

Passing Game Mechanics

I. When pass is read

- a. R steps back and away looking through the QB to opposite tackle and blocking backs. Some referees may take tackle to their side. However, you still have the QB.
- b. U step up to line of scrimmage watching line blocking. (G-C-G)
- c. BJ back pedal away from line of scrimmage watching your receiver go into his route. Be aware of any receiver going deep. Do not let receivers behind you. You have the back line of the end zone.
- d. L and LJ watch your receivers as they go into their routes.
 - i. Monitor receivers running routes near the sideline.
 - ii. Stay on or near the line of scrimmage.
- e. BJ, L, and LJ go to zone coverage as soon as receivers get into their routes. Rarely, in high school do we see press coverage on receivers, however, you must know if they got away clean and into their routes or whether or not they have blocked down field before a pass. The tight end is the receiver that is held up at the line of scrimmage the most. He must not be held.

You may have been fooled by your read (a tackle or guard backing out) and this play may be a run (draw or trap). But if you have stayed with the proper coverage then the important blocking should still be covered. IF it is a draw or trap then the L and LJ have the tough job of quickly finding the ball for progress and U must make sure he doesn't get in the way of the run.

II. As Straight Drop Back Pass Develops

- a. R continues to observe tackle and backs in his view keeping the QB in his line of vision.
- b. U continues to watch G-C-G and any other subjects in his line of vision.
- c. BJ continues backpedaling, keeping cushion between yourself and the deep receivers.
 - i. You must know if any receivers are running you deep.
 - ii. Your line of vision should be to the side where the majority of receivers are running routes.
- d. L and LJ focus on your zones if there are multiple receivers in your area. Get proper angles. You may have to get off the line of scrimmage forward or backwards. (No more than 2-4 yards beyond)
 - i. Be observant for Offensive Pass Interference.
 - ii. Be observant for receivers going out of bounds and then coming back in bounds.
 - iii. Weak side watch for receivers coming from opposite sides.
 - iv. Weak side official may have time to watch the tackle to his side.

The longer this play goes on the more observant that we need to be. The U must keep track of ineligible and be observant of the ball crossing the line of scrimmage. All down field officials should continue to scan their zones while at the same time keeping track of where the QB is and what he may be trying to do with the ball.

III. As Roll Out Pass Develops

- a. R must move with the QB making sure that he keeps his cushion.
- b. U turns to continue watching his linemen.
- c. L and LJ nothing changes except that now there will be a definite weak side to this play that must be observed.

- i. Weak side official can help with middle of field and/or pass blocking if no one is in his zone.
- d. BJ, L and LJ watch for offensive pass interference.

As noted on this play, coverage does not change. However all officials must be aware that on this type of pass play the QB is fixed on only half of the field and receivers in that area must be watched. This play may also turn into a run, so knowing the location of the line of scrimmage is important.

IV. Screen Pass

- a. U or L or LJ must know whether or not the forward pass was first touched behind the line of scrimmage.

This play may have started out looking like a run. There are so many ways to run screen passes and nearly all will fool the officials because of what our keys are, but we should be able to shift gears easily enough. On run plays wing officials let the ball take them down the field, therefore on a screen pass when you realize the QB still has the ball you should still be in proper positions for pass coverage, because the ball has not been taken you anywhere.

The U has a tough job because once he realizes this is a pass play he may have to step through downfield linemen to get to the line of scrimmage. On this type of play the U can use all the help he can get as to whether the pass is first touched behind or beyond the line of scrimmage. This can be down by the weak side wingman (if there is a weak side). What presents a problem for wings and the BJ is the down field blocking and their keys getting off the line of scrimmage as if I were a run. If you are in doubt as to whether or not the ball was first touched behind the line of scrimmage and you have receivers down field blocking, throw the flag then ask. We can wave it off if we need to. This is much preferred to throwing it after the play is over.

V. After the Pass is Thrown

- a. R protects the QB until he can protect himself and participate in the play. Then clean up.
 - i. Let everyone know that the ball has been thrown.
 - ii. If there are defenders near do not look down the field, keep your focus on the QB and other linemen.
- b. U turns as the ball goes beyond to possibly help with catch/no catch.
- c. L, LJ, BJ focus on the zone where the pass is going and rule on catches, DPI and OPI

If the pass is incomplete, use proper signals to assure the clock is stopped. If the pass is complete we now begin run coverage and should have this play triangle with the L/LJ, BJ and U. R stays with the QB and if stragglers and the opposite wing has the backside. No matter how short of long the completion and run, the wings have the progress. Rarely will the BJ ever come back to get a progress spot. (On long passes that are caught and downed near the end zone or long, diving catches where sliding is involved... maybe.)