



Kicking Game – General Rules and Situations

August 24, 2015



Free Kick - Starting Points

- K's 40-yard line for a kickoff
- K's 20-yard line after a safety
- Yard-line through the spot after a fair catch or awarded fair catch
 - Unless moved by a penalty in each
 - ALWAYS 10 yards apart (Neutral Zone)



Free Kick – Recent Rule Changes



- All K players with the exception of the kicker MUST be within 5 yards of K's free kick line by the time the Referee marks ball ready for play and the time ball is kicked. This is a dead ball foul.
- There MUST be AT LEAST 4 K players on each side of the kicker. They have until the ball is kicked to correct then it's a dead ball foul (2015 modification)



Free Kick - General Rules

- Must be made from any point between the hash marks
- CAN punt after a safety
 - Punter must be one step behind K's free kick line
- Referee has authority to move K's free kick line in an emergency
 - Both lines have to be moved to compensate



Free Kick - General Rules



(Cont'd)

- Only kicker and holder (if used) can be beyond free-kick line after ball marked ready and before ball is kicked
 - Remember, this is a dead ball foul
- Any receiver may catch/recover and advance unless R fair catches
- R may signal for a fair catch in or beyond the neutral zone.



Free Kick - General Rules



(Cont'd)

- Ball is dead if K recovers or catches free kick
- Belongs to K if recovered beyond R's free kick line
 - Must touch the ground
 - Must go beyond the plane of R's line
- Belongs to K if R touches anywhere and K recovers



Free Kick - General Rules



(Cont'd)

- First touching if K touches ball before R in neutral zone
 - R may take ball at this spot or choose results of the play
 - Can be more than one spot of 1st touching
 - Ignored if R pushes or blocks K into ball
 - Canceled if R fouls or any other foul is accepted



Free Kick - General Rules



(Cont'd)

- Free kick not repeated unless:
 - Foul occurs prior to change of possession and penalty acceptance requires replay
 - Double foul occurs
 - Inadvertent whistle during kick



Free Kick - General Rules



(Cont'd)

- Free kick goes out of bounds untouched, R may:
 - Accept a 5-yard penalty from previous spot and have K re-kick
 - Take the ball 25 yards from previous spot
 - Decline penalty and take ball at inbounds spot



Free Kick - General Rules



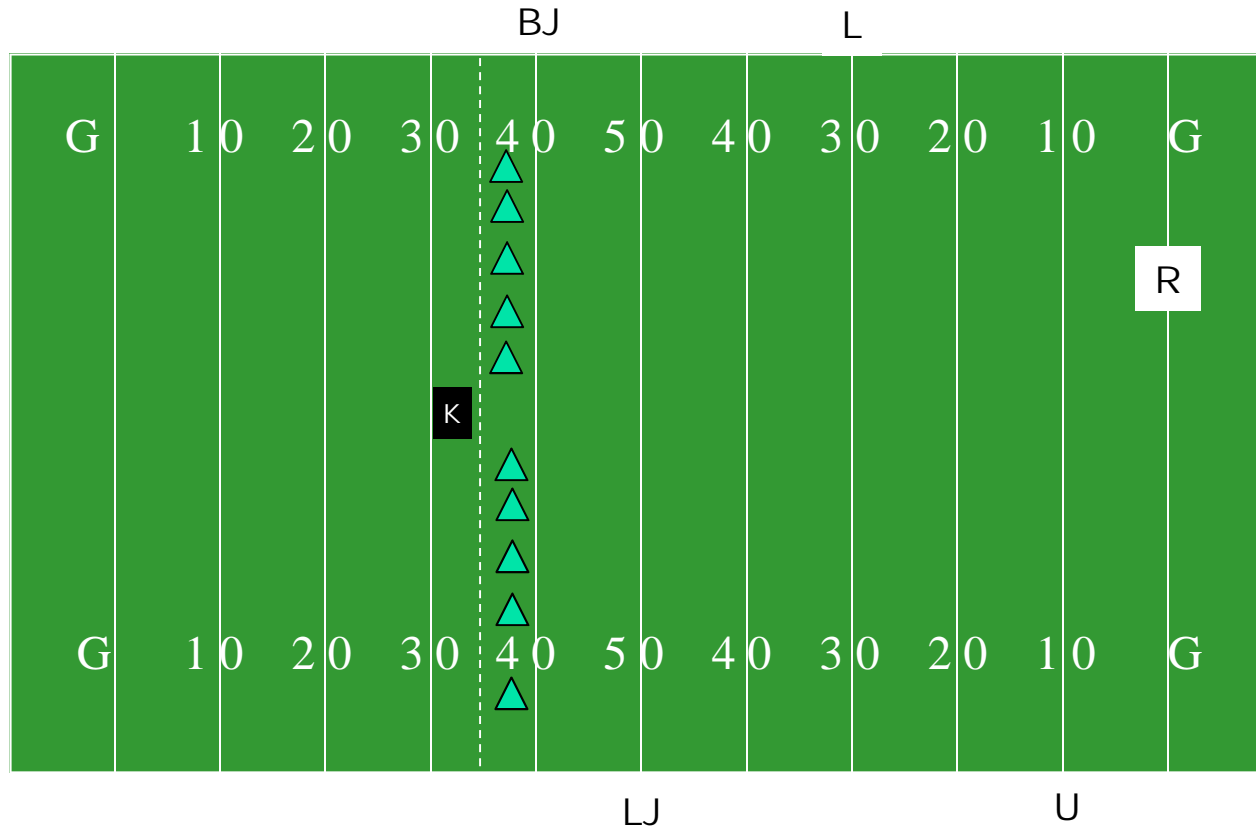
(Cont'd)

- Free kick activities:
 - Kickoff including kick following safety cannot score a FG
 - Kick following fair catch or awarded fair catch may score a FG
 - May not be advanced by K
 - Not recovered by either team belongs to R
 - Jointly recovered belongs to R
 - Touchback if ends in R's end zone



OFFICIALS' POSITION

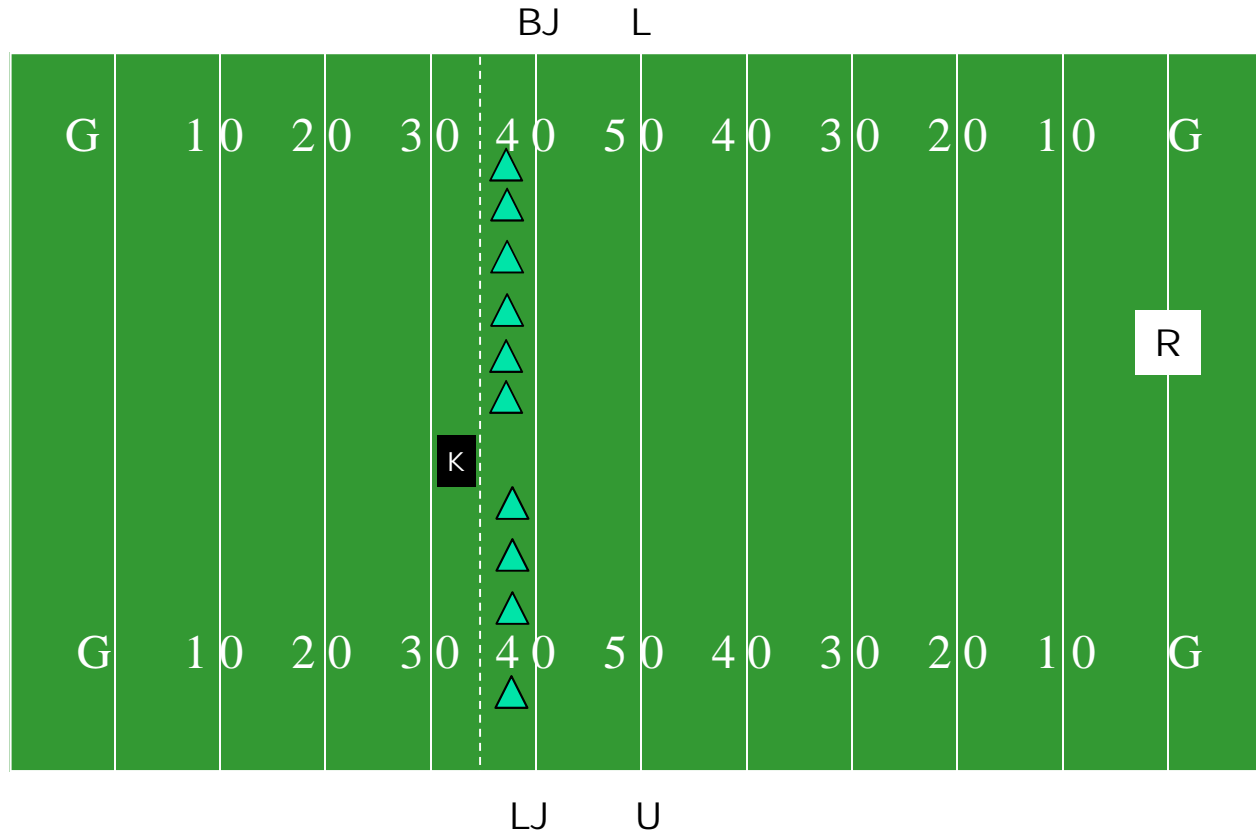
■ Basic Free Kick





OFFICIALS' POSITION

- Anticipated Short Free Kick





SITUATIONS – Free Kick

- K is lining up for a free kick from their own 40 yard line. After the Referee has marked the ball ready for play but before the ball is kicked, K9 who IS the kicker is lined up at K's 30 while K26 is straddling K's 35 yard line but all other K players are between K's 35 and 40 yard line



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

- Ruling: The position of kicker K9 is legal. However, K26's position is illegal. This is a dead ball foul and Team K should be penalized 5 yards for encroachment.



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

- Late in the game Team K is lining up for an apparent on-side kick. K44 appears to be the kicker with 6 team mates lining up on his left and 4 on his right all in legal position. At the last moment, K14 who is at K44's immediate right kicks the ball.



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

- Ruling: Since K14 ultimately was the one who kicked the ball, that left three K players on his right and 7 on his left. Team K shall be penalized 5 yards for illegal formation. This is a dead ball foul. Shut it down immediately.



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

- A kickoff by K99 from K's 40 is muffed by R84 near his 20 yard line. The muff is caught by a K teammate at the 18 and he advances into R's end zone.



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

- Ruling: It will be K's ball first and 10 from R's 18. Team K may catch or recover the muffed kick, but may not advance. The ball is dead when K gains possession.



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

The free kick is possessed by R43 who:

- (a) is airborne and alights with one foot in contact with the sideline at his 26
- (b) contacts the sideline on the 26 after completing the catch



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

- Ruling: In (a) and (b) R will put the ball in play, first and 10 from its 26-yard line because R43 caused the ball to go out of bounds at the 26



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

A kickoff from K's 40 is high and comes down over K's 48 where it is muffed in flight by K72 and recovered by K81 on R's 47.



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

Ruling: 1st touching and kick-catch interference by K72. R can take

- (a) the ball at K's 48 which is the results of the play (awarded fair catch)
- (b) 15-yard penalty and make K kick again from their own 25
- (c) 15-yard penalty from spot of the foul and it will be their ball at K's 33

Remember: Do not start the clock on K's touching.



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

K tries an onside kick from their own 40. K61 muffs the ball at K's 48. The ball bounces off R24 and is finally muffed out of bounds by K86 at R's 45. K did NOT force the ball into R.



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

- Ruling: R can either take the ball:
 - (a) at K's 48 which was the spot of 1st touching or
 - (b) at R's 45 where the ball went out of bounds.

R does not have a re-kick option since they actually touched the kick.



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

During an on-side kick attempt:

- (a) R32 touches the ball at K's 48 after which K18 blocks R56 and K34 recovers the ball
- (b) After the ball touches the ground and travels at least 10 yards, K47 blocks R64 before K21 recovered the kick at R's 49
- (c) K22 initiates a block on R87 at midfield but the ball was rolling at K's 46



SITUATIONS – Free Kick

Ruling:

- (a) Legal recovery by K34 because R32 touched the ball in the neutral zone
- (b) Legal recovery by K21. All requirements have been met – the ball traveled at least 10 yards so any K member can legally block.
- (c) Illegal block by K22. Even though the contact occurred on or beyond R's free kick line, the ball had not reached this point. If the foul is accepted, it will be penalized 10 yards from the previous spot.



Scrimmage Kick - General



Rules

- Offensive team may punt, drop kick or place kick from in or behind the neutral zone
- Scrimmage kick recovered beyond the neutral zone may be advanced by R
 - Ball is dead if recovered by K
- Scrimmage kick recovered in or behind the NZ may be advanced by either team.



Scrimmage Kick - General Rules (Cont'd)



- Snapper has protection when K is in legal scrimmage formation
 - At least 10 yards for punt, 7 yards if there's a holder
- Scrimmage kick ending in R's end zone is a touchback no matter who supplied the force
- Remember, missed or blocked FG attempt is treated same as a punt



Scrimmage Kick - General Rules (Cont'd)



- First touching if K touches ball before R beyond neutral zone
 - R may take ball at this spot or choose results of the play
 - Can be more than one spot of 1st touching
 - Ignored if R pushes or blocks K into ball
 - Canceled if R fouls or any other foul is accepted



Scrimmage Kick - General Rules (Cont'd)



- Scrimmage kick goes out of bounds between goal lines
- Scrimmage kick recovered inbounds jointly by opponents
- Scrimmage kick becomes dead anywhere inbounds with no player in possession
 - Ball belongs to R in any of the above cases



Scrimmage Kick - General Rules (Cont'd)



- Kick becomes dead in R's end zone
 - Touchback unless a field goal is scored
- Kick becomes dead in K's end zone
 - Safety if K has possession or kick is out of bounds unless R provides the force then it's a touchback
 - Touchdown if R is in possession



Fair Catch - General Rules

- Any receiver may signal for a fair catch on a free kick or scrimmage kick
- Must be done in or beyond the neutral zone for free kick but only beyond neutral zone for scrimmage kick
- Ball becomes dead when kick is caught or someone gains possession



Fair Catch - General Rules

(Cont'd)



- Only the receiver(s) who gives a valid signal is afforded protection
- Cannot block until kick ends
- Receiver cannot give an invalid signal
 - Only valid signal is waving one arm above head
- Runner cannot give an illegal signal
 - Giving any signal once R gains possession



Fair Catch - General Rules (Cont'd)



- While a free kick is in or beyond NZ or scrimmage kick beyond NZ is in flight K cannot touch the ball or obstruct R's path to the ball
 - Doesn't matter whether or not R gives a fair catch signal
 - Ignored if R blocks K into the ball
- Exception: K can catch, bat, touch or even muff a scrimmage kick beyond neutral zone if no R player is position to receive kick.



Fair Catch - General Rules (Cont'd)



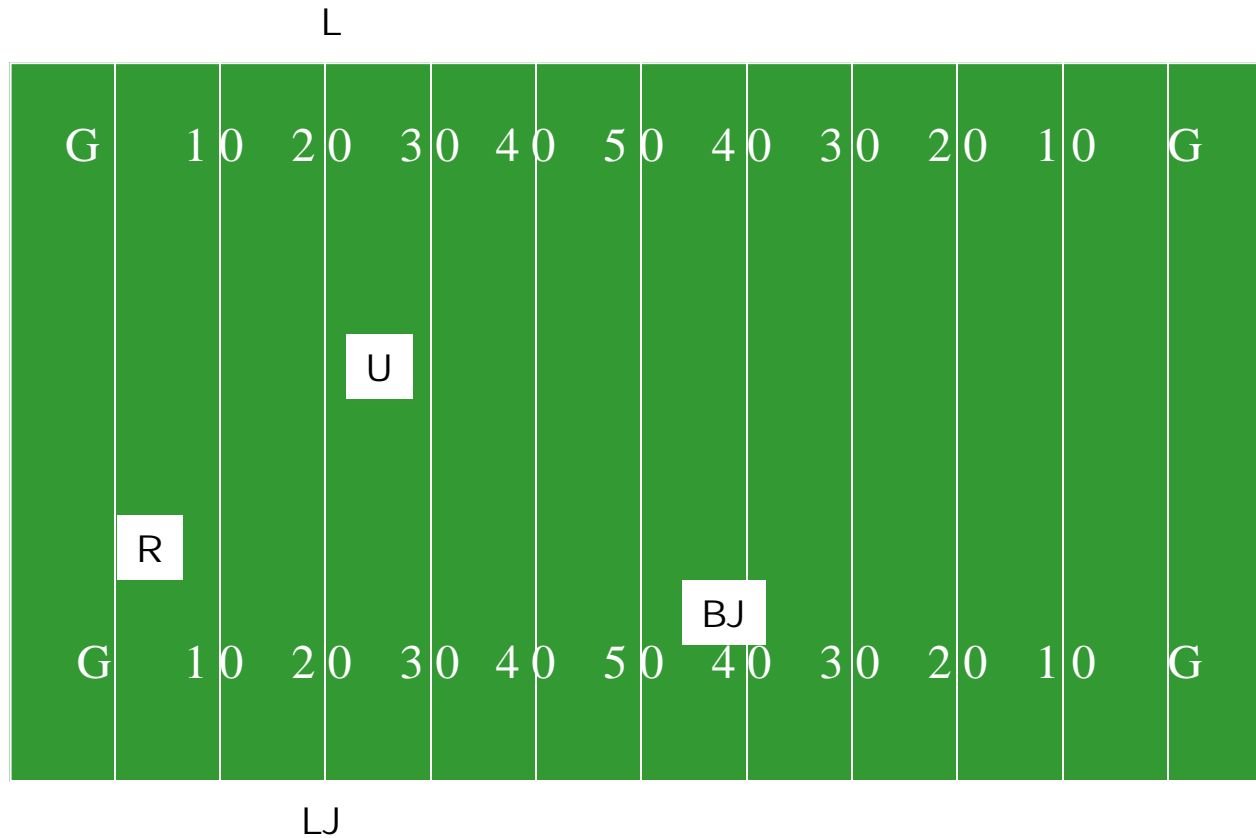
- R's captain may choose to snap or free kick anywhere between the hash marks
 - (a) on the yard line through the spot of the catch
 - (b) through the spot of interference, when a fair catch is awarded
 - (c) on the yard line through the dead ball spot when a distance penalty for kick catch interference is awarded

These choices remain if a dead ball foul occurs prior to the down, a foul or inadvertent whistle occurs during the down and the down is replayed



OFFICIALS' POSITION

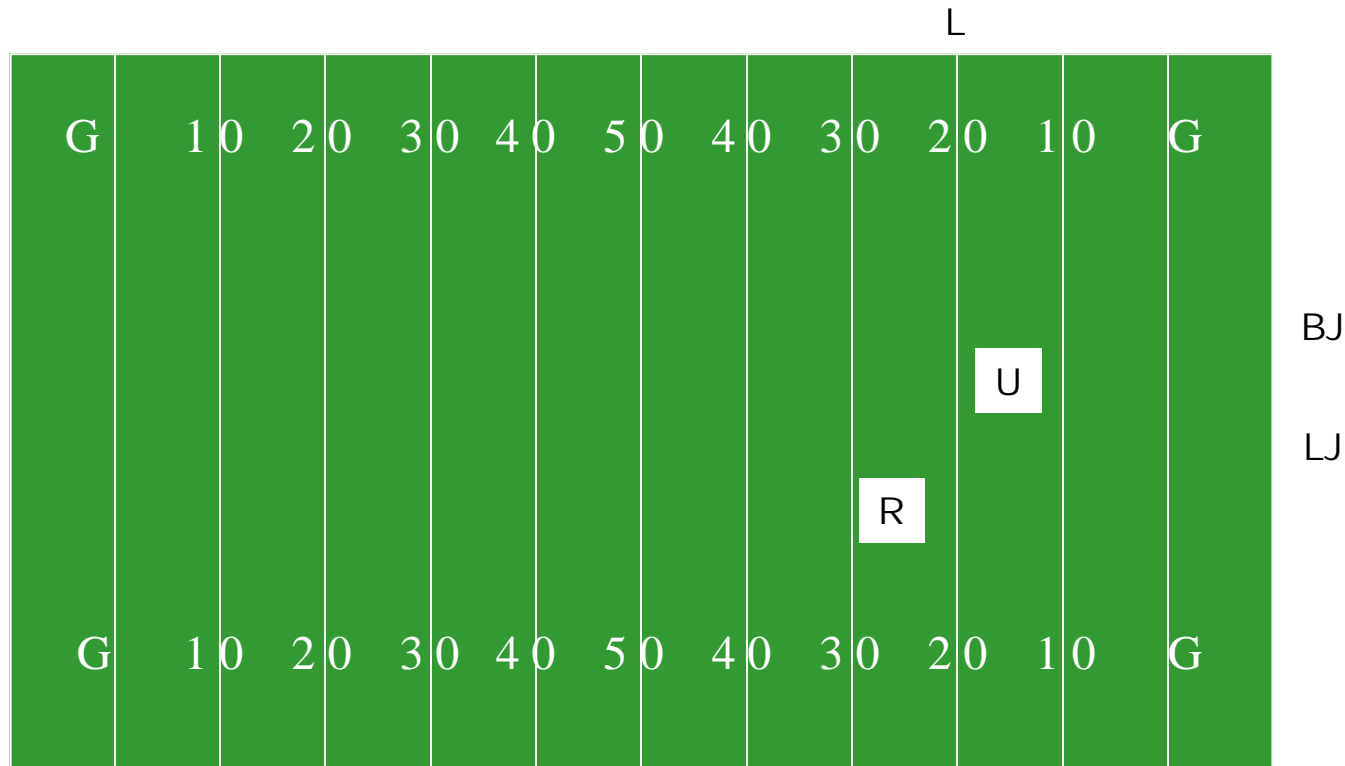
- Basic Scrimmage Kick





OFFICIALS' POSITION

- FG Attempt (R on Press Box side)





SITUATIONS – Scrimmage



Kick

With 3rd and 7 on K's 8 yard line, K28's punt is blocked and recovered on K's 2 yard line

- (a) Simultaneously by K4 and R36 or
- (b) by K90 who advances to K's 14 yard line



SITUATIONS – Scrimmage



Kick

Ruling

- (a) Ball is dead and belongs to R 1st and goal on K's 2 yard line
- (b) K may recover AND advance a scrimmage kick behind the neutral zone. K90's advance is legal and since K did not make the line to gain, it will be the next down 4th and 1. The series does not end for K because of the blocked punt.



SITUATIONS – Scrimmage



Kick

With 4th and 12 from R's 45 yard-line, K39's short punt is grounded and touched by K84 (1st touching) at R's 18 yard-line. The ball continues rolling and is picked up by R24 at R's 15 yard-line. R24 is subsequently hit and fumbles at R's 22 yard-line. K73 recovers the fumble at R's 20. During the kick, R53 is flagged for holding at R's 35 yard line.



SITUATIONS – Scrimmage



Kick

Ruling

If K accepts R's foul for holding, it will be enforced from the previous spot making it 4th and 2 from R's 35. PSK cannot apply in this case because K is next to put the ball in play as a result of the fumble recovery. Also, the awarded spot for 1st touching is not applied since K accepted R's foul. If K declines the foul R will take the ball at their own 18 yard-line, the spot of K's 1st touching.



SITUATIONS – Scrimmage



Kick

A scrimmage kick comes to rest at R's 11-yard line. R15 attempts to recover and advance but accidentally kicks or muffs the ball so that it rolls into R's end zone where:

- (a) the ball subsequently rolls out of bounds or beyond the end line
- (b) R34 downs the ball
- (c) R49 recovers and advances out of the end zone or
- (d) K94 recovers in the end zone



SITUATIONS – Scrimmage



Kick

Ruling

It is a touchback in all cases. The kick does not end until someone gains possession. Muffing or accidentally kicking the ball in an attempt to gain possession does not mean R gained possession. When the kick broke the plane of R's goal line, it becomes an automatic touchback. The covering official should sound his whistle once this occurs.



SITUATIONS – Scrimmage



Kick

With 4th and 9 from K's 42-yard line, K53's punt is coming down over R's 20-yard line where

- (a) R22 is in position to catch the ball or
- (b) all R players have moved away from where the ball will land

In either case, K8 catches the ball.



SITUATIONS – Scrimmage



Kick

Ruling

- (a) it is kick catching interference by K8. R can take the ball at the spot of K's catch- 1st and 10 from their own 20, penalize K 15 yards from the spot of the catch - 1st and 10 from their own 35, or penalize K 15 yards from the previous spot and re-kick – 4th and 24 from K's 27
- (b) K8's catch is legal since no R player was in position to field the punt. R's ball 1st and 10 at their own 20.



SITUATIONS – Fair Catch

With 4th and 3 from K's 12-yard line, K22's punt is high and short but goes beyond the expanded neutral zone. R85 gives an invalid fair catch signal at K's 25-yard line and the untouched kick hits the ground and rebounds behind the neutral zone where K22 recovers his own punt and is downed at K's 12-yard line.



SITUATIONS – Fair Catch

Ruling

This is a PSK foul and the ball belongs to R by rule. If K accepts R's penalty, it will be 1st and 10 for R from K's 30, since the kick ended at K's 12-yard line and the foul was behind the basic spot.



Thank You!!

