

## Working The Wings

1. **Stay Wide, Stay Wide, Stay Wide**
  - A. The most important thing for a wing official is to stay wide. Even if the runner doesn't get outside of you, you may be too busy getting out of the way to officiate the play
  - B. Start the play on the sideline. Even if the ball is on the far hash mark, stay on your sideline. The obvious reason is so that you don't get caught on the inside looking out at the play. Also, you can see the action you need to see and your peripheral vision will give you a better view of the game.
  - C. Staying wide makes sideline control very important. Work with the head coach to keep players and other coaches away from the sidelines. Use a statement like, "I need this area to work sideline plays. Help me keep the players back." It also helps to thank the coach for helping you. **KILL THEM WITH KINDNESS.**
  
2. **Before The Snap**
  - A. Straddle the neutral zone with one foot on each team's restraining line. Show receivers his scrimmage line with one foot obviously forward and tell him, "Here's your line."
  - B. Identify the eligible receivers on your side by saying the numbers to yourself.
  - C. Hold the whistle in your hand prior to the snap. Once the ball is snapped, drop the whistle and officiate the play. Never officiate with the whistle in your mouth and never blow the whistle unless you see the ball.
  - D. Watch for encroachment prior to snap
  - E. False starts by offensive players
  - F. Keys—snap then offensive tackle on your side to get run or pass read
  
3. **Movement At Snap**
  - A. Don't Get "Happy Feet"**
  - B. The tendency is to immediately start going somewhere, anywhere, sometimes with a lot of footwork and even bouncing up and down
  - C. If you are bouncing around, your eyes will be jiggling as well—this impairs ability to really see and digest action
  - D. Pass Read (After Snap)—Football Officials Manual—Page 41
    1. Observe keys and read tackle to determine run or pass.
    2. Stay on line of scrimmage or until receiver(s) on your side of the field have gone at least 10-12 yards downfield.
    3. Be ready to rule on the direction (forward or backward) of a quick quarterback pass.
    4. Move down sideline as required to cover pass on your side of field.
  
4. **If you read run toward your direction**
  - A. Take a step or two into the backfield
  - B. Better looks at lead blocks at the point of attack
  - C. Let ball carrier pass you—officiate behind play
  - E. If you are ahead of the ball carrier you are just a ball watcher more than reading keys and blocks
  - F. If you have to come back to get spot on running play—you missed your reads and the play

5. **If you read run away from you**
  - A. Move cautiously toward the flow of play
  - B. Clean up action behind the umpire and referee
  - C. This is area where cheap shot take place—has to be officiated well
  - D. If you are moving upfield on plays away from you
    1. You have a bad or worse yet, no look at action behind umpire and referee as they move with the flow of the play
  
6. **Read run between hash marks**
  - A. **Stay on line of scrimmage**
  - B. It is better to pick up the ball carrier to soon then not soon enough.
    5. You will be forgiven for missing a hold but never forgiven for missing a fumble
    6. Short yardage situations—may want to step to backfield to pickup ball carrier—never forgiven for missing big time spot
  - C. **Let ball carrier take you upfield**
    1. Unless there is loss of yardage on the play, you don't want to have to come back to mark forward progress
      - a. If you do--you have missed your read and the play
  
7. **Squaring off to get a spot**
  - A. Be quick & aggressive when having to move down field to mark forward progress
  - B. Square it off—making a crisp right-angle turn
  - C. Coming onto field perpendicular to the sideline to mark forward progress spot
  - D. Anything else gives appearance of laziness or nonchalance
  - E. Covering official has a better look at the action and is less likely to come in to the spot to soon
  - F. The covering official is already on the yard line of the forward progress. You can be a good “dead ball official” while still marking the correct spot
  - G. **Keep your head up and stay alert when marking progress spot—DO NOT officiate grass—officiate players—the spot is going no place**
  - H. If there is any question as to the correct spot, the covering official can look across the field to his counterpart for assistance
  - I. This technique instills confidence that the official has correctly determined the correct forward-progress spot
  
8. **Sideline and Out-of-Bounds Plays**
  - A. When the play ends out of bounds do not turn your back on the action. Face out of bounds while marking forward progress so you can observe players out of bounds
    1. Your primary responsibility is the out of bounds spot and safety of players who have went out of bounds
    2. Once those two responsibilities have been satisfied (and only then) do you worry about getting a football back onto the field
  - B. When a player is contacted and driven out of bounds the wing official must determine whether to award the runner forward progress in the field of play or to rule the player is out of bounds

- C. If you award forward progress in bounds the clock is not stopped except for a first down. In this case give the “wind the clock” signal twice and then stop the clock.
  - D. If the play is dead inbounds place a ball on ground inside the sideline to mark the spot. If out of bounds place a ball on the ground just outside the sideline.
9. **Be On The Goal Line To Rule On A Touchdown**
- A. When the play starts inside Team B’s 5-yard line, go to the goal line immediately after the snap
    - 1. Think—1) goal line; 2) read; 3) react
  - B. When the play starts between Team B’s 5 and 10 yard lines, your initial movement should be several steps downfield. If the play moves toward the goal line, go directly to the goal line and be there when the runner gets there
  - C. If play ends short of the goal line, move out into field of play, square off and mark the spot
  - D. When the runner or receiver beats you to the goal line, proceed quickly to the goal line, stop there and signal touchdown. **Do not signal touchdown while in the field of play and do not follow the runner into the end zone while signaling a touchdown.**
10. **Communication With Other Officials**
- A. The linesman and the line judge must agree on the signals that they will use to indicate players on the line, receivers off the line, unbalanced line
11. **Observation Points**
- A. Line Judge is the first official that should be aware of an earned first down—if the line judge stops the clock we should measure—the referee should not be involved in knowing whether it’s close enough to measure—you are looking directly at chains across the field—first down stop the clock—clock management is a big deal
  - B. **Don’t ever give up the goal line. If you are responsible for the goal line—hold your position. You may have to back off for safety or perspective but never give up if there is the possibility of it coming into play**
  - C. Accordion effect on almost every play—has several effects on coaches and players. Makes it look like you are interested in the game and more importantly it has you moving forward toward an altercation should one arise
  - D. Linesman—DO NOT turn your head from field to check on first down—do not take eyes off players—gives the perception your look may change spot