

# Probationary Cheat Sheet – “The Cribs”

*Note – The intent of these Crib Notes (The Cribs) is to provide select, high level reference points of game management for probationary members. You’re first and foremost reference guides should be the NFHS Rules, Case book, and the Officials Manual for mechanics (distributed every other year to membership by our board). The goal of this committee is to provide guidance, reference material, mentoring, and feedback so you can go to that “next level – Class 2 Official”.*

Next Level.....	3
1) Mentors .....	3
2) Meetings.....	3
3) Ratings .....	3
4) Experience.....	3
Mechanics – First Looks (Pre-Season and Regular).....	4
1) Pre-Season scrimmages .....	4
2) Pre-Season Scrimmage Positions.....	4
3) Regular Season – Pre-games.....	4
4) Regular Season – On-Field .....	4
Pregame.....	5
1) Day (or days) before the game.....	5
2) Game Day .....	5
3) Game Site.....	6
4) Pre-Game Conference.....	6
Field Positioning and Basic Responsibilities.....	10
1. Free Kicks .....	10
2. Scrimmage Down.....	11
3. Scrimmage Kicks .....	12
4. Field Goal Kicks .....	13
Mechanics – Round Robin.....	14
1) Pre-game .....	14
2) Kick-Off.....	14
3) Scrimmage – Running Play .....	14
4) Scrimmage – Passing Play .....	14
5) Scrimmage - Kick .....	14
6) Try.....	14
Game Management.....	15
1) Dealing with Coaches and taking the field .....	15
2) Coin Toss .....	15
3) Dealing with Players .....	16
4) Reporting Fouls.....	16
5) Clock Management .....	16
6) First Down Measurement.....	17
7) Weather .....	17
Sideline Management.....	18



## Next Level

### 1) Mentors

Each probationary member will be assigned a mentor. Mentors are respected, experienced officials whom you can talk to informally and on a one-to-one basis. The mentors have volunteered to assist in your development. Introduce yourself to your mentor, share your sub-varsity schedule with them, and ask questions or advice. They're there to help you.

### 2) Meetings

Come to the meetings. Every night of the regularly scheduled membership meetings, 45 minutes prior, we will have our own dedicated meeting tailored to your needs. Each meeting will be on a specific topic, with a different presenter from the Probationary Committee.

Attendance at these meetings contributes to your overall ratings which are input to your final recommendation for Class 2 membership.

### 3) Ratings

Ratings ... Ratings ... Ratings. You guessed it; ratings are a MAJOR item in your recommendation for that Next Level.

It is strongly recommended that you obtain an adequate number Sub-Varsity rating cards at the start of the season and hand them out to your partners after each game. Strongly encourage them to turn those rating cards as soon as possible – DO NOT WAIT TILL THE END OF THE SEASON!

### 4) Experience

The more games you do, the better you will get – it's that simple. Do as many as you can fit into your schedule. Youth games are also a great place to get additional games and experience. Ask at the meetings who some of the youth league coordinators you could contact – you'll get all kinds of experience at these games.

## Mechanics – First Looks (Pre-Season and Regular)

### **1) Pre-Season scrimmages**

- a. Talk with you mentor and see if you can hook up with that person during scrimmages.
- b. Check the CCAFO Web site for scrimmages and find ones that meet your schedules.

*Note – you won't get paid for these, BUT you will gain some valuable experience.*

### **2) Pre-Season Scrimmage Positions**

- a. Think about the position(s) you are interested in
- b. Shadow the experienced ref who is in that position
- c. After shadowing awhile, ask if you can try that position and have the experienced ref shadow you – providing advice and feedback.

*Note – it doesn't get much better than this for getting experience in a controlled and friendly environment.*

### **3) Regular Season – Pre-games**

- a. Go to a regular season pre-game meeting
  - i. You're always welcome – don't be nervous
- b. Listen to what is talked about and how these are conducted
- c. Go to more than 1 – this way you can see and learn from the different personalities

### **4) Regular Season – On-Field**

- a. After the pre-game, go on the field with crew and shadow the chain crew, maybe even man the clip if they don't have a person assigned to that
- b. If not on the field, maybe observe from the press box – great vantage point for observer positioning and signals

*Note – some schools may not allow this; you will need to check prior to the game. Again, don't be bashful. The school administration is generally receptive.*

## Pregame

### **1) Day (or days) before the game**

- a. Timely acceptance of assignment from Arbiter.
- b. Confirm Arbiter game time and location with CIAC schedule online at:  
<http://www.casciac.org/ciacsports.shtml>
- c. Confirm location of lockers/facility/parking with our website:  
<http://www.ccafo.com/schools.htm>
- d. Contact referee
  - i. Confirm game assignment
  - ii. Ask about “probable” uniform
  - iii. Inform ref of any problems with arrival time
- e. Check CCAFO web site for notes about locker room facilities, i.e. some schools do not have facilities for us to change in, therefore come dressed!
- f. Pack equipment bag:
  - i. Clean and shined shoes (before arriving)
  - ii. Long and short sleeve shirts
  - iii. White knickers
  - iv. Federation/NCAA socks
  - v. White compression shorts
  - vi. Black tee shirt or cold weather undergarments
  - vii. Clean hat
  - viii. Two flags
  - ix. Two bags (white & blue for BJ)
  - x. Two whistles
  - xi. Hand down marker
  - xii. Chain down clips (for linesman)
  - xiii. Watch
  - xiv. Rain jacket
- g. Write down crew member’s home and cell numbers along with Larry’s cell if there are any problems
- h. Print out directions to school
- i. Review the following a few minutes each day
  - i. Case book
  - ii. Rule book
  - iii. Other learning materials
- j. Prepare any questions from game situations for crew to review
- k. Get a good night’s sleep
- l. Hydrate yourself before game day

### **2) Game Day**

- a. Eat healthy and drink plenty of water
- b. Look at weather forecast

- c. Double check Arbiter and CIAC site for any last minute changes to crew or game times
- d. Finish work or personal issues before getting in the car to go
- e. Check radio or internet for any traffic delays before you leave, especially on Friday nights
- f. Double check equipment bag for uniform and that you have phone numbers and cell phone
- g. Look professional even in your street clothes before you leave for the game
- h. Car pool (if you can) with another member of the crew.
- i. Leave for game in time to arrive 1 to 1 ¼ hours before Friday night game and 1 ½ hours before Saturday game
- j. Focus on football during the drive to the game

### **3) Game Site**

- a. Park in designated area
- b. Check in with game management if needed
- c. Leave all non-football matters mentally in the car
- d. Confirm entire crew is present
  - i. If crew member is missing and you can't contact him, call Larry
- e. If game management available referee (or other crew member) can confirm:
  - ii. Pre-game ceremonies (15 min before kick-off)
  - iii. National anthem (10 min before kick-off)
  - iv. Team lineup announcements (5 min before kick-off)
  - v. Half-time length
  - vi. Game time
  - vii. Chain crew availability (school management is responsible)
  - viii. Field issues.
- f. Get dressed and begin Pre-game conference

### **4) Pre-Game Conference**

- a. Review key points/wisdom
  - i. Hustle not hurry
  - ii. See the ball but watch the players
  - iii. Know don't guess
  - iv. Teamwork, judgment, decisiveness; poise, confidence, communication, focus, etc...
- b. Special issues to discuss first
  - i. Rule changes
  - ii. NCAA rule differences (if applicable)
  - iii. Overtime or not
  - iv. Weather issues
  - v. Team related issues

1. No huddle
2. Strange formations
3. Unusual plays
- vi. Verify time and timer on field (LJ)
- c. Pre-game on field duties
  - i. Coach's conference
  - ii. Check balls
  - iii. Identify any medical people
  - iv. Chain crew instruction
  - v. Inspect field
- d. Coin toss procedure
  - i. First half positioning and timing with pre game ceremonies
  - ii. Team options
  - iii. Second half positioning
- e. Free kicks
  - i. Positions
  - ii. Instructions to teams
  - iii. Restraining lines
  - iv. Counting players
  - v. Starting clock
  - vi. Momentum into end zone
  - vii. Ball in end zone touchback
  - viii. Untouched kick out of bounds
  - ix. Blocking below the waist
  - x. Kick catch interference
  - xi. Fair catch
  - xii. Forward handoff
  - xiii. Onside kick
    4. Positions
    5. Illegal touching
  - xiv. Free kick after safety
- f. Scrimmage plays – General
  - i. Positions
  - ii. Crew Communication
  - iii. Count players
  - iv. Substitutions
  - v. Legality of offensive line - wing officials signals
  - vi. Eligibility of receivers
  - vii. Man in motion
  - viii. Dead-ball fouls
    6. False Start
    7. Encroachment
  - ix. Legality of snap
- g. Scrimmage plays – Run
  - i. Coverage of runner - in backfield, between tackles, sweeps, pitchout

- ii. Action in front of runner
- iii. Clean up coverage
- iv. Action out of bounds
- v. Forward progress
- vi. Goal line/short yardage situations
- vii. Coverage of fumbles, and ensuing advances and returns
- viii. First downs
- h. Scrimmage plays – Pass
  - i. Coverage of passer - roughing
  - ii. Passer or pass behind/beyond line of scrimmage: clarify jurisdiction
  - iii. Forward/backward pass/fumble: clarify jurisdiction
  - iv. Intentional grounding: clarify jurisdiction
  - v. Ineligibles downfield: clarify jurisdiction
  - vi. Keys and zones
  - vii. Coverage of receivers
  - viii. Complete/incomplete
  - ix. Pass interference - offensive, defensive
  - x. First touching
  - xi. Coverage on interception - momentum into end zone, blocking below the waist
- i. Punts
  - i. Positions
  - ii. Coverage of kicker – roughing
  - iii. Ball over kickers head
  - iv. Blocked/touched at line of scrimmage - ball beyond/behind neutral zone
    - v. Kick catch interference
    - vi. Fair catch
    - vii. Untouched / touched in end zone
  - viii. Out of bounds - marking spot
  - ix. Illegal touching
  - x. Coverage of runback - ball carrier, other action, blocking below waist
  - xi. Fakes
- j. Field goal & try
  - i. Positions - coverage of posts
  - ii. Who has whistle on field goal and try
  - iii. Coverage of kicker/holder - roughing
  - iv. Blocked/touched at line of scrimmage - ball beyond/behind neutral zone
    - v. Fakes
    - vi. Coverage when defense gains possession on field goals – punt rules
- k. General duties
  - i. Fumble pile-ups



- ii. Ball relay
- l. End of quarter
  - i. 1st & 3rd
  - ii. Halftime
  - iii. End of the game
- m. Timeout
  - i. Timing
  - ii. Recording
  - iii. Positions
- n. Measurements
  - i. Positioning
  - ii. Ball outside hash
- o. Fouls and enforcement
  - i. Reporting- who, what, where, when
  - ii. Measurement
  - iii. Recording unsportsmanlike/ejection fouls
  - iv. Crew communication
  - v. Options
  - vi. Signals
  - vii. Enforcement
- p. Positions changes if crew member injured
- q. Overtime rules and procedures
- r. Other procedures
  - i. Muffs
  - ii. Force
  - iii. Inadvertent whistle

## Field Positioning and Basic Responsibilities

### 1. Free Kicks

#### Referee

1. Positioned on goal line near hash mark to Linesman's side of field
2. Rulings on momentum and goal line plays
3. Punch to Umpire and Linesman to confirm 11 players

#### Umpire

1. Positioned at R's 20 yard line, opposite linesman
  - a. Move up if you anticipate an onside kick – talk during pre-game if you will “bump over” or not
2. Clear side lines
3. Count players, punch back to Referee to confirm 11 players
4. Hold Hand above head once LJ is in position and ready for kick
5. During return, stay with ball carrier on your side until you turn him over to the line judge

#### Linesman

1. Positioned at R's 30 yard line, opposite press box / chain side
  - a. Move up to 50 yard line if on onside kick is anticipated – “box it in”
2. Clear side lines
3. Count players, punch back to Referee to confirm 11 players
4. Hold Hand above head once BJ is in position and ready for kick
5. Also during return, stay with ball carrier on your side until you turn him over to the back judge

#### Line Judge

1. Positioned at R's free kick line, opposite linesman
  - a. Hold this position if an onside kick is anticipated – discuss during pre-game and make sure this is the procedure to be followed
2. No need to go to middle of field before kick, come to hash if necessary to get players positioned
3. Clear side lines
4. Count K players, signal Umpire when ready and raise hand above head
5. Pick up the runner from the umpire during the return to your side

**Back Judge**

1. Come to middle of field with ball
  - a. Make sure the ball is legal
  - b. Verify kicking tee is legal as well
2. Remind kicker to look for Referee and wait for his whistle
3. Count K players and hustle to side line (linesman side)
4. Signal Linesman when ready and raise hand above head
5. Pick up the runner from the linesman during the return to your side

**2. Scrimmage Down****ALL: The general rule is not to key the same player as another official.**

1. In determining keys, the following definitions are needed for clarification purposes:
  - a. Strength of the formation is determined by the number of eligible receivers on a particular side of the offensive formation. It has nothing to do with the number of linemen on each side of the center but rather the number of eligible receivers outside the tackles.
  - b. Tight End - the end man on the line of scrimmage lined up no more than four yards from the nearest offensive lineman.
  - c. Back In Backfield - a player in the backfield between the tackles at the snap.
  - d. Trips - three or more receivers outside an offensive tackle.
2. After EVERY down, ALL officials will clearly signal the down for the upcoming play.

**Referee**

1. Line up 10 – 12 yards deep on QB's passing arm side
2. Read opposite tackle for play situations
3. Count players with Umpire and hold hand out indicating 11 long enough for wings to see you
  - a. Verbally notify wings if less than 11 – “check it” or “take a look”

**Umpire**

1. Line up 5 – 7 yards behind defensive line
2. Keep center and guards in view
3. Alternate your position, side of ball, so your position is not predictable and offense uses you as a screen or pick on defense
4. Count players with Referee
5. Remain within hash marks, unless situation warrants you “getting out there” (players deciding to be knuckleheads)

**Linesman and Line Judge**

1. Line up on the sidelines, straddling the line of scrimmage
  - a. Some formations may warrant you moving in, but no further than the top of the numbers
2. Don't be "anchored" on sidelines. Come in hard when the play calls for it, ie;
  - a. Goal lines going in or coming out
  - b. Close to first downs
3. Count defensive players and acknowledge your partner opposite you and to the back judge
  - a. Linesman, on first downs – your first responsibility is getting chains set, don't worry about counting defensive players unless you have time
4. Check Referee to see that he has indicated 11 offensive players
5. Maintain your sidelines!!

**Back Judge**

1. Always positioned deeper than the deepest defensive player – normally no closer than 15 yards deep and deeper than the deepest defensive player
2. Key to the strong side
  - a. If balanced formation, key to the end on the Line Judge's side
3. When the ball is on a hash mark, position yourself no wider than the opposite upright
4. Count defensive players and minimally punch / acknowledge to your Line Judge indicating you have 11
  - a. Your Linesman may not always have time to punch and acknowledge with you – hold your punch out there if it helps him, till shortly before the snap
5. You own the goal line, don't let anyone beat you there
  - a. Inside the 15 yard line, you will tend to give up the goal line – talk it over during the pre-game so your wing men are on same page with you as to when you will give it up

**3. Scrimmage Kicks**

Everyone pretty much has the same positions except the following;

**Back Judge**

1. Down field with receivers, on chain side
2. Position yourself 5 – 7 yards in front of the receiver
  - a. Assure you have good visibility if he were to wave for a fair catch

**Line Judge**

1. Starting drifting down field with the snap, after ensuring kicker a good snap.
2. Assist back judge for actions in front of receiver
3. If the ball goes over receiver's head, move down to assist back judge – watching activity behind ball

### **Linesman**

1. You have the line
2. Assist referee if the ball goes over kickers ahead
3. Assure kick crosses the line of scrimmage
4. Watch for “flyer” being held as he goes down field

### **Linesman**

1. Protect the snapper – make sure he isn't punished while his head is down
  - a. Remind players “clearly” – staff off the snapper
2. Watch for holding as kicking team moves down field

### **Referee**

1. Position on leg side kicker kicks, wide enough to see the ball from snap to kick
  - a. Position to be even or slightly in front of kicker when ball is kicked
2. Protect the kicker
3. Be sure kicker has a chance to protect himself after he kicks the ball, before receiving team starts blocking him
  - a. Receiving team does not get free shots on kicker if he's no where near the play

## **4. Field Goal Kicks**

- Umpire and Referee have similar responsibilities as in scrimmage kick
  - Referee will not signal ready for play until all officials in position and ready
- Wings positioning depends on who is facing holder;
  - Stay on the line of scrimmage if you are facing holder
  - Move under goal with back judge if you are not facing holder
- Back Judge under Field goal post – responsible for post and over / under

## **Mechanics – Round Robin**

*This is a meeting you don't want to miss. At this meeting, we will have stations setup up – each station covering a different mechanic. Members will rotate through the stations in groups of 2 or 3. In this manner, everyone will have a chance to ask and get answers to as close to one on one as we can make it.*

*The timing of this Mechanics meeting is so that you will by now have had a chance to attend pre-games, observe, or possibly be in a game situation. Now you can take what you have heard or learned early in the season and fine tune it.*

*Stations will be;*

- 1) Pre-game**
- 2) Kick-Off**
- 3) Scrimmage – Running Play**
- 4) Scrimmage – Passing Play**
- 5) Scrimmage - Kick**
- 6) Try**

## Game Management

### **1) Dealing with Coaches and taking the field**

- a. Referee and Umpire – meet with coaches
  - i. Give card with officials names and positions
  - ii. Confirm: current time, introductions, coin toss and half time
  - iii. Captains
  - iv. Ask for captains numbers
  - v. Verify players legally equipped by rule with umpire present
  - vi. Any players equipment we need to look at
    - a. Legally protected injuries and / or doctor's note
    - b. Eye shields – inspect and correct BEFORE game starts
  - vii. Ask about unusual plays or formations
  - viii. Ask for get back coach name
  - ix. Ask if QB is right or left handed
  - x. Ask if Kicker is right or left footed
  - xi. Umpire checks game balls and any casts or equipment issues
  - xii. Questions or issues
- b. All officials
  - i. Enter 30 minutes before game together
  - ii. Perform duties in a business like manner
- c. Linesman
  - i. Check line to gain equipment
  - ii. Place tape at 5 yard mark on chain
  - iii. Instruct chain crew with another official present
  - iv. Identify and locate ball person(s)
- d. Line judge and back judge
  - v. Inspect field
  - vi. Secure sidelines
- e. Referee communicates information to crew from coaches meeting

### **2) Coin Toss**

- a. Timing
  - i. Play Star-Spangled Banner 7 minutes before game time if possible
  - ii. Captains should be lined up and ready to be escorted to center of field 5 minutes before game time
  - iii. Toss should occur 3 minutes before start of game
- b. Toss Mechanics
  - i. Referee, line judge and back judge escort home team captains to center of field
    8. Line judge and back judge stop at 9 yard marks to restrain home team
    9. Referee continues to middle of field with captains

- ii. Umpire and linesman escort visiting team captains to center of field
  - 10. Linesman stops at 9 yard marks to restrain visiting team
  - 11. Umpire continues to middle of field with captains
- iii. Referee introduces captains to each other while Umpire listens and records decisions
- iv. Referee asks visiting captain to call coin prior to tossing
- v. Umpire confirms call with referee
- vi. Coin flipped
- vii. Winner of toss may choose to first make a choice in the first or second half
- viii. The person with the 1<sup>st</sup> half choice can elect to kickoff, receive or defend a goal
- ix. After choices are made the captains place their backs to the goal they will defend in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter
- x. Referee signal the choices made by the captains
- xi. Captains sent back to sideline
- c. Before Kickoff
  - ii. Crew gathers in middle of field to confirm and record the choices made by the captains
  - iii. Crew moves to kickoff positions

### **3) Dealing with Players**

- a. Get the team leaders to deal with “problem” players
- b. Do not touch nor yell at players – speak firmly but respectfully
- c. Let the coach know about trouble players – give the coach a chance to correct the issues
- d. Preventive officiate but don’t overly warn

### **4) Reporting Fouls**

- a. Once the down ends, give multiple whistle tweets while stopping the clock
- b. Dead ball foul – find the referee
- c. Live ball foul – stay with your flag, release when another official comes to cover the flag or the Referee comes to you
- d. Tell the “whole story” to the referee;
  - a. Result of play – this can effect penalty enforcement
  - b. What is the foul
  - c. Who committed the foul and which team (Holding on 72 red)
  - d. Where fouls was committed
  - e. Status of the ball (running play, loose ball play, live ball, dead ball)
  - f. Status of clock

### **5) Clock Management**

- a. Know when the clock should and should not run
  - a. Player’s forward progress goes out of bounds, clock stops.



- b. Player's forward progress stops in bounds, and then goes out of bounds, clock runs.
- c. Clock stops on awarded first down. Runs on the ready for play.

## **6) First Down Measurement**

- a. Obvious first down, tell the Referee
- b. Close first down; tell the Referee "its close, take a look."
- c. Referee will look and stop the clock
- d. Blowout games – measure little
- e. Tight games – always measure

## **7) Weather**

- a. Prepare for various weather conditions.
- b. Lightning – Clear the field at the first Flash-Bang. Play stops for 30 minutes from the last Flash-bang
- c. Rain – Prepare for sloppy fields and bringing in new balls on every down.
- d. Snow – Lines may be hard to see or not visible at all.

## Sideline Management

- Team Box – 2 yards from the sideline between the 25 yard lines
- Restricted Area – in front of the team box between the 25 yard lines
- Non-player subs may not be outside the team box
- A MAXIMUM of three coaches may be in the restricted area
- Coaches allowed in the restricted area only when the ball is dead
- Coaches must vacate the restricted area prior to the ball becoming live
- A replaces player must exit on their sideline and not through the endzone
- Coaches or non-player shall not be on the field of play during live ball situations
- Sidelines must be clear for chain management
- Techniques for dealing with irate coaches