

OPTIONAL UMPIRE POSITIONING FOR SPRING FALL 2021

We are giving the umpire the option of positioning themselves for scrimmage plays in the traditional umpire position behind the defensive line opposite the referee or to move behind the offensive line opposite the referee for the Spring Fall Season of 2021 only. The reason for offering this change in position is to help make sure the Umpire avoids exposure to possible droplets that potentially might contain the COVID virus due to having to constantly go through the players in spotting the ball and moving to his/her normal position along with potentially being in a position where there will be fewer injuries to the umpire. The umpire shall have his/her choice of which position they line up in (this decision is entirely the umpires as to which position they line up in). It is essential that the Umpire and Referee will need to have a good pregame discussion on the positioning and coverage responsibilities when the umpire is in this new starting position.

I. Prior to the snap

- A. On plays outside of the 5-yard line, the Umpire's position is 10 to 15 yards from the line of scrimmage and 5-7 yards wider and on the opposite side from the Referee. 12 to 15 yards deep and at least as wide as the tight end on the non-throwing arm side of the quarterback.
- B. On plays from the 5-yard line and in, the Umpire lines up behind the linebackers as he needs to be in position to help on goal line plays.
- C. Referee keys on opposite tackle. Umpire keys on center, guards, and opposite tackle.

II. After the snap

- A. If running play, Umpire keys on blocks on runs between the tackles
- B. If running play away from Umpire, the umpire watches for action away from the runner and Referee keys on point of attack
- C. If running play on Umpire's side, the umpire keys on point of attack and Referee watches action away from runner
- D. On passing plays, if QB stays in pocket, the Umpire keys on linemen
- E. On passing plays where QB rolls towards Umpire, Umpire keys on QB and Referee keys on action away from QB. Umpire may need to move backwards to maintain distance from QB.
- F. On passing plays where QB rolls towards Referee, Referee keys on QB and Umpire keys on action away from QB
- G. On passing plays the official who is responsible for action away from the quarterback will need to rule on ineligible moving downfield.
- H. On plays that go away from the Referee, the Referee will often be the person spotting the ball.

III. Punts

- A. Umpire positions 10 to 15 yards from line of scrimmage and 5-7 yards wider than the punter and on the opposite side from the Referee
- B. Umpire keys on snapper and interior linemen
- C. After punt, Umpire watches blocks away from ball
- D. On bad snaps, Referee and Umpire would bracket play.
- E. On bad snaps and/ or a blocked or deflected punt the HL has responsibility for the line of scrimmage and ineligible receivers downfield if the ball is passed.

IV. PATs and Field Goals

- 1. 10 yards or less, Umpire under goal post with Back Judge
- 2. Outside of 10 yards,
 - A. Umpire positions 10 to 15 yards from line of scrimmage and 5-7 yards wider and on the opposite side from the Referee
 - B. Umpire keys on snapper and interior linemen
 - C. On bad snaps, Referee and Umpire would bracket play
 - D. On bad snaps and a blocked or deflected kick the wing official who remained on the LOS, has responsibility for the line of scrimmage and ineligible receivers downfield if the ball is passed.