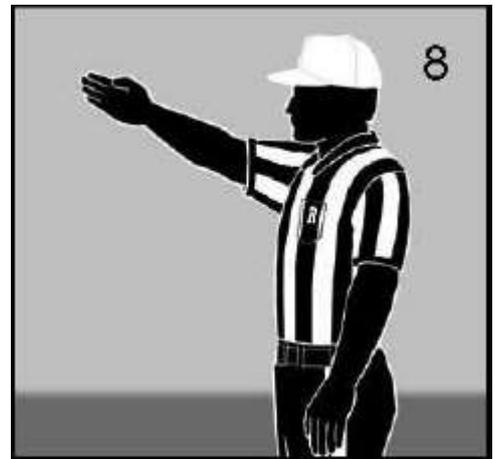




QUICK START MECHANICS BOOK

(Fourth edition, 2021)



Please refer to THE IFAF MANUAL OF FLAG FOOTBALL OFFICIATING for the full version.

QUICK START

1 GAME MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

At the earliest possible opportunity after arriving at the ground, the officials should check all **appropriate** items from the following list. To save time, it is better that all officials share the management of the items in this list or delegate if it is possible.

With game or tournament management...

- Adequacy of ground and field markings, removal of hazards, etc.
- The time the teams will enter the field, or the time the first game shall start
- Team announcements and the time they will begin and end
- Any VIP's or special arrangements for coin toss ceremony
- National Anthems
- If appropriate, half-time activities, length of the half-time interval and intervals between games, etc.
- Payment of game fee
- Down box operator
- The balls to be used and whether each team will supply its own football(s)
- Towels
- Medical facilities and personnel (see below)
- Changing room security
- If the officials can have a copy of any video
- Whether overtime will be played

With the management or coach of each team...

- Player equipment
- Roster form
- Coach's report card
- Names and numbers of captains
- Unusual plays or situations
- Rule queries
- Sideline control

With medical personnel...

- Location of medical personnel
- Signals to be used to summon medical help to the field

QUICK START

2 PRE-GAME CONFERENCE

A pre-game conference is an opportunity for officials to get into the right frame of mind to officiate a flag football game: for this reason, a pre-game conference should always be held. Before a tournament, it may be appropriate for all the officials present to hold a joint conference. All aspects of the game must be covered during the pre-game conference, this includes both rules and mechanics. Discuss rare and unusual game situations and decide how you would cover them. Describe experiences of previous games and how you handle them.

The following checklist is provided as a guide.

2.1 PRE-GAME DUTIES

- Coaches certification
- Conduct a check of players' equipment
- Check balls (no need to mark)
- Identify medical facilities
- Instruction of down box operator and alternates, if present
- Location of tournament management
- Inspection of field

2.2 COIN TOSS PROCEDURE

- See IFAF Flag rules R3.1
- 2 Captains maximum
- Mechanics and options

2.3 PLAYS - GENERAL

- Positions
- Count players
- Player in motion
- Legality of snap
- Blitz line patrol
- No run zone enforcement

2.4 WHEN TO WHISTLE IMMEDIATELY (AND WHY)

- An official shall throw a penalty marker and whistle immediately, because it cannot be corrected:
 - R 7-1-1-b (delay)
 - R 7-1-3-a (substitution)
 - R 7-1-3-b (false start)
 - R 7-1-4-a (offside)
 - R 7-1-4-b (ball touch defense)
 - R 7-1-4-c (disconcerting signal)
 - R 7-1-4-d (more than 2 signals, less than 7yd) Act as in AR 7-1-4-V prescribed.
 - R 9-3-1-b (substitution)
 - R 9-3-1-c (unfair tactic)
- An official shall throw a penalty marker and whistle at the snap, because it cannot happen before:
 - R 7-1-1-a (snap before ready)
 - R 7-1-2 (illegal snap)
- An official shall throw a penalty marker and whistle at the snap, because it can be corrected before:
 - R 7-1-4-d (invalid signal, 1 sec)
 - Important is to wait there to judge it correctly.
 - Act as in AR 7-1-4-II prescribed.

QUICK START

2.5 RUNNING PLAYS

- Coverage of runner - in backfield, up the middle, sweeps, pitchout, option plays
- Action in front of runner
- Clean-up coverage
- Forward progress - out of bounds
- Goal line/short yardage situations
- Fumble/backward pass
- Fake

2.6 PASSING PLAYS

- Coverage of passer – 7-second limit, roughing, forward pass vs. fumble
- Passer/pass behind/beyond line of scrimmage: clarify jurisdiction
- Forward/backward pass/fumble: clarify jurisdiction
- Coverage of receivers
- Complete/incomplete
- Pass interference - offensive, defensive
- Touching a pass in flight
- Coverage on interception - momentum into end zone, reverse mechanics

2.7 MULTIPLE QB FORMATIONS

- Coverage by Referee
- 2 forward passes checking
- 7-second limit off
- Multiple backward passes
- Spot on incomplete backwards passes

2.8 TRY DOWNS

- Positions
- 1 pt vs 2 pts
- Coverage when defense gains possession

2.9 RUNNING CLOCK MANAGEMENT “MERCY RULE”

- See IFAF Flag rules R3.2.6
- In the last 2mn
- 30 points or more

2.10 END OF PERIOD DUTIES

- Half-time
- End of game

2.11 TIMEOUTS

- Records
- Positions

QUICK START

2.12 FOULS & ENFORCEMENT

- Reporting - who, what, where, when
- Recording fouls
- Options
- Signals
- Enforcement

2.13 IN CASE OF INJURY

- If one official is hurt
- If two officials are hurt

2.14 OVERTIME

- Review rules for overtime

2.15 CHALLENGE

- See IFAF Flag rules R12
- Timeout left
- When, what

QUICK START

3 MECHANICS

3.1 CREW

	Referee	Down judge	Field Judge	Side Judge
2-official crew	Count offense 7s 25s	-	Count defense Game clock	-
3-official crew	Count offense 7s 25s	Count offense Count defense	Count defense Game clock	-
4-official crew	Count offense 7s	Count offense	Count defense Game clock	Count defense 25s
Colour in the drawings	R	DJ	FJ	SJ

Crossing zones

: this is a zone where 2 officials have different responsibilities.

3.2 SUPPLEMENTARY SIGNALS FOR COMMUNICATION

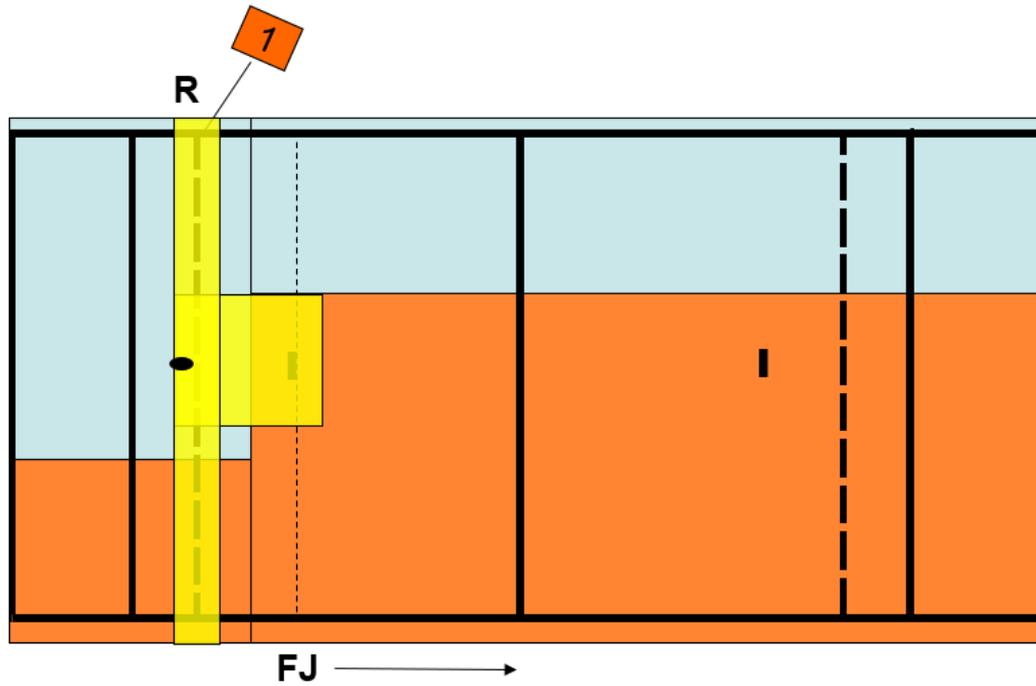
Sup Signal N°	Explanation	Signal
3	The team I am responsible for counting has 5 players on the field	Clenched fist at shoulder height (with optional upward pointing thumb); arm outstretched to side (see also Sup24)
4	The team I am responsible for counting has more than 5 players on the field	One hand on top of head
5	The last pass in the backfield was a backward pass	Punch arm into backfield
6	The line to gain is the goal line	Wagging index fingers discreetly at chest height (Note 1)
8	The clock stops after the next play	Crossed wrists at chest height
11	The game clock starts on the snap	Click fingers
12	The game clock starts on the ready	Circular motion of finger from wrist
13	The catch was complete	Clutch hands to chest in catching motion
14	The pass was caught out of bounds (incomplete)	Throw arms to out of bounds side
24	The team I am responsible for counting has 4 (or fewer) players on the field	Clenched fist with downward pointing thumb; arm outstretched to side (see also Sup3)
25	I believe all the conditions for a touchdown are met	Fists together (in front of chest) with thumbs up
26	The receiver touched the ball inbounds but did not have control of it until they was out of bounds	Move hands (palms up) alternately up and down in front of chest
27	The down box is displaying the wrong number	Give signal S17 (uncatchable forward pass) before the snap
46	The blitzer is in correct position	Arm extended in front of the official, thumb up
47	"I am responsible for the GL"	Both hands remove dust from chest

[Note1: This signal should only be used when the ball is in Team A's half]

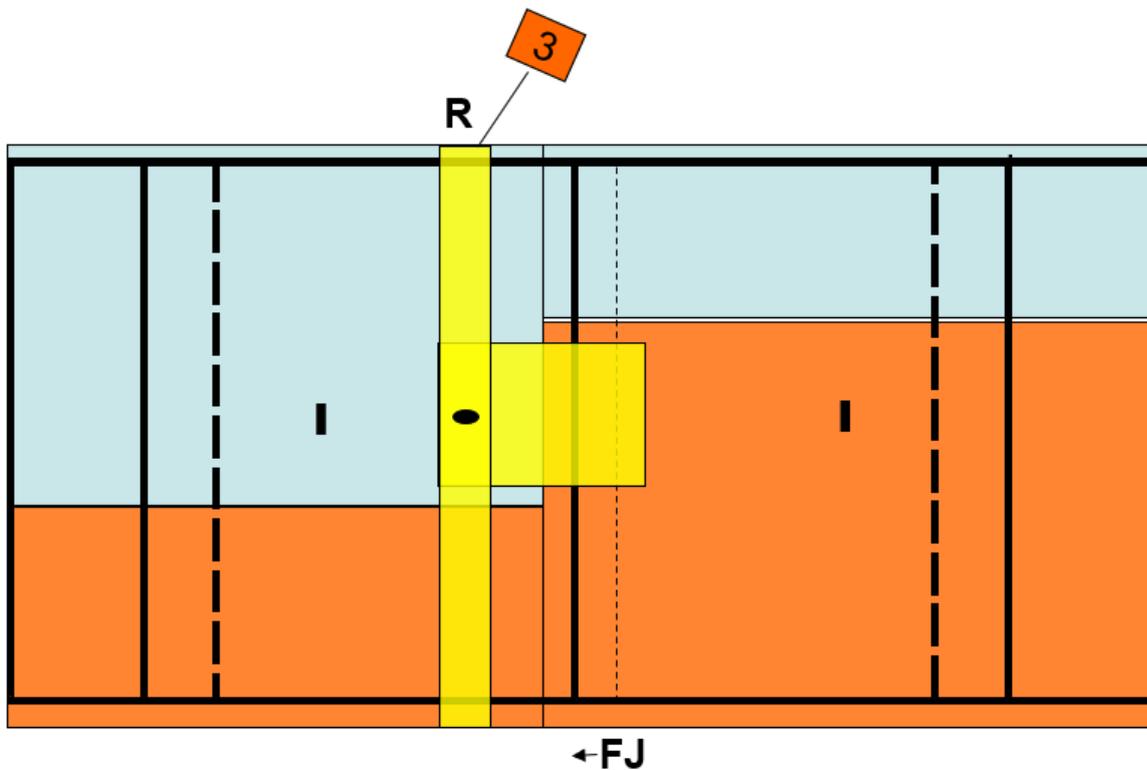
QUICK START

3.3 2-OFFICIAL MECHANICS

3.3.1 A Goal Line



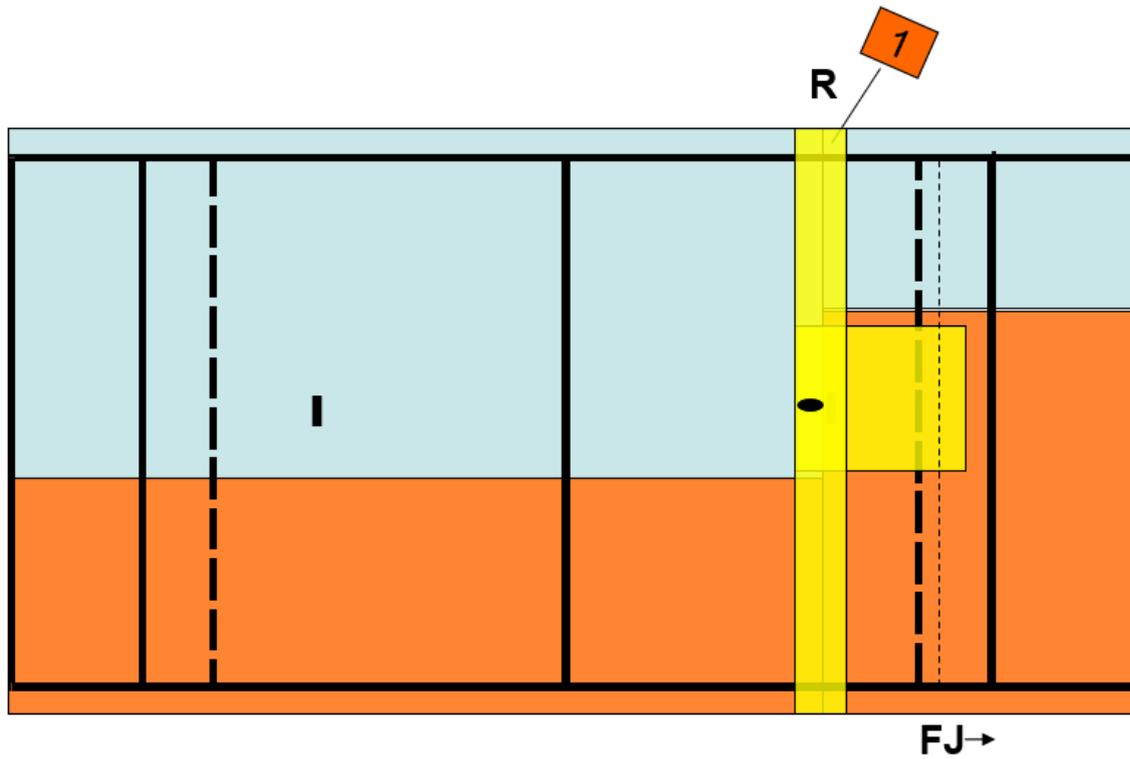
3.3.2 Mid-field



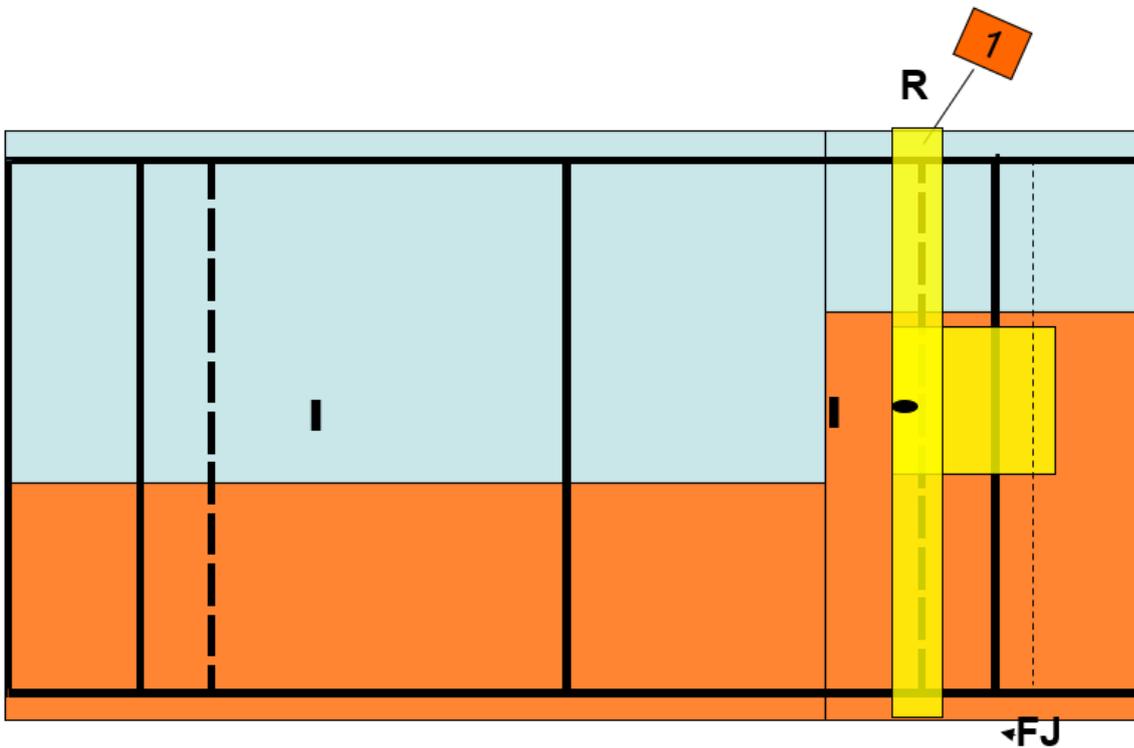
If the ball is snapped less 3 yards to the midfield, R must take both lines, Line of scrimmage and midline making sup47 to FJ.

QUICK START

3.3.3 2-point conversion or long distance



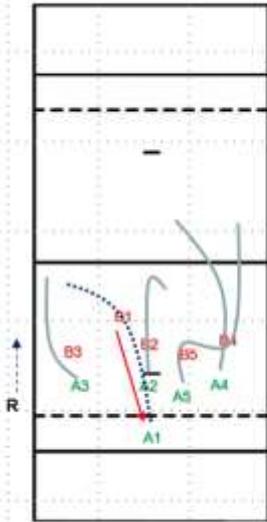
3.3.4 1-point conversion or short distance



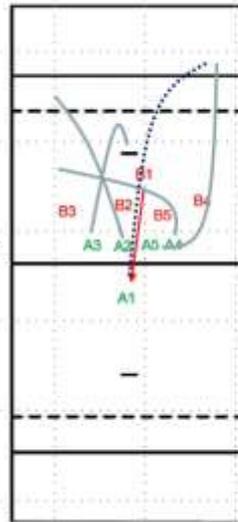
If the ball is snapped less than 3 yards to the B GL, R must take both lines, Line of scrimmage and GL making sup47 to FJ.

QUICK START

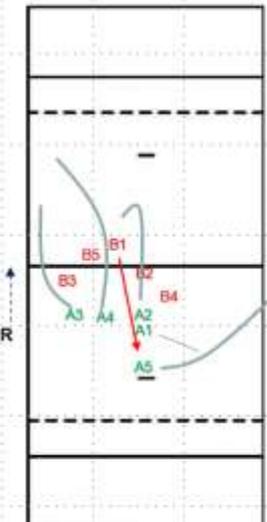
3.3.5 Some situations for 2-official mechanics



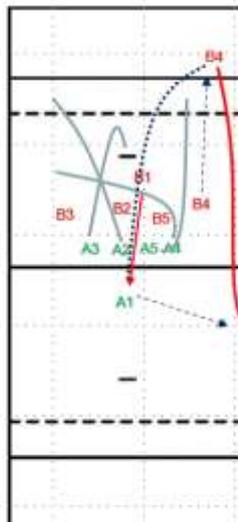
Situation : Pass on the WR of the weak side.
R : Blitzzer B1 is on the weak side (check the pattern of A2). As soon as the pass is thrown, verify QB A1 is not threatened anymore and turn to see the pass. Follow the play and check the flag pull or the feet out of bond
FJ : move back, stop at midfield and when the pass is thrown, run and watch A3 catching (or not) the ball. If the catch is made, try to be on the GL before A3



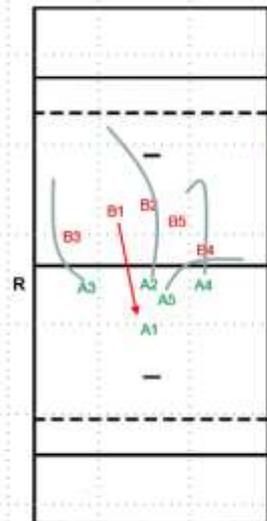
Situation : Pass on the Slot of the strong side.
R : Blitzzer B1 is on the strong side (check the moves of other defenders). As soon as the pass is thrown, verify QB A1 is not threatened anymore. Follow the play and watch any illegal contact
FJ : move back and when the pass is thrown, run and watch A5 catching (or not) the ball. If the catch is made, try to be on the GL before A5



Situation : Run on the weak side.
R : Blitzzer B1 is on the strong side (check the pattern of A2). Follow the pitch from A1 to A5 and check any illegal flag pull
FJ : move back, watch where A5 goes out of bound



Situation : Interception.
R : after the interception, watch the A players and go on the A GL.
FJ : move back and when the pass is intercepted by B4, follow him and watch when he goes out of bond



Situation : short pass for the first down.
R : Blitzzer B1 is on the weak side (check the pattern of A2). Check short pattern and contact between A's and B's
FJ : move back and watch short patterns, seek for help if 1st down

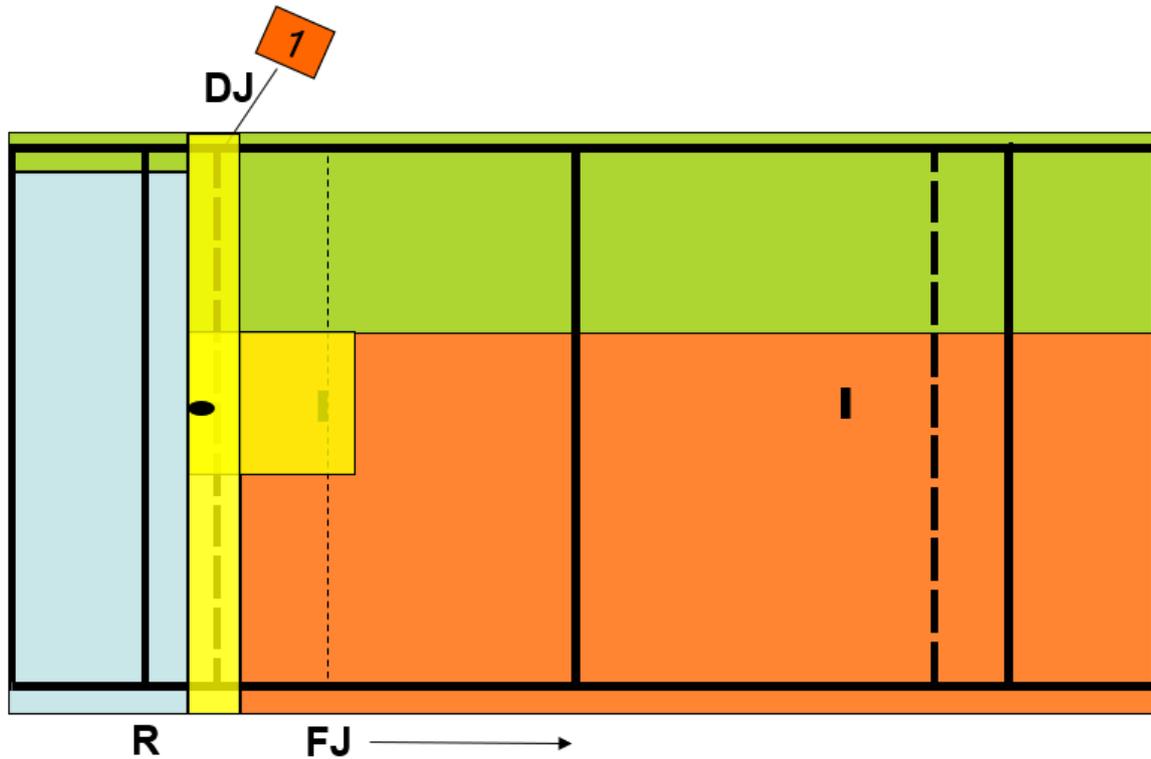


Situation : short pass for the TD.
R : Blitzzer B1 is on the weak side (check the pattern of A2). Check short pattern and contact between A's and B's
FJ : move back and watch short patterns, seek for help if A's crosses GL

QUICK START

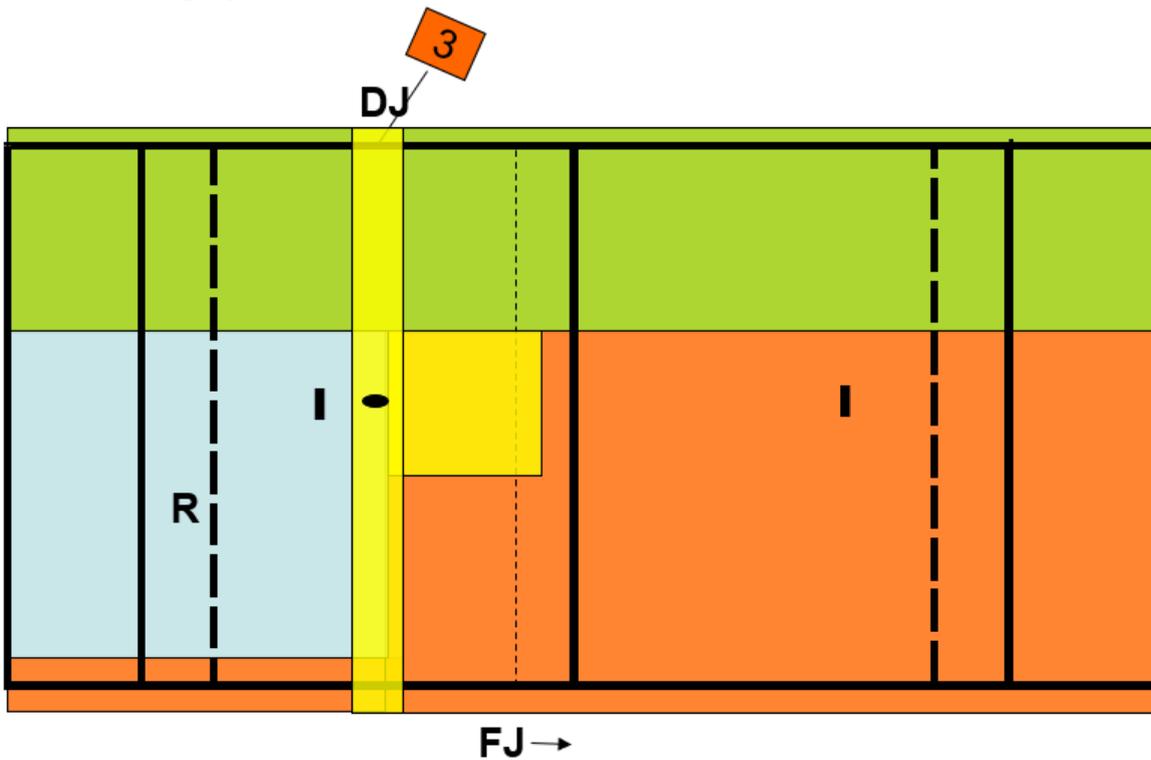
3.4 3-OFFICIAL MECHANICS

3.4.1 A Goal Line



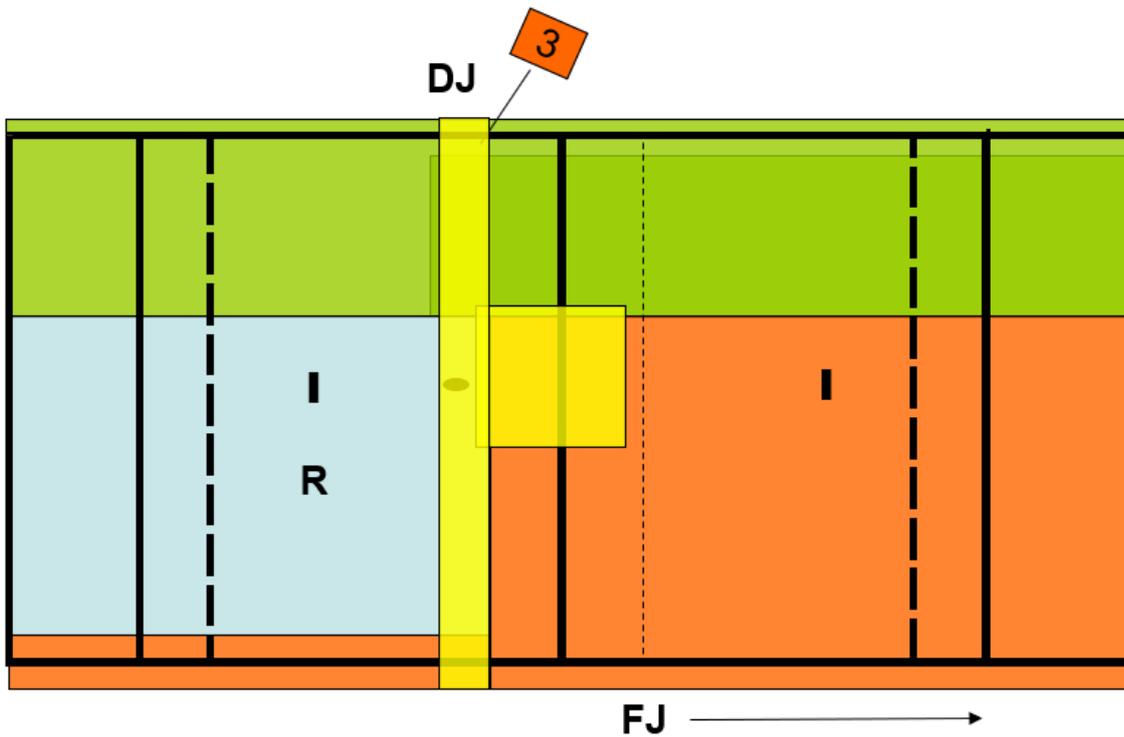
If the ball is snapped less 3 yards to the A GL, DJ must take both lines, Line of scrimmage and GL making sup47 to R.

3.4.2 Normal play in A area



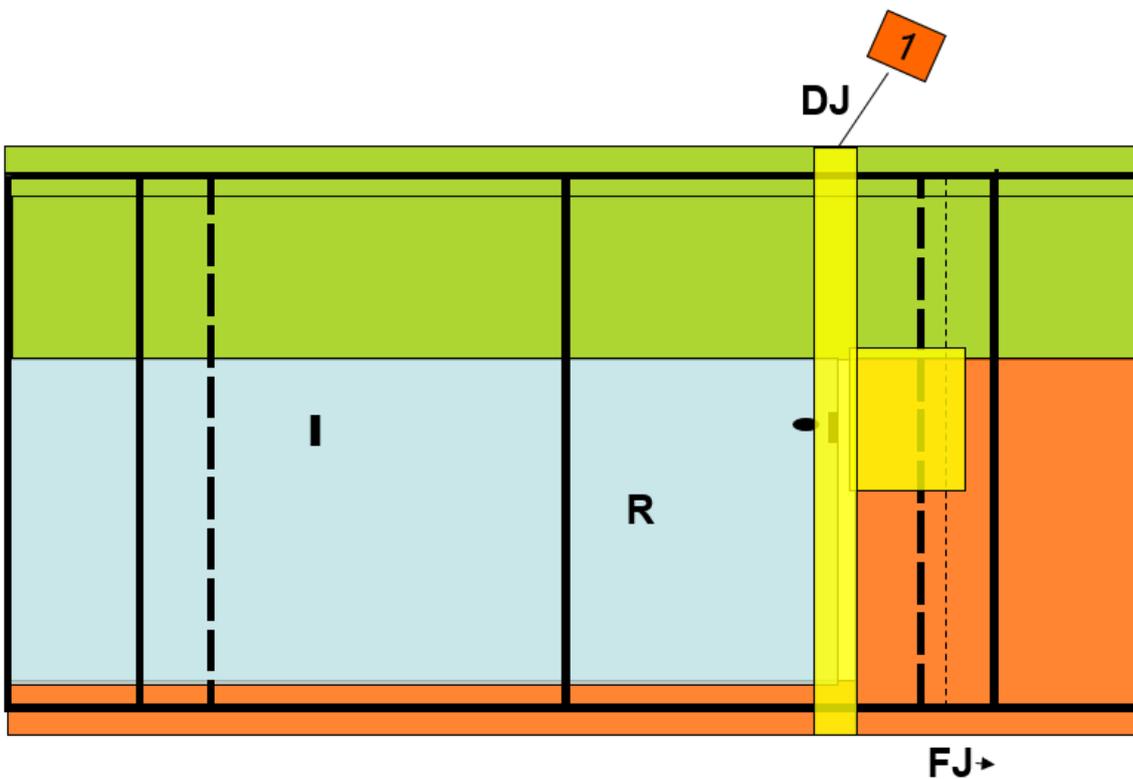
QUICK START

3.4.3 Near Mid-field



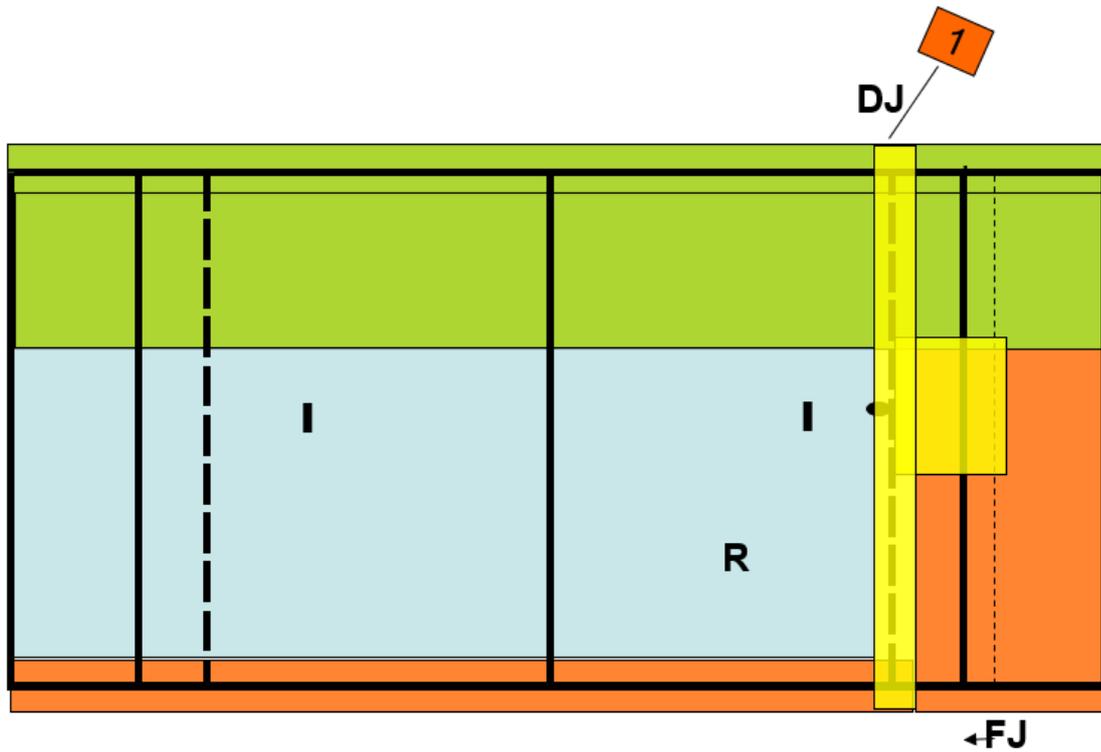
If the ball is snapped 3 yards or less to midfield, DJ must take both lines, Line of scrimmage and midline making sup47 to FJ. R could help in case of a running play.

3.4.4 2-point conversion or long distance

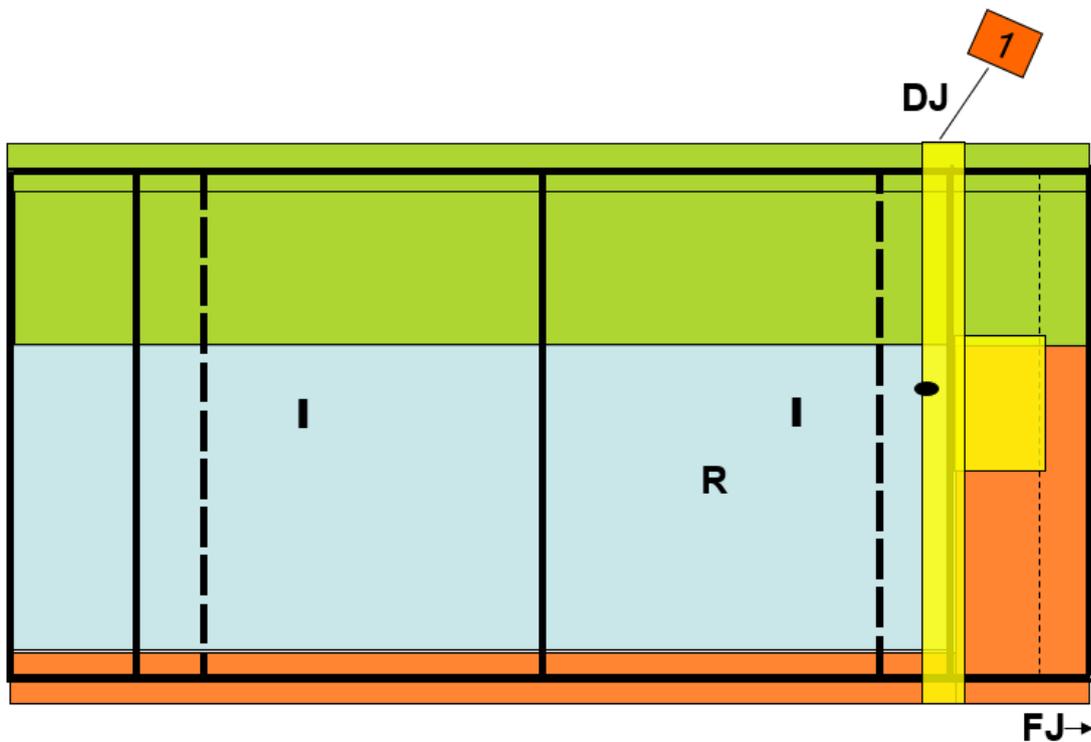


QUICK START

3.4.5 1-point conversion



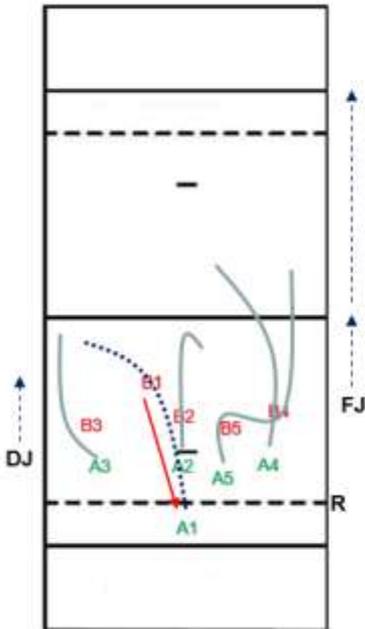
3.4.6 Short distance



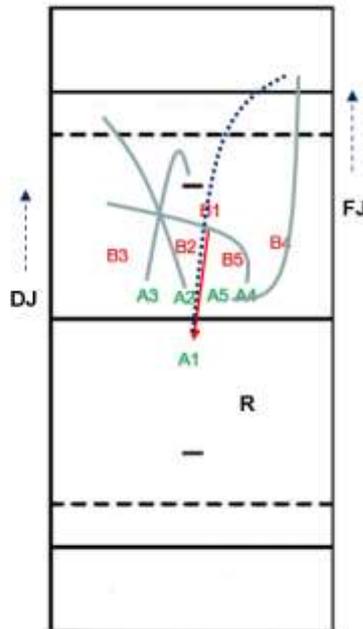
If the ball is snapped less than 3 yards to B GL, DJ must take both lines, Line of scrimmage and GL making sup47 to FJ. FJ will take the end-line. R stays in the middle of the field to gate a better view of the blitzer.

QUICK START

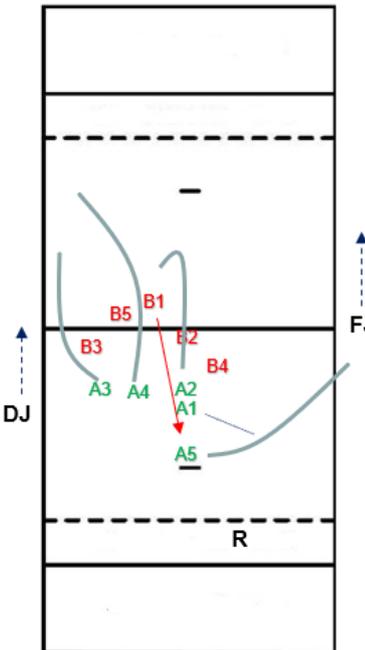
3.4.7 Some situations for 3-official mechanics



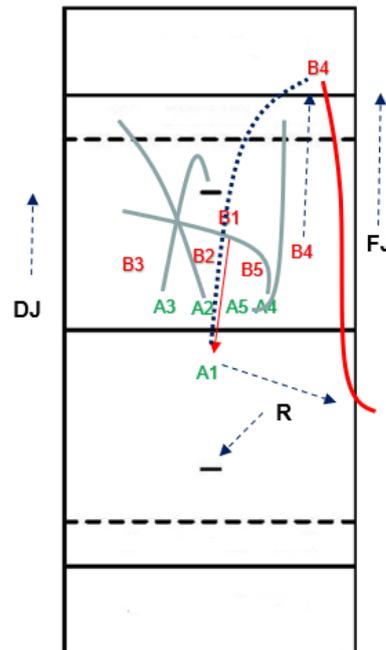
Situation : Pass on the WR of the weak side.
R : Blitzer B1 is on the weak side (check the pattern of A2). As soon as the pass is thrown, verify QB A1 is not threatened anymore and follow the play.
DJ : Check any illegal contact on short routes or within the first 5 yards of the LOS. After the pass is thrown, follow A3 and check the flag pull or the feet out of bond
FJ : move back, when the pass is caught, be on the GL before A3



Situation : Pass on the Slot of the strong side.
R : Blitzer B1 is on the strong side (check the moves of A2 and A5). Follow the play
DJ : Check any illegal contact on short routes or within the first 5 yards of the LOS and follow the play
FJ : go directly to GL and when the pass is thrown and watch A5 catching (or not) the ball.

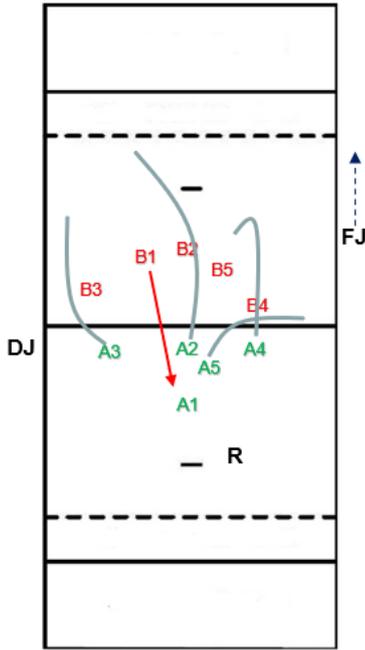


Situation : Run on the weak side.
R : Blitzer B1 is on the strong side (check the pattern of A2). Follow the pitch from A1 to A5 and check any illegal flag pull
DJ : as soon as you see the pitch, stay on LoS to see any illegal forward pass and follow the runner from this spot
FJ : go to midfield and stay, watch where A5 goes out of bond

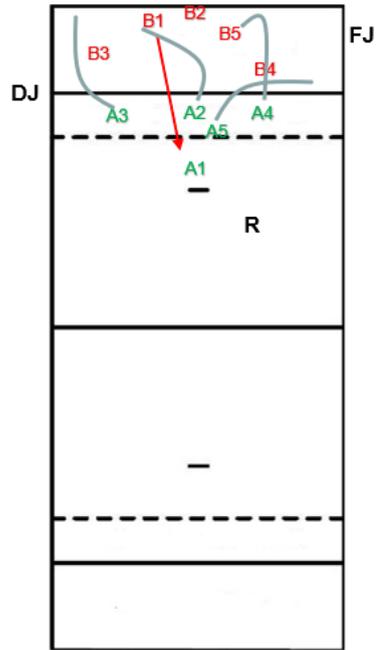


Situation : Interception.
R : after the interception, watch the A players and go inside the field.
DJ : after the snap, watch the receivers on your side
FJ : move back and go on the GL. After the interception by B4, follow him and watch when he goes out of bond

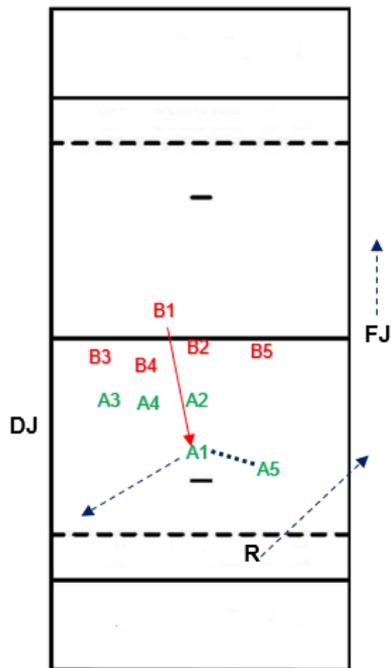
QUICK START



Situation : short pass for the first down.
R : Blitzer B1 is on the weak side (check the pattern of A2). Check short pattern and contact between A's and B's
DJ : stay on LoS and move to midfield to help FJ (easy if A1 is in shotgun position)
FJ : move back and watch short patterns, seek for help if 1st down



Situation : short pass for the TD.
R : Blitzer B1 is on the weak side (check the pattern of A2). Check short pattern and contact between A's and B's on your side
DJ : already on GL, check short pattern and contact between A's and B's on your side
FJ : move back and watch deep patterns

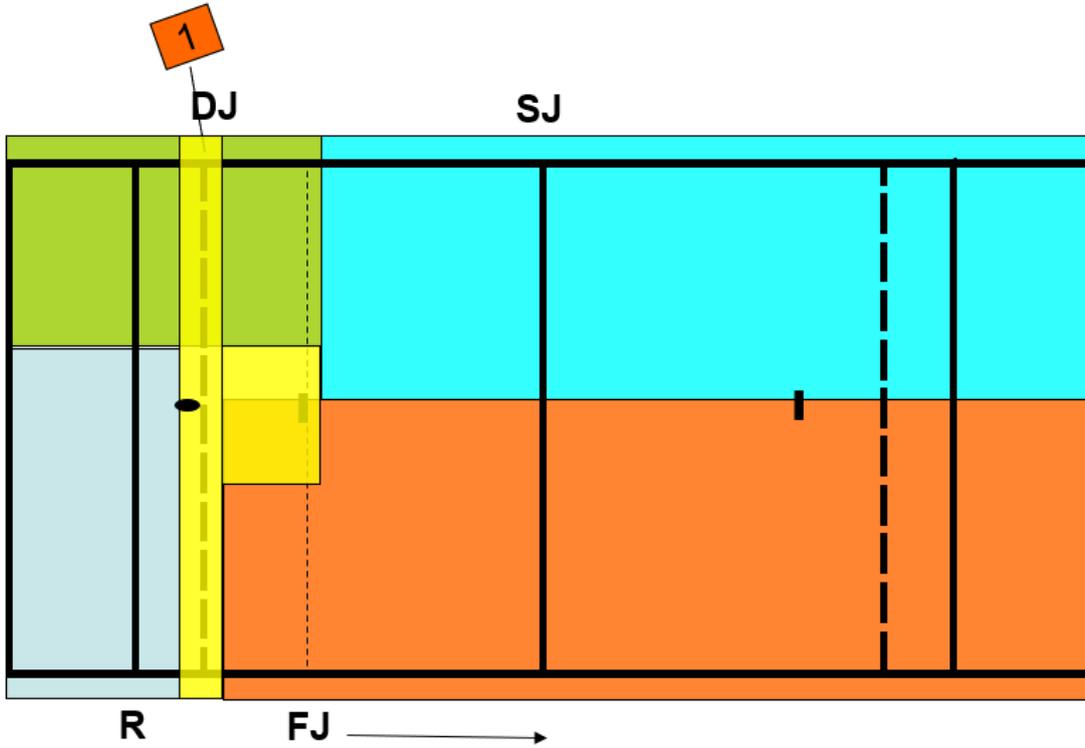


Situation : Multiple QB.
R : Blitzer B1 is on the strong side (check the pattern of A2). As soon as A1 pitch to A5, go to the sideline and check if there is more than one forward pass. Stay on the ball carrier
DJ : as soon as you see the pitch, stay on LoS and check downfield
FJ : go to midfield and stay. If there is a long passe, follow the ball to see the possible targets and stay on them

QUICK START

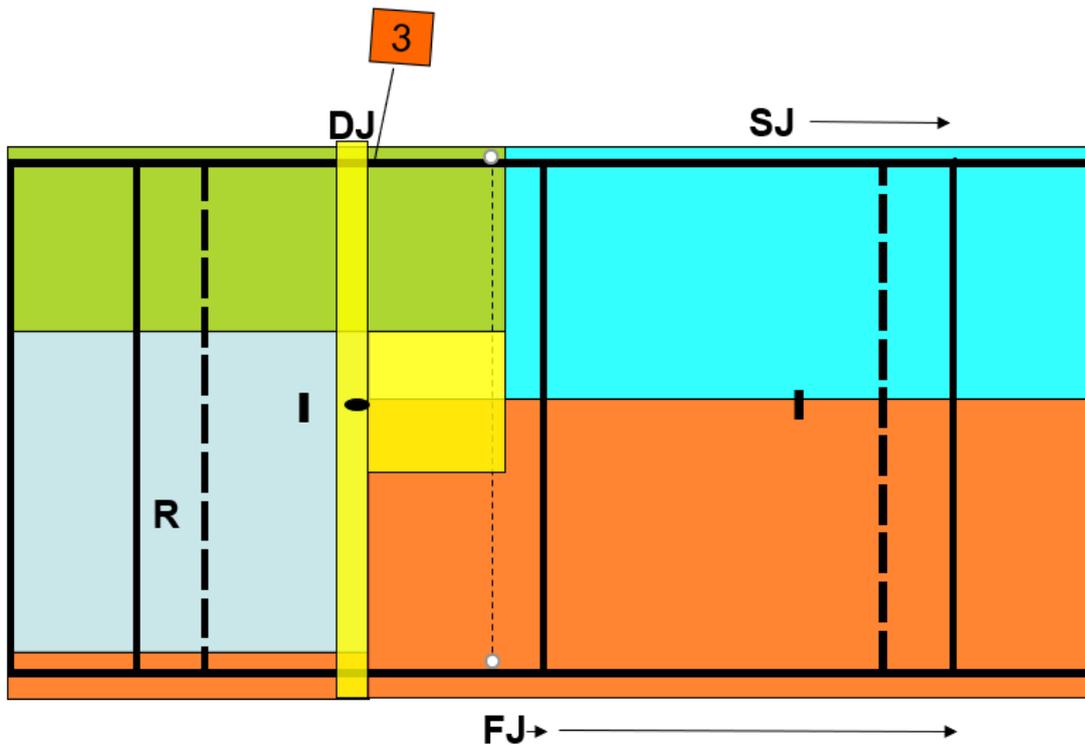
3.5 4-OFFICIAL MECHANICS

3.5.1 A Goal Line



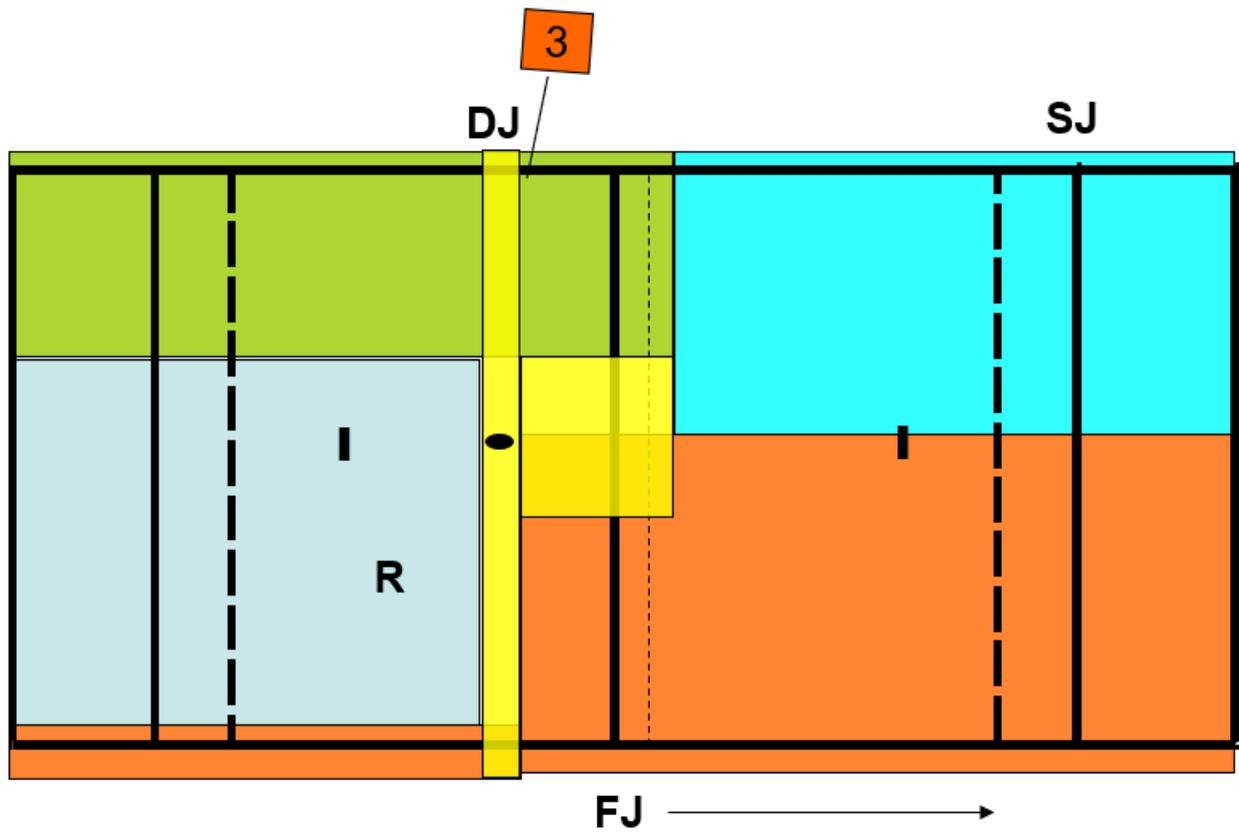
If the ball is snapped less than 3 yards to A GL, DJ must take both lines, Line of scrimmage and GL making sup47 to R.

3.5.2 Normal play in A area

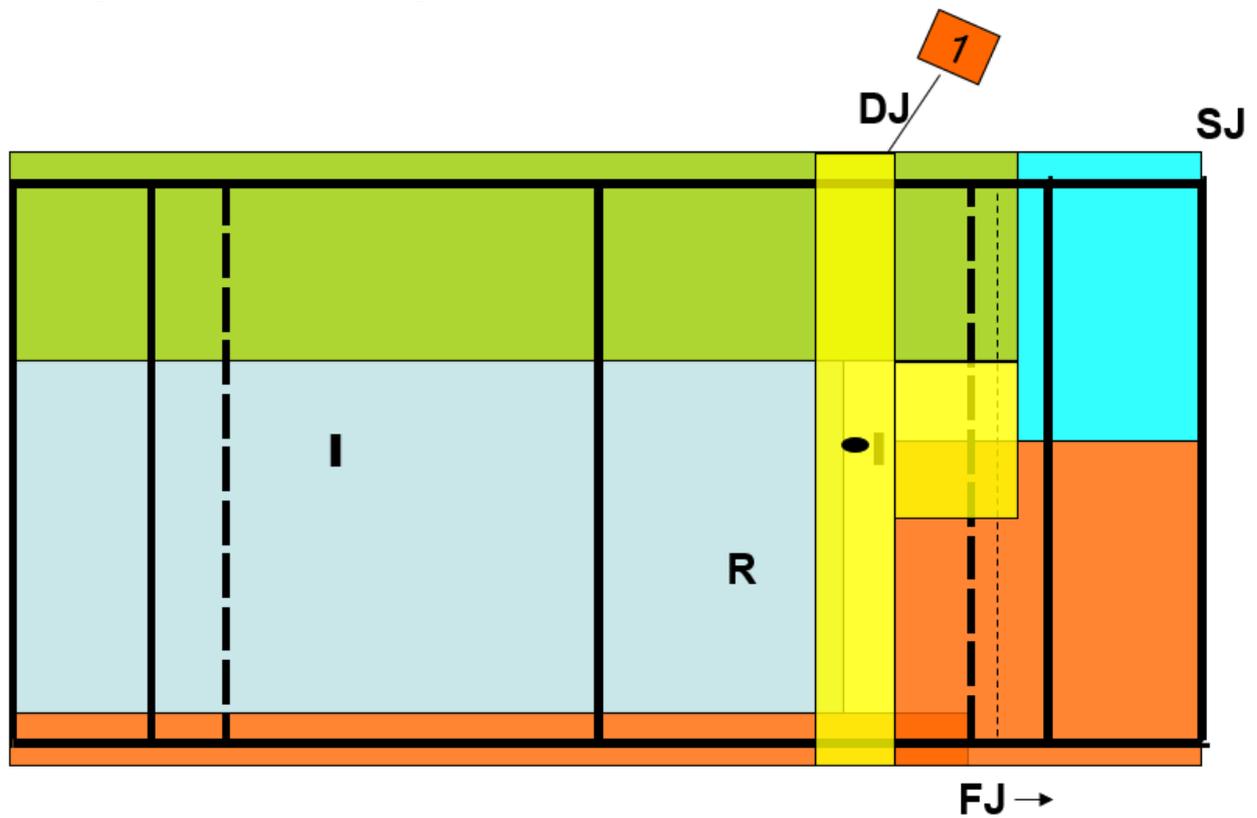


QUICK START

3.5.3 Near Mid-field

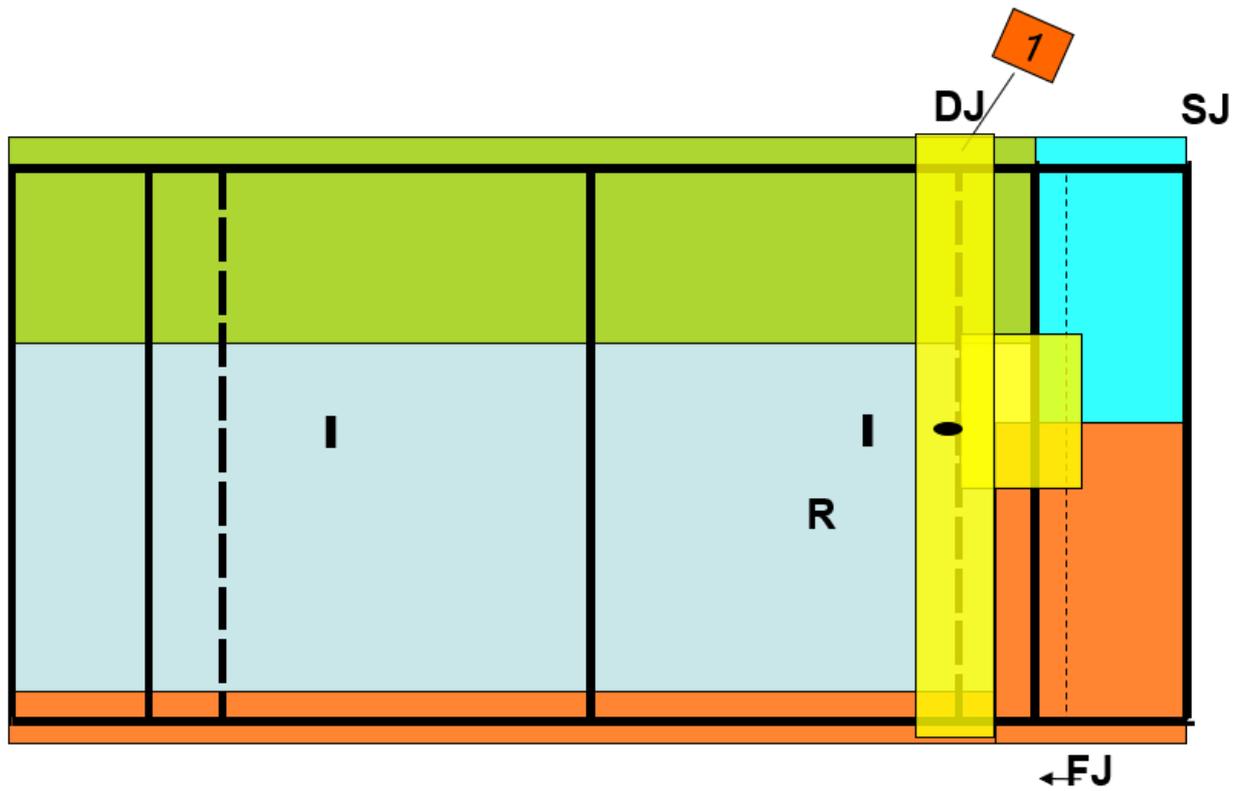


3.5.4 2-point conversion or long distance

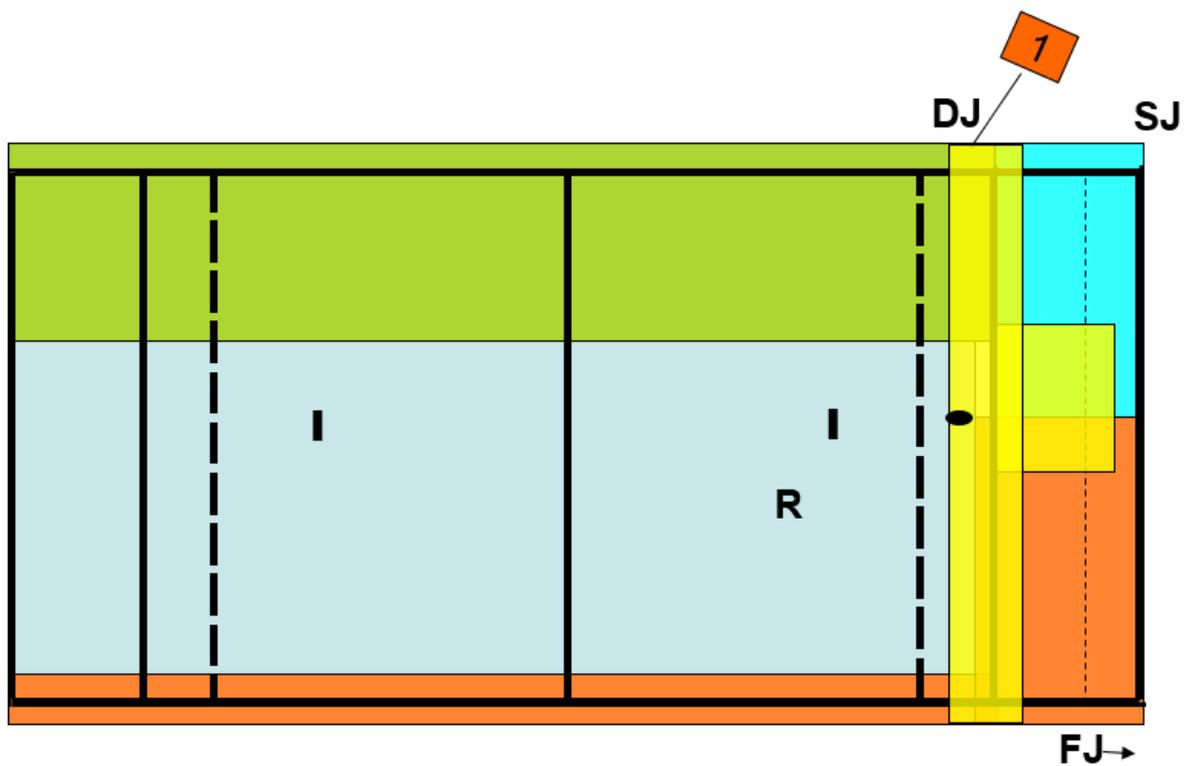


QUICK START

3.5.5 1-point conversion



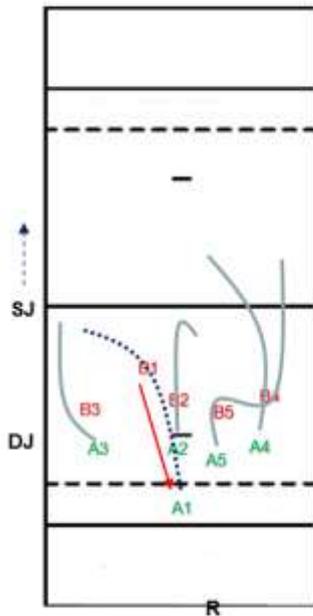
3.5.6 Short distance



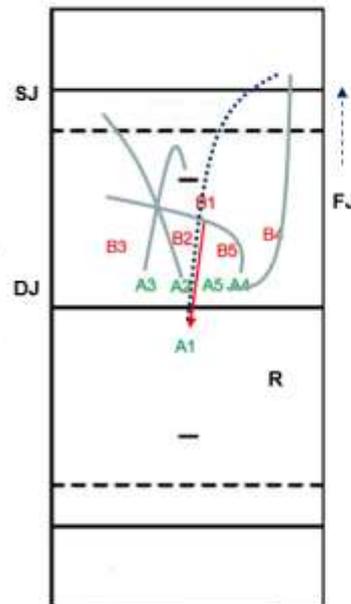
If the ball is snapped 3 yards or less to B GL, DJ must take both lines, Line of scrimmage and GL making sup47 to FJ. FJ will take end-line with SJ. R stays in the middle of the field to gate a better view of the blitzer.

QUICK START

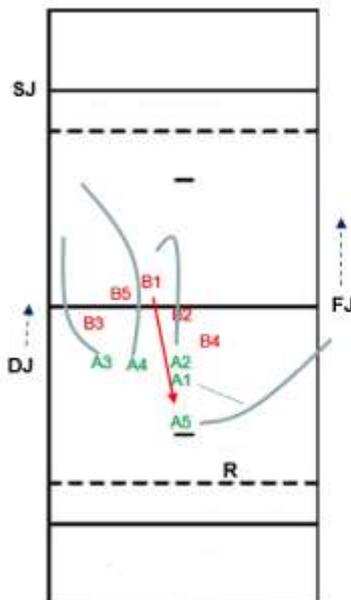
3.5.7 Some situations for 4-official mechanics



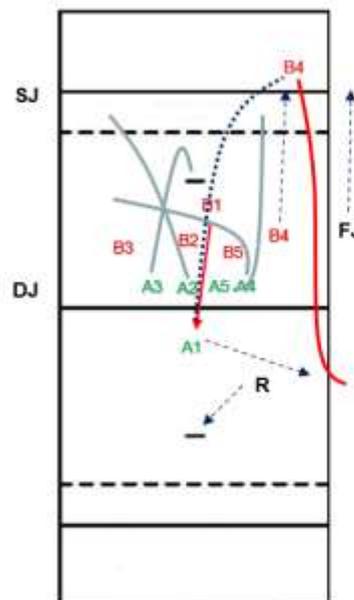
Situation : Pass on the WR of the weak side.
R : Blitz B1 is on the weak side (check the pattern of A2).
DJ : check any illegal contact on the LoS. Turn and watch A3
FJ : go directly at midfield and watch the receivers in your zone
SJ : move back and watch the receiver in your zone. Let midfield to the FJ and go to the GL



Situation : Pass on the Slot of the strong side.
R : Blitz B1 is on the strong side (check the moves of A2 and A5). Follow the play
DJ : check any illegal contact on the LoS and follow the play
FJ : go gentle to the GL and when the pass is thrown, watch A5 catching (or not) the ball.
SJ : from the GL, watch the receivers in your zone and when the ball is thrown, check with FJ for the reception

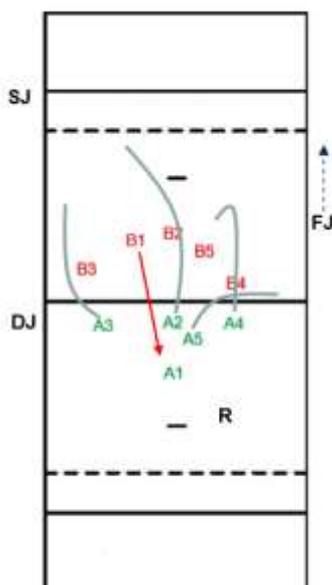


Situation : Run on the weak side.
R : Blitz B1 is on the strong side (check the pattern of A2). Follow the pitch from A1 to A5 and check any illegal flag pull
DJ : as soon as you see the pitch, go to midfield
FJ : moves back, watch where A5 goes out of bound
SJ : from the GL or less deeper, watch the play developing

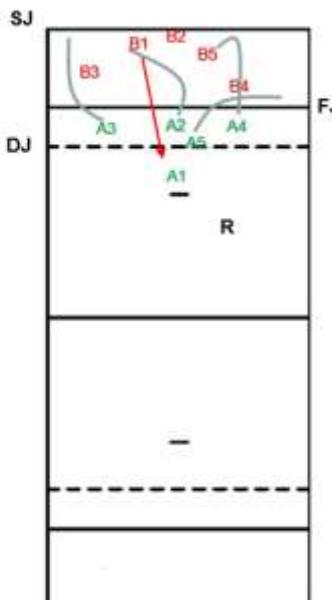


Situation : Interception.
R : after the interception, watch the A players and go inside the field.
DJ : after the snap, watch the receivers on your side
FJ : moves back and go on the GL. After the interception by B4, follow him and watch when he goes out of bound
SJ : from the GL or less deeper, watch the play developing

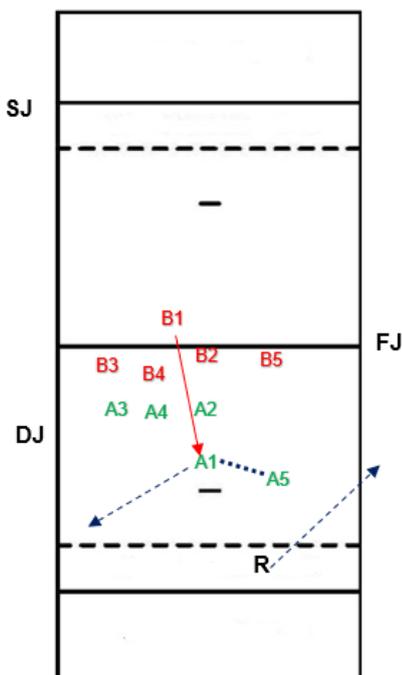
QUICK START



Situation : short pass for the first down.
R : Blitz B1 is on the weak side (check the pattern of A2). Check short pattern and contact between A's and B's
DJ : stay on LoS and move to midfield to help FJ (easy if A1 is in shtogun position, if not, R could be on LoS and LM moves directly at midfield at snap)
FJ : move back and watch short patterns, seek for help if 1st down
SJ : deeper than he FJ or already on the GL (if the receivers are fast or offense is not on 4th down)



Situation : short pass for the TD.
R : Still behind the QB. Blitz B1 is on the weak side (check the pattern of A2). Check short pattern and contact between A's and B's on your side.
DJ : Still on LOS, check short pattern and contact between A's and B's on your side
FJ : move on GL, check short pattern and contact between A's and B's on your side and watch deep patterns to help SJ
SJ : already on the corner of the sideline and the endline end line checking deep patterns



Situation : Multiple QB.
R : Blitz B1 is on the strong side (check the pattern of A2). As soon as A1 pitch to A5, go to the sideline and check if there is more than one forward pass. Stay on the ball carrier
DJ : as soon as you see the pitch, stay on LoS and check downfield
FJ : go to midfield and stay. If there is a long passe, follow the ball to see the possible targets and stay on them
SJ : drift to the GL or stay on it and watch the play developing