by other officials?