

# Mechanics of Penalty Enforcement

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# Mechanics of Penalty Enforcement

Think “Musically”

- If you all don't know the “song”, you can't possibly “sing” together.
- 7 skilled musicians might know the song, but don't know which key to sing in.
- You can train 5 people to sing together, but when you throw 2 others in with them, who knows what it is going to sound like?
- All 7 need to “sing” their part. Some have the “melody” some are the “harmony”, but when you put it all together, CORRECTLY, it sounds beautiful.

# Penalty Administration is a 7-man job

“If you’re not doing something, you’re doing something wrong”

- Calling Official(s) Communication
- Covering Flag(s)
- Speaking the Language
- Conferences
- Referee’s Preliminary Signal and/or Announcement
- Umpire/Linesman’s Coordination
- Line Judge’s Role
- Communication to Sidelines
- EVERYONE Checks the Math

“You can’t fix the problem unless you know one exists”

# Calling Official(s) Communication

- First step of effective communication starts with your whistle!
- If you are holding the dead ball spot, make sure the off wing relieves you before you go anywhere.
- Is your flag in the right spot?
- Is it the only flag?
  - Same foul?
  - Multiple Fouls
- Is someone trying to get your attention?
- Report your foul to the B first. WHAT?!?
- Preliminary Signal to the R
  - Not if it's an odd one.
  - Not until you know there's no one coming to give you more info.
  - Get the direction right! (Don't point to the player)

# Speaking the Language

Report your foul to the R the way he will announce it (We're not that smart)

- **When**
  - Starting with the **“WHEN”** helps the R assess the situation and start processing the scenario in his head.
  - During the Kick, During the Return, After the Change of Possession
- **Foul**
  - “Pass Interference” **NOT** “Hook and Turn”
  - “Holding” **NOT** “Takedown”
  - Some initials are ok. We all know OPI, DPI, but make sure your crew knows them before you start throwing them around. You can't just throw out CHB or HCT and expect everyone to immediately know what you're talking about.
- **Team**
  - Offense/Defense, Return Team/Kicking Team **NOT** Red/White, Home/Away, California
- **Number**
- **Enforcement**
  - **Spot Foul**
  - **PSK**
  - **“We're half the distance here”**
- **Other needed details, when appropriate**
  - “The kick was good”, “The pass was incomplete”, “We had a completed catch”, “We had a TD, we're on the snap”, “We're under 1 minute, we could have a runoff here”. “There's no runoff, the clock was on the snap”

# Covering Flags

More than just standing there, looking good

- Helps Secure the Integrity of the Flag's Spot
- Puts You in the Conversation
  - You're now close enough to be able to speak to the calling official and hear what he has to say
    - What the foul is.
    - His brief explanation of what the player did.
  - Able to take that first-hand account and share it
    - With Others on Crew
    - With Sideline
    - With Players

# Conferences

- When necessary, to get something right, some of the crew may occasionally need to conference
  - Can't have all 7 – who is watching the players?
  - INVOLVED and INVITED only
  - Away from sideline, Away from players
  - Others keeping teams apart, keeping players and coaches away from the conference, holding spots/covering flags, getting new ball, etc.
- No gesturing, signaling or use of emotion
  - Everyone is watching, waiting, and trying to guess what you're talking about and about to rule

# Referee's Preliminary Signal and Announcement

- Preliminary Signal as a Communicative Tool
  - To Sideline Officials
    - Alerts the sideline officials that they need to get a response from the coach
  - To Coach
    - Communicates to the coaching staffs that we need some input from them
    - Allows them to start playcalling for the next down
    - Coaches love communication!
  - To Press Box
    - Gives the announcer / statistician / timer a better idea of what is coming
  - To Camera / Fans
    - Tells the story to the crowd to stop them from wondering.
    - Shows the crowd that we know what we have, and we're just waiting to hear what the team wants to do (Perception)
    - Gets much of the crowd's reaction out of the way, so that the announcement isn't drowned out by their cheers/boos.
- Preliminary Signal not needed in 90% of circumstances.
- Before Announcing ANYTHING, the R has to know that the U knows the details of the penalty so he can do his part



# Referee's Preliminary Signal and Announcement (Continued)

- The Referee is not the only one involved in the Announcement
  - Calling official should remain within earshot, but out of camera shot to feed the R any information (usually numbers) that slip through his mind.
  - L should be feeding the R the next down
- Announcement can make or break the perception of the crew's abilities and knowledge
  - Find your clearing, away from players, but there's no need to walk or jog 20 yards away. The camera will find you.
  - Stand still (do not walk through your signals)
  - Think before you speak
  - Be finished speaking with others before you speak and try to make sure others are finished too
  - Turn the microphone on and wait for any system delay (which you've tested pregame)
  - Fewer words the better, try to "stick to the script", but be descriptive when necessary
  - Confidence, bordering on arrogance when speaking (Perception)

# Umpire / Linesman's Coordination

## Walking the walk

- Starting at the right spot
  - Next Ball in U's hands
  - Confirming with calling official or getting it from the R.
  - Where to walk
    - Previous Spot
    - Spot of Foul
    - End of Run
- Coordinating Signals
  - 5/10/15
  - Spot
  - Half the Distance
- “Stepping it off” vs “Doing the math”
  - Moving in to the hash
  - Putting the ball down

# Line Judge's Role

Is standing there really that important?

Why, yes. Yes it is.

## Holding the Enforcement Spot

- Integrity of the spot
  - U/H make a mistake
  - Something changes
- Feeding the Down and Other Information to the R
  - R is looking your way already. Help make him look good, we all look good.
    - Down
    - Numbers of Fouling Players
    - Clock Status
- Checking the Math
  - Before you move, where are you starting?
  - Did the U/H get the right spot?
  - Are we aligned at the correct spot between the hashes?
  - SHUT IT DOWN IF SOMETHING IS OUT OF PLACE.

# Communication to the Sidelines

- **Calling Official passes his info on to the B, who can start spreading the word.**
  - All 7 need the info
  - If you have conflicting information, get involved immediately
    - Uncatchable pass
    - “I saw that play and I had the block as legal”
- **Getting Information to Coaches**
  - May need their input for decision
    - Accept / Decline
    - On the try / On the kick
    - Kickoff OOB
    - Take the FG off the board to enforce the penalty?
    - 10-second runoff options / timeout
  - They need the information to get ready for the next play
    - Down/Distance
    - Helmets coming off, possibly caused by a foul. Who can play, who cannot?
  - We know they want the info, why make them ask?
    - Foul
    - Options
    - NUMBER
    - “What did he do?”
      - If you don’t know, make sure you find out and get back to them at next opportunity
    - Late in half – Clock Status

# Everyone Checks the Math

- If it's wrong, we're ALL wrong
  - Correct Enforcement
  - Correct Yard Line
  - Correct Position of the Ball
  - Correct Down
  - Correct Clock Status
  - Correct Player if UNS or Disqualifying Foul
  - Correct Application of 10-Second Runoff Rules
- Clock Status
- Recording of Fouls
  - Accurate Penalty Report
  - Tracking Unsportsmanlike Fouls