



Ultimate Players Association Observer Manual

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I – Introduction

The most important aspect differentiating Ultimate from other organized sports is summarized in the following excerpt from the Introduction to the Official Rules of Ultimate, 11th Edition (the “Rules”):

Spirit of the Game: Ultimate relies upon a spirit of sportsmanship that places the responsibility for fair play on the player. Highly competitive play is encouraged, but never at the expense of mutual respect among competitors, adherence to the agreed upon rules, or the basic joy of play. Protection of these vital elements serves to eliminate unsportsmanlike conduct from the Ultimate field. Such actions as taunting opposing players, dangerous aggression, belligerent intimidation, intentional infractions or other “win-at-all-costs” behavior are contrary to the spirit of the game and must be avoided by all players.

It is a tribute to those who play Ultimate that, in the overwhelming majority of cases, the mutual obligation to adhere to these principles serves to maintain compliance with the Rules, and to resolve disputes that do arise, in contests at virtually all levels of competition. However, it is fairly well settled that some form of third party judging or appeal process is necessary in highly competitive situations where the stakes may be significant or where there is added value to faster-paced play, such as when spectators are present.

Observers have therefore proven useful in a number of capacities. In the heat of competition, the players involved in a play are not always certain about exactly what happened, nor do they always have a clear view of what occurred. Even though they may try their best to make the correct call, it can be difficult for them to know what actually transpired, especially when fatigued in the midst of hard-fought, competitive play. Because Observers are not playing, they are better situated to track and evaluate objective limits related to both time and space, such as time limits and line calls. Observers also can help facilitate and speed up the game by supplying an objective perspective to help resolve player disputes that otherwise can drag on and sour the game experience for both players and spectators.

This Manual describes how Observers are to conduct themselves and be involved in the game, and outlines UPA-recommended principles and practices for observing. Its purpose is to help ensure consistency and quality in the way that games are observed, both of which are crucial to maximizing the benefit that the Observer program can provide to those who play Ultimate.

The UPA Observer Program

Observers initially were used sparingly and their role first was envisioned as totally passive. The Observer program became somewhat more formalized after UPA Club Nationals in 1987, where it became evident to many that Observers would have to become a bit more active in certain capacities (despite protests from some that to do so was contrary to the Spirit of the Game). With the understanding that Observers’ roles would be better defined, an official Certified Observers Pool (COP) was established – the program was guided into existence by Robert “Nob” Rauch, and Mark Dixon was appointed the first head of the COP.

In ensuing years, the COP program was refined in response to changes in play and players’ expectations. Over time, Observers became requested more often at important tournaments, and Observer involvement became more active, though not nearly to the level of officials in most sports. The UPA continues to examine the ramifications of more active Observers and the use of different rule sets for different levels of play (including the limited use of penalties). As a result of the UPA at times having sanctioned the use of different rule sets, Observers’ roles have taken a variety of forms. However, under the Official Rules and various supplemental or experimental rule sets, Observers have been allowed and/or assigned a more active role.

In 2005, the UPA Observer Program took on its current structure. A standardized training document was produced in the form of the UPA Observer Manual. A training clinic curriculum, based on the standards in the manual, was developed, implemented, and continues to be utilized at clinics around the country. Criteria for certification were developed, which included clinic attendance, testing, and performance evaluation. Regional Observer Coordinator positions were created to facilitate scheduling of training clinics and use of Observers at UPA events. A standing Observer Committee, headed by a committee chair, was tasked with overseeing the development of the program.

The UPA Observer Committee determines official UPA guidelines for observing, including current standards for UPA competition, and training materials and methods. The committee consists of seven active members (including a chairperson and a UPA staff liaison), plus the UPA's national division directors. The active members of the committee are responsible for updating and maintaining this Manual and other official Observer training materials. They also meet periodically to discuss potential changes to Observer roles and practices, and implement any such changes by revising and refining those materials. The Observer Committee oversees, and assists in conducting, Observer training clinics, including at least one "experimental rules" tournament, where proposed variations on Observer roles, protocol and interaction can be tested and evaluated by players and the committee.

Board Policies

The following UPA Policy on Observers and Referees was adopted by the Executive Committee of the UPA's Board of Directors on August 8, 2003:

In line with its previous statements, the UPA endorses the use of Observers in Ultimate but does not endorse the use of Referees.

The primary difference between Observers and Referees is that Observers shall not make active foul and violation calls of a subjective nature, while Referees are empowered to make any call authorized in the rules, bylaws, officiating guide, or any set of tournament ground rules. Observers are allowed to resolve disputes on foul and violation calls if requested to do so by the players or event organizers. It is permissible but not required for Observers to be allowed to make active calls on conduct issues and objective matters in the rules, including but not limited to time violations where the disc is not in play and boundary decisions.

Observers have the responsibility to uphold the Spirit of the Game to the players on the field. While Observers can provide a neutral perspective for dispute resolution or calls of an objective nature, the primary responsibility for the integrity of Ultimate and the Spirit of the Game remains with the players.

II – Principles of Observing

The overriding principles of observing are outlined in the Observer Code of Conduct:

Observer Code of Conduct

Spirit of the Game

An Observer's paramount consideration is to help players uphold the Spirit of the Game. Observers should assist players in creating an environment that fosters sportsmanship and respect among teammates and opponents, including striving to inform players when their actions or manner of treating others during play are inconsistent with the concepts of fair play or mutual respect. Performing this function helps maintain integrity among players familiar with Ultimate and instill in new players the unique spirit with which Ultimate is played.

The following is excerpted from the UPA Official Rules of Ultimate (11th Edition):

Spirit of the Game: Ultimate relies upon a spirit of sportsmanship that places the responsibility for fair play on the player. Highly competitive play is encouraged, but never at the expense of mutual respect among competitors, adherence to the agreed upon rules, or the basic joy of play. Protection of these vital elements serves to eliminate unsportsmanlike conduct from the Ultimate field. Such actions as taunting opposing players, dangerous aggression, belligerent intimidation, intentional infractions, or other win-at-all-costs behavior are contrary to the spirit of the game and must be avoided by all players.

The Game Belongs to the Players.

Managing and conducting the game is primarily the players' responsibility, and the outcome of a game should be decided by their actions, not those of Observers. An Observer's role is not to alter the outcome or dictate the course of a contest, but to assist players in following the rules and to help resolve disputes where necessary. Thus, except where Observers are empowered to decide a matter, all calls and play stoppages are initiated by the players. Likewise, if there is a reasonable chance that the players may be able to quickly resolve a dispute on their own, they should be afforded the opportunity to do so before an Observer intervenes.

Professionalism

Observers should approach their role and conduct themselves with the utmost professionalism. This includes treating players, coaches and spectators with respect, being as prepared as possible – mentally, physically, and with the proper equipment – to perform their duties, and making every effort to position themselves properly and make the best judgments possible at all times. Observers should make every attempt to improve their observing skills, both individually and in conjunction with their fellow officials, in an effort to do the best job that they can for the players.

Observing Fundamentals

Rules

This Manual assumes that Observers know the Rules, and any modifications in effect for the game or tournament being observed. It thus contains few references to, or repetitions of, specific Rules' sections. The purpose of this Manual is to serve as a guide beyond the Rules – a tool for implementing, not learning, them. It is imperative that Observers know the Rules well, and that each ruling be supported by the applicable Rule(s). Consulting a rulebook during a game is acceptable, if that is necessary in order to rule correctly. Making a ruling that is not in accord with the Rules is one of the quickest ways to lose the respect that an Observer needs. Occasionally, complex game situations arise that test even the most experienced Observers,

but a thorough understanding of the Rules and how to apply them allows an Observer the best chance of properly resolving those situations.

Active or Inactive Calls

“Active” calls are those for which the Observer is empowered to rule immediately, without player request or initiation. Line calls are active, including in/out-of-bounds, goal/no goal, and off-sides. Time limits also are called and announced actively, and an Observer may stop play if appropriate to handle conduct issues. All other calls, such as fouls and violations, are not active; i.e., an Observer does not rule or offer an opinion unless requested or unless the players involved cannot quickly agree on the outcome. Note that Observers do not actively call up/down (whether the disc touched the ground before being caught), but should be prepared to rule if a dispute arises, as with other inactive calls.

The Observer should immediately rule on each active call with a hand signal and simultaneously announce the ruling loudly enough so that impacted players are aware of it (this may require yelling in certain situations). While it is the players’ responsibility to check the indication, the Observer should do everything possible to minimize confusion and assist the players in knowing the call. After making certain rulings, other hand signals may be appropriate for spectators, sidelines and players not involved in or aware of the matter. Hand signals are described in Appendix 2.

As with any call, a ruling on an active call should be made by the Observer with the best view (typically, the one closest to the action), and it is important for Observers to communicate with each other and make every attempt to avoid issuing conflicting calls. If conflicting calls are made, the Observer with the best view reigns; if views are roughly equal, the situation is resolved as if it were a contested call and no Observers were present. Active calls often involve a “play-on” situation, such as indicating that a player is in- or out-of-bounds, or that a catch was made on the playing field proper (not in the end zone). In such cases, if no other issue requires play to stop, play continues uninterrupted after the call.

For calls that are not active, the Observer should not offer an opinion or make a call for the players. Thus, if an Observer ruling is necessary the Observer *always* should clarify what the call is before ruling. In addition, it is not appropriate to say, “no foul, but there was a travel” or the like. Except as discussed below in this Manual regarding stalls and strip/foul calls, an Observer should rule on only the call actually made.

On-Field Authority

Depending on the personnel available, an Observer may work a game alone or with other Observers and/or linespersons. The roles of the various officials are defined in this Manual, in the descriptions of each observing system. Generally, the Observer closest to the play will make the ruling. If s/he cannot make the call, s/he can consult other Observers or linespersons. An official further from the play can indicate that s/he has a call (if needed) by putting one or both hands on top of his/her head. It is the responsibility of the closer official to look to the others for help, and long trips and conferences to consult with other officials should be kept to a minimum.

If an Observer who is not nearest the play disagrees with a ruling, s/he should not indicate the disagreement verbally or otherwise. After the play, s/he can privately discuss the ruling with the official who made it. The Head Observer in a game has final authority on calls and can overrule another Observer’s ruling, but only where the Head Observer is absolutely certain that s/he is correct. An official who is not making a ruling should avoid giving any affirmative or negative signal (e.g., shaking or nodding the head), because such signals may appear to indicate agreement/disagreement with a player’s call or another official’s ruling. When discussing a potential ruling with other officials, be sure to be well-separated from all players, so that they cannot ascertain the decision in advance (and, thus, whether it is advantageous to request Observer intervention).

It can be helpful to discuss “non-calls” with other officials during breaks in the action, such as how they saw a particular play, even if the players have agreed amongst themselves without Observer intervention. Such consultations can help hone skills and provide an opportunity to see how others view the same situation. Keep these discussions private, however. While there still may be differences in how two people view the same play, such discussions can lead to more consistency among Observers.

Observer-Player Interaction

Ideally, rulings are made succinctly, without long discussions or explanations. It is preferable to state the ruling, which team has possession of the disc, and what is about to happen, such as: “No foul. Red’s disc here with the stall count at zero.” Statements such as “I did not see a travel” or “If your arm was here, then that would not have been a foul” and the like tend to create confusion, and/or give the appearance that the Observer was not paying attention or is unsure of his/her ruling. However, a brief description of the specific action can reinforce the Observer’s image of attentiveness (e.g., “No travel – the foot did not move until after the release.”).

After an Observer rules, there is no further argument and play resumes according to the ruling *after a check*. By requesting Observer intervention, a player implicitly agrees that s/he will abide by the Observer’s ruling, even if s/he disagrees. An Observer should not discuss what would have happened if such and such had occurred, or how s/he would have ruled on a situation where no ruling was issued. This keeps the game under the players’ control, helps avoid tipping the Observer’s hand on future rulings, and averts discussion about calls that were not even at issue.

Observers should not get drawn into player arguments. Converting an argument from one between players to one between an Observer and a player is counterproductive to keeping the game moving. Serious verbal or physical abuse is a conduct issue and Observers should not respond in kind. Also, an Observer should attempt to stay detached from the players and avoid conduct that may create the appearance that s/he may be biased or otherwise interested in the outcome of a particular play or contest. While the occasional remark or brief conversation may help calm a tense dispute or otherwise facilitate relations with players on the field, actions such as overtly cheering or applauding for a particular team, accepting gifts of food or drink from a team, or excessively conversing with members of one team or “hanging out” on their sideline during breaks should be avoided.

When to Intervene

As the name implies, Observers watch the game – closely. If players can quickly resolve contested calls on their own, an Observer need not rule. However, when a call is made and contested, the nearest Observer should be ready to rule if the players cannot agree on an outcome relatively quickly (generally within ~20 seconds). If the closest Observer did not have a clear view, s/he should use this time to quickly confer with other crew members who may have had a better vantage point.

Either player involved in a dispute can request Observer intervention; agreement between the players is not required and team captains need not be involved or consulted. If one player requests Observer intervention and the other player wants to discuss the matter, the Observer may give them a short time to attempt to work it out themselves, if it appears that this may be fruitful. If such a discussion initially appears to have promise, but begins to drag on towards the recommended 20 second limit, the Observer should inform the players that they need to decide quickly or the Observer will rule. If both players come to an Observer immediately without trying to work out a dispute themselves, the Observer should ask them to at least make an attempt. Where it is obvious that the players will not agree, the Observer may and should rule quickly.

The “Do-Over”

Players may agree themselves to a “do-over” and the Observer should respect this decision regardless of what s/he would have ruled if consulted. When an Observer is consulted, it is important that before ruling, the Observer should be confident (at least 90% certain) that s/he had the requisite proximity and perspective

to rule properly. Officials should strive to ensure that at least one of the crew is in proper position to confidently rule on any particular play or situation. However, if no crew member is sufficiently confident, it is preferable to return the disc to the thrower for a do-over than to make an educated (or uneducated) “guess,” which almost always adversely impacts players’ confidence that rulings are being made correctly. If the Observer being consulted on a play did not have a proper view or perspective, then before implementing a do-over, s/he should be sure to check with other crew members who may have been situated to confidently make the ruling. If crew members are repeatedly out of position to properly see plays (whether due to lack of hustle or otherwise), then they should confer and adjust their positions and movements to the extent possible, as players may begin to lose confidence in and/or respect for a crew that consistently resorts to do-overs in order to resolve contested situations.

Player Overrule

On occasion, a player who believes that an Observer’s ruling on an active call is incorrect may request that the ruling be reversed to the detriment of his/her own team. For example, where an Observer rules that a catch was made in-bounds, but another offensive player believes that it was out-of-bounds, resulting in a turnover. In such cases, provided that the person requesting the reversal was both a) a player on the field at the time of the call and b) a member of the team benefiting from the call, the Observer has the discretion to reverse his/her ruling, taking into account the perspective and proximity of the player requesting the reversal and other factors that the Observer considers relevant under the circumstances. After a request for reversal, play restarts with a check.

Justice

An Observer’s job is not to render justice. Players sometimes will agree on the “wrong” solution (i.e., the Observer may feel that their decision – perhaps a do-over – is not supported by what actually occurred). In such cases, the Observer should not intervene or suggest an opinion. It is preferable that players settle matters amongst themselves rather than have a non-player make a ruling. An Observer should not attempt to equalize games or right past wrongs, but should make each call based upon what is seen and the applicable Rule(s), and should not take into account what may have happened on a previous play or the reputations of the players involved.

Consistency and Best Judgment

Observers should strive to be consistent in their rulings, both within a particular crew and between different crews at the same tournament. Two neutral parties can see the same play from the same perspective and still come to different conclusions about it. However, players rightfully expect some consistency. Given the same circumstances, rulings should be similar, both from the same Observer and from different Observers.

There is a tacit assumption that an Observer will use his/her best judgment in making any call. It often is difficult to be absolutely sure that the call is correct, and there will be occasions where an Observer makes an incorrect ruling. There also are times when a proper ruling will not be popular – on most calls the best that one can hope for is that half of the players agree. Among the things that an Observer can do are know the rules thoroughly, know and abide by the guidelines of this manual, expend the utmost effort to be in the best position to make calls, and be fair and respectful to all players and their coaches and fans. There always will be situations where an Observer, much as the umpire or referee in any sport, is questioned, sometimes rightfully and sometimes not.

Professionalism

Observers should conduct themselves in a professional manner. This includes preparing adequately for the game. Observers should arrive at their field 15 minutes before game time, start their meeting with the captains 10 minutes before game time (see pre-game meeting under Best Practices, Common Situations), and give a 3 minute warning to both teams before game time. Observers also should use pre-game time to tend to matters such as surveying the field for debris or obstacles, assuring that sidelines are free of

spectators and equipment, and informing players of potential uniform or dangerous equipment issues. Because good observing requires constant running, pre-game stretching is recommended. Extra game discs (if available) should be kept handy in case of a damaged disc or a turnover far out-of-bounds.

It is of utmost importance to avoid interfering with players' movements or the flight of the disc. An Observer is an obstacle on the field, and if the disc hits an Observer and is not caught by an offensive player, it is a turnover. Per the UPA Standing Rules Committee, Observers are treated as "air" (i.e. as if they weren't there) in terms of their potential to impact the flight of the disc or player movement. Observers always should be cognizant of where players are and where they may be moving. This requires attention to the weather (especially wind) conditions and the style of defense being played (zone or man), and an awareness of the tendencies and skills of both throwers and receivers. Stepping off of the playing field often is necessary to avoid interfering.

Observers always should know the game score, time limits, number of time-outs remaining for each team, and how any cap times may affect the game, and should periodically apprise teams about them (see "Time limits" below). Observers should be well-groomed and appropriately attired for the particular event (see "Equipment" below). Observers should carry themselves (e.g. posture, activities) professionally while at the field. Observers should be easily accessible to the teams prior to games. It's recommended that Observers stand at mid-field near the scoreboard or each at the corner where they will be working. During this time, Observers can note potential issues such as uniform violations, dangerous equipment, etc. It is absolutely prohibited for an Observer to officiate in any contest of which the outcome is the subject of any wager in which the Observer has a direct or indirect interest.

III – Observing Systems

Multiple observing systems have been developed and used over the years. For UPA events, the Two Observer System (TOS) generally is recommended. However, if sufficient personnel are available (especially for marquee contests), the Four Observer System, which operates similarly to the TOS, provides maximum field coverage. For events where personnel are limited, the One Observer System may be used, with the assistance of a Linesperson if at all possible.

Two-Observer System

Each Observer has primary responsibility for one sideline and one goal line. Observers generally follow the guidelines set out in the following table and diagram below, with Observer 1 or “O1” being the Observer who is behind the offense and Observer 2 or “O2” being the other or “downfield” Observer. One Observer tracks time limits between points and during time-outs (and communicates those to the other Observer), while the other Observer keeps track of the score and any warnings or penalties assessed. If the wind is blowing toward one corner of the field, it is recommended that one Observer set up there; i.e., have primary responsibility for both the end zone and the sideline toward which the wind is blowing (not be based on the sideline away from the wind).

As the disc advances, O1 follows behind the disc and is primarily responsible for thrower/marker fouls, travel calls, stall counts and receiver/defender interactions close to the thrower. O2 stays roughly even with the deepest player near the end zone being attacked and has primary responsibility for long receptions, picks, and downfield fouls between receivers and defenders. When the offense nears the goal line for which O2 is responsible, s/he may move toward the back line, leaving O1 to watch the goal line. On a turnover, the Observers trade roles, with the Observer who is about to be behind the offense (new O1) counting down the time warnings to put the disc in play.

Situation	Observer 1 (O1)	Observer 2 (O2)
During Pull	Watch for off-sides on receiving team.	Watch for off-sides on pulling team.
After Pull	Get in position behind the thrower, staying slightly toward your sideline. Note offense and defense (zone, man, etc.) as players set up.	Jog toward midfield to watch catches near your sideline. Note offense and defense (zone, man, etc.) as players set up.
Short passes	Shadow the disc, monitoring stall count and the thrower's feet; avoid interfering with dump and swing passes. Run toward new receiver (to-be thrower) when disc is released. Be prepared to run deep on a huck, to be in position for watching your sideline in/near far end zone.	Stay near your sideline, roughly even with the deepest receiver. Be prepared to run to the end zone on a long pass.
Long Pass	Watch for stall, foul or travel calls and then run downfield. Stop and position just before disc is to be caught.	Run toward the end zone. If the pass is near the far sideline, run across field for better view, avoiding receivers and defenders. Return to original side when O1 is close enough to see his/her sideline at/near end zone.
Turnover	Move toward the disc, setting up roughly even with the deepest receiver. Be ready for quick huck; avoid players as they change direction. Check with O2 to see if there are any calls that would negate the turnover.	Get in position behind the thrower, staying slightly toward your sideline. Check with O1 to see if there are any calls that would negate the turnover.
Man-to-man Sideline Trap	Stand behind thrower and out of the way of dumps. Depending on the wind strength and direction, best position may be behind the thrower, off the field.	If force is toward your sideline, stay off the field, even with the deepest receiver. If force is other way, run to the middle of the field to watch for long hucks or punts down the line.
Flat Zone	Stand further back from thrower and out of the lane for swing passes. Typically, fewer marking fouls occur in a flat zone.	Stay parallel with the deepest receiver. If it is windy, cross-field hucks are less likely.
Trap Zone	Several offensive players may crowd around the disc and marking can be very aggressive. Avoid interfering with dumps. Depending on the wind, best position may be behind the thrower, off the field.	If force is toward your sideline, stay off the field, roughly even with the deepest receiver. If force is other way, run to the middle of the field to watch for long hucks or punts down the line.
Score	Carefully watch thrower's feet for travels, and listen for count and for foul calls both before and during the throw. Check with O2 to see if there are any calls that would negate the score.	Upon completion, watch receiver's feet to see if they are in the end zone and/or in-bounds. Indicate in/out of the end zone, and goal/no goal when appropriate. Check with O1 to see if there are any calls that would negate the score.

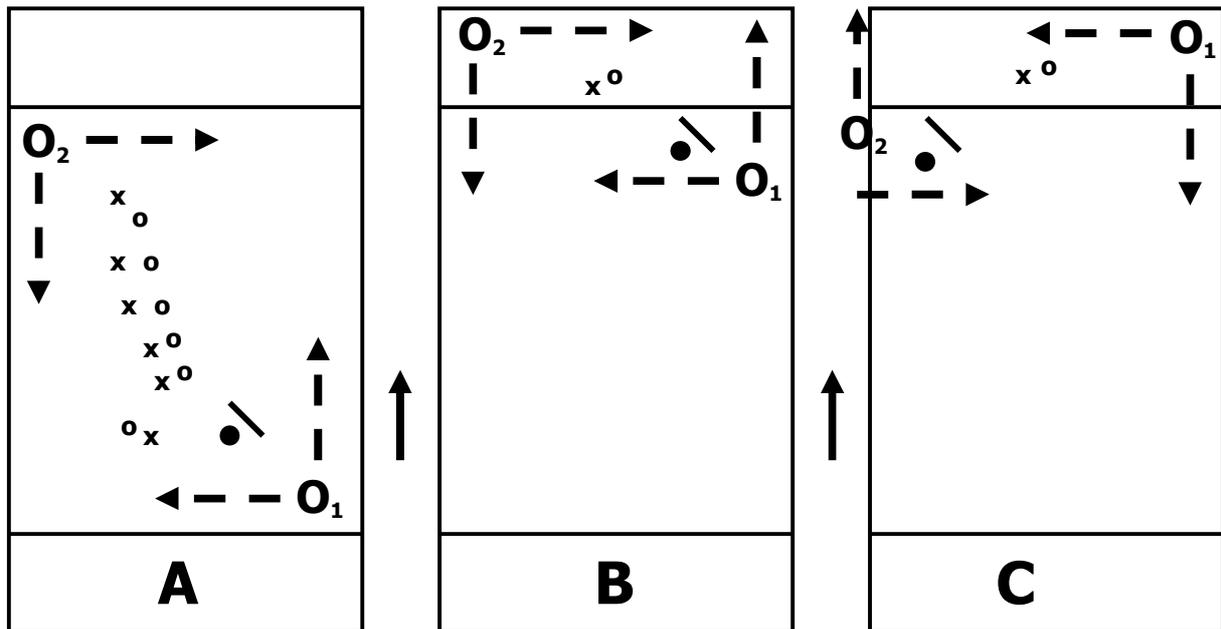


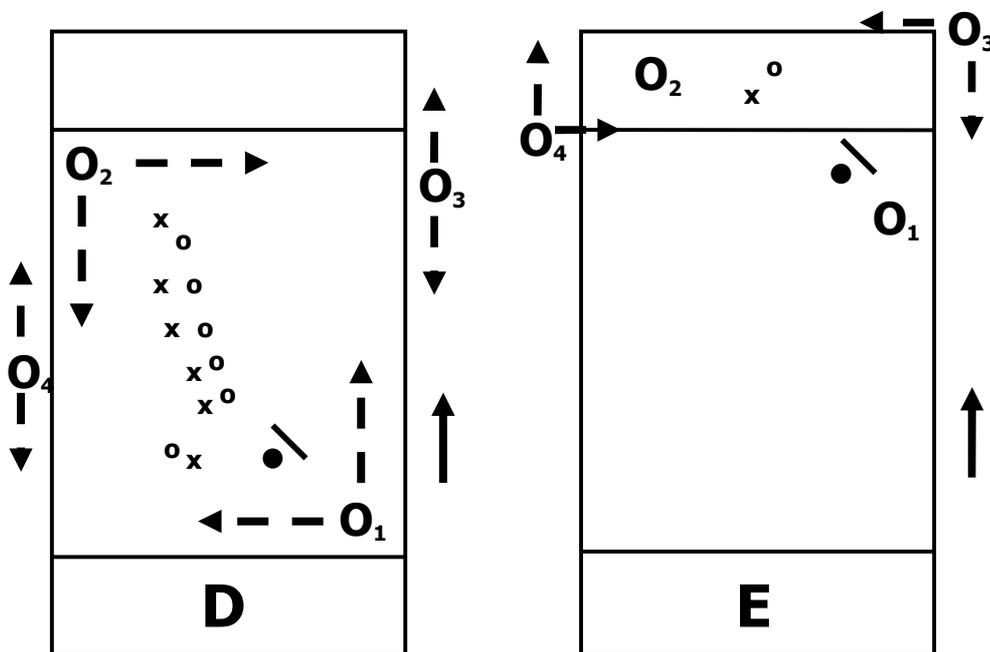
Figure 1. **A** – Initial positions as offense begins to advance the disc. **B** – When the offense is close to the end zone of attack and O1 has made it to that end of the field; O1 still watches the thrower and marker, but also is in position to call in/out of the end zone. O2 is deeper in the end zone, able to watch the back line. **C** –Observers may swap ends to better cover the front goal line, depending on the location of the disc, as described in more detail below.

A positioning problem can arise if the disc is near the end zone being attacked, near the sideline covered by the downfield Observer (O2 in this case). With O2 watching the back line, neither Observer is optimally positioned to call in/out of the end zone on a short pass to the front corner of the end zone. Nor is either Observer in the best position to watch thrower-marker interactions. In this situation, both Observers should be alert for any stoppage of play during which they quickly can trade responsibility for ends (not sides) of the field; thus, O2 now is responsible for the bottom (on the diagram) end of the field (and thus the goal line in this situation) and O1 becomes responsible for the top (on the diagram) end of the field (and thus the back line in this situation). Those positions may be maintained for the rest of the point, or the Observers can trade back, depending on how play continues (e.g., a turnover in the end zone may allow the Observers to reset to their original positions). This process is recommended for only experienced Observers who are comfortable working together.

The most difficult situation to cover in the TOS is when the disc is near O2's sideline, and most or all of the players are between the disc and the end zone being attacked. Here, O1 may be unable to stay close enough to the thrower and marker to hear the stall count well closely watch their interaction, because s/he must be able to get back and see his/her sideline on a long swing pass in that direction. O2 cannot get too close to the disc without being out of position to see the action on a long pass downfield. While it is generally not recommended for the Observer behind the disc (O1 in this case) to cross the long axis of the field to the far side, s/he may have to do just that under conditions described above, in order to suitably monitor the thrower and marker. This is acceptable, but O1 must be prepared to move quickly towards his/her sideline. In this and similar cases, each Observer must constantly be aware of the movements of players, the other Observer and the possible path of the disc, and be ready to sprint to new positions whenever necessary.

Four-Observer System

The Game Head Observer and another experienced Observer monitor the game from on-field positions, with the responsibilities assigned to the Observers in the TOS. The additional Observers generally remain on the sidelines, with each responsible for covering the downfield sideline for one on-field Observer and covering the end zone with the other on-field Observer (e.g., one Observer helps cover the “downfield” portion of the sideline assigned to O1 and helps cover the end zone that O2 is primarily responsible for). The sideline Observer responsible for the end zone being attacked should stay near the back of the stack, in a position where s/he always can get back in time to see any play on his/her goal line or back line (O3 in diagram below). The other sideline Observer should work in tandem with the on-field Observer on his/her side of the field to maximize coverage, always being positioned far enough back so that s/he can return to his/her end zone in time to make a ruling if a deep throw is made in transition (O4 in diagram below).



Better coverage generally is obtained if the Observers stagger their positions to the extent possible. Move with the other Observer(s) as a unit and communicate with the other Observer(s) on positioning and what each Observer is primarily responsible for, especially during play stoppages near the goal line. Remember that each sideline Observer is responsible for goal line calls, as well as in/out calls on the back line, for his/her end zone. When the thrower is at or near the goal line, the on-field Observer assigned to that end zone should assist by moving to watch the goal line, so that the sideline Observer responsible for that end zone can move back to watch for back line calls. Both must communicate properly, to be sure that someone is watching the goal line at all times.

One-Observer System

The One Observer System generally is used only where qualified personnel are insufficient to assign two Observers to a particular game. Because, this often is the case in certain tournaments, all Observers should be familiar with the system. Even if there is only one experienced Observer available, there may be an experienced player available who can assist as a Linesperson (described below), which can greatly enhance field coverage. Without a Linesperson, it is impossible for one Observer to adequately monitor all of the action at one time, except in situations where players are very compressed. In most situations, the Observer

will have to forego closely monitoring certain interactions (such as thrower/marker), in order to be in position for more critical matters, such as ruling on potential scoring plays.

Positioning With a Linesperson

Where the Observer is assisted by a Linesperson, positioning generally is the same as with the TOS, with the Linesperson starting each point in the position of O2 (at the pulling team's end of the field). When the disc is turned over, both the Observer and the Linesperson should take advantage of any stoppage or delay in play (or other appropriate situation) where the Observer and Linesperson can switch ends of the field, so that the Observer can re-position behind the thrower/marker, and the Linesperson becomes responsible for monitoring the downfield goal line and sideline.

Positioning Without a Linesperson

If no Linesperson is available to assist the Observer, positioning is more difficult. At the start of each point, the Observer should be at the goal line for the pulling team, watching for off-sides and also listening for what type of defense is going to be played and in which direction the defense intends to "force" the offense's throws. The Observer should run downfield after the disc is released, watching to see where the disc lands and/or flies. As the disc is put into play by the offense, the Observer's optimal position is on the field, approximately 5-10 yards behind the thrower, but at an angle so s/he can see the space between the thrower and the marker. As long as the Observer is reasonably close, standing in other positions (downfield, off to one side, etc.) can work as well, but behind the thrower generally works best. If a long throw goes up, the Observer should first watch for travel or foul calls and then run downfield to help on potential receiving fouls. Even if the thrower is called for traveling, downfield events can impact possession.

While the Observer generally stands behind the thrower, s/he also is responsible for line calls as much as possible. In order to be in position to make these calls, the Observer should "cheat" toward one side of the field and position him/herself behind the thrower, while staying slightly closer to one line. On turnovers, the Observer often will need to move around behind the new offensive team, while preparing to sprint to be in position to rule on long throws made in transition.

Obviously, there are certain situations where a single Observer working without a Linesperson simply cannot be in position to help the players with a particular ruling. It is helpful to explain to each coach or captain before the game that you are working the game alone, and that while you'll do your best to see as much of the action as possible, where you have to make a choice, you will focus on the "deep" action, so as to be in position to rule on long passes and scoring plays, and that you will not always be able to assist in resolving disputed travel, stall and other thrower-marker interactions.

Linespeople

Although the number of experienced Observers for a particular game or even a tournament may be limited, there may be experienced players who are willing to assist in the role of a "Linesperson." Using Linespeople can greatly enhance field coverage, especially in situations where the Observer is working under the One Observer System, although Linespeople also can be of assistance in the TOS. Also, allowing persons to act as Linespeople helps indoctrinate and instruct persons who may be interested in becoming Observers. Positioning for a Linesperson working with a single Observer is described above in the One Observer System. Where Linespeople are used along with more than one Observer, the Observers should inform each Linesperson as to how s/he should position him/herself.

Active Calls

In any situation, the primary function of a Linesperson is to make active calls on boundaries – i.e., whether a team is off-sides on the pull, and whether a catch is made in/out of bounds or the end zone. A Linesperson is expected to signal verbally and with his/her hands, just as an Observer does. A Linesperson also can relay

time limit countdowns to the team at his/her end of the field, such as “10 seconds to pull,” and should watch the flight of the disc on pulls and other throws in his/her area, to determine where the disc should be put into play if a question arises.

Inactive Calls

The significant difference between a Linesperson and an Observer is that Observers should handle all interactions with players for resolving contested fouls, violations and other matters, and make any requested ruling. In these situations, a Linesperson should not make a call or engage the players. If a Linesperson feels that s/he had a good view of a particular play or otherwise may be able to assist with a ruling, s/he should signal to the Observer(s) by placing one or both hand(s) on top of his/her head. If an Observer was away from the play or thinks that the Linesperson had a better perspective, s/he may (and should) ask the Linesperson for his/her opinion. In any event, the Linesperson should not indicate (verbally or by gesturing) an opinion on a contested call, or whether the Linesperson supports or disagrees with a call, before being consulted by an Observer. If a foul or violation occurs near the Linesperson, it is good practice to always try to decide what the call would be, in case an opinion is needed on a contested call.

Instructional Observers

A new category of Observer, the Instructional Observer, has recently been developed by the UPA to provide players a wider range of options for third-party officials to facilitate game play in various environments. These game officials serve in a distinct (and somewhat reduced) role, compared with standard Observers, and focus primarily on providing instructional information about the game, helping players learn to self-officiate, and monitoring logistical and other factors necessary to facilitate game play.

The UPA recognizes the high value of newer players gaining a solid understanding of the rules of Ultimate and becoming comfortable with the process of dispute resolution in a self-officiated game. In some environments, such as a youth tournament or a learning league, too much active Observer intervention to resolve contested calls could easily interfere with this important process. Yet, some of the other objective functions of Observers, such as announcing time warnings and keeping track of the score, can certainly be a benefit to players at any level of competition, without taking away their control of the game.

The brief list of Instructional Observer duties is provided in the Best Practices chapter of this manual. The following section provides more detail about how these duties should be performed and which duties of a standard Observer should not be.

Positioning

Instructional Observers can function in any of the three Observer systems described in the UPA Observer Manual. Since Instructional Observers will not be making rulings on calls or active line calls, the One Observer System is typically going to be sufficient for following game play and providing information or guidance as needed. The Two Observer System could also be used in order to provide for easier coverage of the field.

Follow Observer Code of Conduct

Spirit of the Game - Teaching “Spirit of the Game” is probably the most important thing you can help do in this role. It is worth emphasizing from the “Code of Conduct” the note about instilling basic concepts about spirit for new players. “Personal responsibility”, “mutual respect”, “adherence to the rules”, and “joy of play” are all key phrases that can be taught through the process of learning to compete in a self-officiated environment. Remember to remind players about one or more of these important factors during the game when the opportunity arises between points or during a call. This can be done by noting and praising positive behavior as well as by constructively noting unacceptable behavior, and helping facilitate conflict resolution.

The Game Belongs to the Players – For this role, it's important to note that Instructional Observers are not empowered to make any calls during the course of normal play. Self-officiating is a skill that is learned by doing, although newer players may need some reminders about the specific processes or pointers about how to conduct themselves within those processes. For all calls, there is a process for getting the game started again. Help the players go through this process without doing it for them. If behavior becomes an issue, address as

Professionalism – There's nothing much to add here except to note that often the Instructional Observer will be used in an environment where the players are younger and interactions may be required with parents or school administrators. It's important to instill confidence in all of these different groups, to interact appropriately with each, and to realize that many of their initial impressions about the sport will be based on their experience with the game you are facilitating.

Pre-game Meeting

Follow the instructions provided in the Best Practices chapter of this manual, excepting the parts about making active calls and rulings on disputed player calls. Be sure to reiterate the role of facilitating play and providing instruction on rules or other aspects of the game. Remind the teams that they should feel empowered to play without looking to you, but that you are there as a resource if needed. Explain the basics of the game (start, end, half-time, timeouts, etc) and ask if they have questions.

Time Limits

Track and announce time between points, for timeouts, after a turnover, half-time as needed or instructed by event organizer. Communicate game start times and caps as instructed by event organizer. The extent to which you track limits will be dictated by the needs of the event. Time penalties can be enforced if that is part of the competition rules for the event or game. Otherwise, announcing time limits should be enough to help keep the game moving, while also teaching players and coaches about that aspect of the game.

Monitor Conduct Issues

Enforce sanctions as necessary. Track and report violations and incidents. Instructional Observers should be empowered to use the Misconduct Foul System as described in this manual. Keep in mind that the role of the Instructional Observer is to facilitate play, so use both informal and formal warnings to the extent necessary to teach appropriate behavior while being empowered to handle offensive, dangerous, or other inappropriate behavior with sanctions if necessary. Remember that the conduct system can be applied to coaches or spectators as well as players, and that may very well be where it becomes more necessary. But coaches and parents may also simply need to be informed about expectations for behavior. Be sure to note and report any incidents to the event organizer or league official.

Keep Track of Score and Timeouts

This is pretty self-explanatory. Periodically remind the teams of both the score and their timeout situation during the game. Be sure that you report the final score and any other game or logistical issues to the appropriate event organizer or league official.

Teach the Rules

Provide information to participants about how to play the game, including reference to specific rules, rules interpretations, guidance on the process for players to handle contested calls or other disputes, and general guidance about the role of personal responsibility and Spirit of the Game in Ultimate. In order to teach the rules, one must know the rules. Always have a rule book handy for your own reference as well as to use as a teaching tool so that participants (players, coaches, parents) will know where and how to find rules information on their own.

Be clear before the game about whether you or players should be able to stop the game for rules questions, or whether they will be handled during normal stoppages or between points. When a rules question arises, either on its own or in conjunction with a call, be sure everyone involved understands the question at hand. If it's appropriate to the setting, potentially make the discussion larger so that others can learn from the situation as well. If the question is about a call, be sure that you don't state your opinion about what happened. Rather, explain the relevant rule and ask the participants to talk about what happened in the context of that information.

For example, on a disputed line call where a player's foot landed on the line: was s/he in or out? That is the players' decision. Explain that the rule says the line is out and that the first point of contact after gaining possession is what dictates where a player landed. Perhaps explain about how straddling the line is viewed in the rules. Then ask the players what they saw. If they agree on what they saw, but just didn't know the rule, they should be able to get started again from there. If they disagree on what they saw, help explain how to handle a contested call in that situation.

Remember that the rules are more than just about throwing and catching, fouls and goals. They talk about expectations for behavior, dispute resolution procedures, equipment, and even the culture of the Ultimate community. These are all areas where the Instructional Observer should be prepared and willing to help teach about Ultimate.

IV – Best Practices

Observer Duties

Following are lists providing a brief synopsis of duties that standard UPA Observers and UPA Instructional Observers are expected to be able to perform.

Standard Observers

- Follow Observer Code of Conduct.
- Pre-game meeting.
- Track and announce time between points, for timeouts, after a turnover and half-time. Enforce time limits as described in this manual. Communicate game start times and caps as instructed by event organizer.
- Make active line calls for in/out of bounds, goals, off-sides.
- Make rulings on contested calls (fouls, violations, other disputes) if requested by players or needed to keep game moving.
- Monitor conduct issues. Enforce sanctions as necessary. Track and report violations and incidents.
- Keep track of score and timeouts.

Instructional Observers

- Follow Observer Code of Conduct.
- Pre-game meeting.
- Track and announce time between points, for timeouts, after a turnover, half-time as needed or instructed by event organizer. Communicate game start times and caps as instructed by event organizer.
- Monitor conduct issues. Enforce sanctions as necessary. Track and report violations and incidents.
- Keep track of score and timeouts.
- Teach the rules. Provide information to participants about how to play the game, including reference to specific rules, rules interpretations, guidance on the process for players to handle contested calls or other disputes, and general guidance about the role of personal responsibility and Spirit of the Game in Ultimate.

Equipment

While an Observer's foremost responsibility is to do the job to the best of his/her ability, it is important (especially in higher profile events) for the image of Observers overall as well as for the sport that Observers be properly equipped and maintain a professional appearance. At a minimum, at least one Observer working each game should carry a stopwatch, pen/pencil, score card and a copy of the Rules. Additionally, Observers should follow these guidelines for their attire during games:

Item	Guideline
Shoes	Observers must wear cleats. Black or black-based is recommended (required for showcase events).
Jersey	Short or long-sleeved jersey worn must be UPA approved. Each Observer must have one blaze orange jersey and also should have one Kelly green jersey (required for showcase events).
Shorts/Pants	Solid black shorts or pants are required for showcase events.
Socks	Black is recommended for showcase events.
Headwear	If headgear is worn, baseball caps are recommended, although other styles may be permitted by the event Head Observer. Colors should match, with black required for showcase events.
Base Layers and Gloves	If base layers or gloves are worn, black is recommended (and is required for showcase events).
Sunglasses	Sunglasses are not permitted except for medical reasons (e.g., prescription) or where approved by event Head Observer due to extreme sunlight interference or other appropriate circumstance.
Rain Gear	Rain gear is permitted if necessary due to weather, matching colors recommended.
Other Items	Other items such as headbands, wristbands or other decorative items are not permitted.

Common Situations

Below are points to keep in mind about situations commonly requiring attention and often a ruling. It is important to use your experience as a player to anticipate what may be coming next on the field. For example, if the mark is broken and a receiver is going deep, the Observer responsible for that goal line should be running deep as well. If patterns develop (such as a certain handler throwing deep or cross-field to the same receiver over and over), be prepared for the situation to recur.

Also, always be cognizant of staying out of the way of the players to the fullest extent possible. If play is close to a sideline, an Observer should not occupy a position that would interfere with the disc going down the line, or if a team is threatening to score and play is on the same side of the field as the Observer watching the goal line, don't kneel at or near the cone, where you may be in the way of the players trying to make the play and unable to move out of their way quickly.

Off-sides

With a crew of two or more, off-sides is easily monitored. For the receiving team, the best vantage is usually several steps behind the goal line, so that the Observer can simultaneously watch the pull and players' movements. For the pulling team, the Observer should stand even with the goal line. Until the disc is released, no pulling team player's *foot* may cross the vertical plane of the goal line, and each receiving team player must be in contact with the goal line. Off-sides should be called for every violation, but it is important to be consistent and Observers should pro-actively give informal verbal warnings to help prevent multiple violations and keep the game moving. If off-sides is called, the Observer should signal with hands and

verbally (loudly), so that play stops quickly. As soon as the pull is released, Observers should look at each other to see if there is an off-sides call, so they can help inform the players.

Sideline Catches

The Observer should position so as to clearly see the line and the receiver's hands and feet at the same time; if not, first confirm the catch, then immediately look to the feet. If the disc is close to a boundary line, be sure to watch the take off foot of any player attempting a "greatest," and watch closely to see which foot (or other body part) makes the first ground contact and when that occurs, relative to the throw. A force-out foul is called actively – if the disc is caught out-of-bounds and the Observer believes it would have been in-bounds except for a force-out foul. When this occurs, play stops and resumes with a check. Remember, an in/out call is separate from and unrelated to an up/down call. If up/down is not an active call, it is the players' responsibility to call up/down and up/down should not be considered when making an in/out call.

Goals

Scoring calls are of the utmost importance and this should be stressed to other officials. The official responsible for the end zone being attacked should stay downfield well enough to be able to be in position for any ruling call at the goal line or back line. When a catch is made near the goal line, initially indicate only whether the receiver is in/out of the end zone; do not indicate a goal until it is clear that no call negates the score. Note that when a player is ruled in the end zone (with no outstanding calls), the point is over, even if that player does not realize and throws a subsequent incompletion. In these cases, the Observer is considered to have "best perspective." Remember, an in/out call is separate from and unrelated to an up/down call. If up/down is not an active call, it is the players' responsibility to call up/down and up/down should not be considered when making an in/out call.

Thrower/Marker Fouls

Marking fouls often are disputed, particularly when the count gets high and there is more frenzied action by both players. If the marker is jumping back and forth to deny all throws, resultant contact typically will be a foul on the marker, as is contact resulting from both the marker and the thrower vying for the same unoccupied position. However, if the marker establishes a legal position, it is a foul on the thrower to pivot into the marker's body. If there is contact between the thrower and a marker's extended arms or legs, this also is typically a foul on the marker and is considered a foul on the thrower only if the marker's extremities were both in legal marking position and completely stationary. For any throw resulting in contact, the Observer should consider:

- Was the marker in a legal position to begin with?
- Was the contact with the marker's body, or his/her arms or legs?
- If the contact was with the marker's body, was the marker moving over to prevent the throw, or did the marker already occupy that position before the contact?

Guidance from the UPA Standing Rules Committee is useful in interpreting how to handle some tricky situations, including where the thrower aggressively makes contact with the marker.

- 1) Any contact with an illegally positioned marker is almost always a foul on the marker.
- 2) In the case of normal, legitimate, ultimate-related movements of the thrower (pivoting, faking, throwing, etc.), any contact that occurs in the space illegally occupied by the marker is considered "due to the marker setting up an illegal position."
- 3) For any contact not addressed by 2. above, if the thrower is the primary cause of the contact, it will not be considered "due to the marker setting up an illegal position."

Keep in mind that, in games without an Observer, a thrower might call foul and throw the disc downfield anyway, knowing that even if the pass is intercepted or incomplete, the disc will come back to the thrower,

whether or not the marker contests the call. With an Observer, if the call is contested and the Observer rules no foul, it is a turnover with play resuming where the disc lands or is intercepted. Consider mentioning this to experienced players before the game.

Travels

Watch the thrower's feet and the disc carefully until the disc is released. After the throw, immediately scan downfield, so that if a travel is called, players can be directed back to the positions that they occupied at the time of the call. Pay special attention to defenders who are well away from the receivers who they are supposed to be covering, in case players ask for assistance in re-positioning. Several situations may prompt travel calls, including:

- Incorrect location – Know the spot where the disc should be put into play and see whether the thrower's pivot is correctly positioned when releasing the disc.
- Absence of ground touch – A player in possession of a live disc (e.g., walking an out-of-bounds pull to the sideline or brick mark) must touch the disc to the ground to put the disc into play.
- Throwing while running – Count ground contacts as soon as a catch is made (if a player is contacting the ground when catching, the *next* ground contact as the first one), and be careful to see whether the player accelerates or changes direction. If the disc is released before the third ground contact, and there is no acceleration or direction change, it is not a travel.
- Pivot moves during throw – Be in position to see the thrower's feet and the disc, and note whether the pivot leaves its spot before the disc is released. Note that some players have a very quick throwing motion and first step.
- Throw during a marking foul – Per the UPA Standing Rules Committee's interpretation of the 11th Edition Rules, a thrower may legitimately be called for a travel if s/he moves his/her pivot foot as a result of being fouled by the marker. This may be addressed in future revisions of the Rules.

Fast Count/Contested Stalls

Listen carefully to the stall count (and monitor with hand counts if necessary) to determine whether the count speed is legal, and listen for acceleration at the end. Although as a general matter, an Observer rules only on the call that is made, in a case where a stall is contested, the Observer should rule to ensure the correct outcome, whatever the reason for the contest. That is, a stall can be overturned for either the count being too fast or the throw being released before the first utterance of "ten," regardless of the specific call made by the thrower. Also, a thrower may call fast count for any individual instances of fast counting, even if the marker's count is consistent, but fast – failure to call prior fast count infractions does not preclude the thrower from calling subsequent fast count infractions. For example, if a marker's count is fast at 1-2, and is still fast at 7-8, the thrower may call a fast count based on the latter, but may not wait until later in the count to call it on the former.

Receiving/Defending Hucks

Multiple players may simultaneously be vying for the disc on certain (typically deeper) throws, and when players are chasing a floating disc, one or more of them may trip and multiple fouls may be called. It is important, especially for the downfield Observer to determine the likely path of the disc, get to the intended area as quickly as possible and watching approaching receivers and defenders for early interference fouls, such as trips, tackles or blatant blocking out with the elbows. Especially relevant are whether (1) one player is pushing another with his/her hands, (2) there is an obvious sweep across a player's hands, (3) one player tackles another, or (4) one player uses another to assist in a leap. Unless this sort of activity is taking place, "boxing out" or similar incidental contact should not be ruled a foul. Keep in mind that, when adjacent players simultaneously vie for the same position, the contact generally is considered incidental.

If no official has a good view of this type of play (such as due to a several players going up at once) or if there are offsetting fouls, the disc should be returned to the thrower. On throws into the end zone, Observers

should get as close to the play as possible without interfering with the players, and always be prepared for the disc to be tipped in another direction until possession is firmly established. Contact initiated by a defender after s/he touches the disc is not a receiving foul. However, if the end result is dangerous play (e.g., offensive player is hit hard or tackled), or the contact prevented the receiver from making a subsequent play on the disc, a general foul or a blocking foul can result. The general foul after the outcome of the play has been determined would not affect possession, but would result in a stoppage of play and player resetting their positions. Remember that, even if the thrower travels, downfield events can impact possession.

Player positioning After a Call

When play stops due to a call, the Observer should be prepared to help players set up in the appropriate positions before resuming play. If the thrower acknowledges the call and no throw is made, players return to the positions they occupied at the time of the call. If a throw was made and the result of the play stands, players return to the positions they occupied when play stopped (generally, when the pass was caught). However, if a throw was made and the disc is returned to the thrower, players return to the positions they occupied the time of the throw or the time of the call, whichever was earlier.

Strip Fouls

To establish possession, a player must have both sustained contact with and control of a non-spinning disc. If the disc is still spinning, even slightly, or if the receiver does not have sustained contact or control, and the defender knocks it away, it is not a strip. A strip is a type of foul under the Rules, and a player calling “strip” is implying that s/he established possession of the disc and that contact with the disc caused possession to be lost. However, if an Observer sees the player establish possession and the contact causes possession to be lost, s/he should uphold a strip call, whether the contact occurred with the disc or with the player. If a strip call is contested, play stops and restarts with a check after the ruling. If the Observer upholds the call and the strip/foul occurred in the end zone, it is a goal. Note that in cases where possession is not yet established, then even if the receiver has been fouled, if s/he calls only “strip” (not foul), s/he should not be awarded the disc, even if the Observer feels that the player was fouled.

Picks

For a pick call to be legitimate, the defender must be within three meters (approximately 10 feet) of the person s/he is covering. Feel free to consult a Linesperson, who may have been in better position downfield to rule on the pick. Because picks often happen away from the disc and the primary cutters, Observers and Linespersons may not see the play, and in these cases, it is perfectly acceptable to so indicate and defer to the standard rules for continuing play after a pick call. Remember that a picked defender may recover only the relative position lost due to the pick. Even if a pick did occur, the Observer may rule that the disc stays with the receiver, if the Observer feels that the picked defender could not have made a play on the disc absent the pick.

Disc Up or Down

While this is not an active call, it often is the subject of dispute and the Observer may be asked for a ruling. Making this call accurately nearly always requires the Observer to be very close to the disc. If you are uncertain, send the disc back to the thrower. If an Observer makes an up/down call after a dispute or request, play restarts with a check. Remember, an in/out call is separate from and unrelated to an up/down call. If up/down is not an active call, it is the players’ responsibility to call up/down and up/down should not be considered when making an in/out call.

Time Limits

An Observer should track time limits, including game start-times, time between pulls, half-times, time-outs, and resuming play after turnovers. See Appendix 1 for time limits and when to give/announce warnings, and Appendix 2 for hand signals, and make sure that players understand the hand signals. Once a time limit expires, indicate the potential for continuing play with an appropriate announcement.

On turnovers, the Observer who will be behind the disc calls out the warnings and then “in play” at the appropriate time. The marker in position may then initiate a stall count, regardless of whether a thrower is in possession or has established a pivot. Be sure to have a spare disc available in case the offense requests one due to the original disc being difficult to retrieve. To end time-outs, call out the appropriate warnings for the offense to set up, and then announce “offense freeze.” Then call out the appropriate warnings to check the disc into play, and if the disc is not checked into play within the allotted time, announce “offense start when ready.”

Only 90 seconds may elapse between a score and the subsequent pull. The receiving team has up to 70 seconds from the preceding score to assume stationary positions and signal readiness (typically, a raised hand). The pulling team has up to 90 seconds from the preceding score to pull. However, if the receiving team has not assumed stationary positions and signaled readiness within the allotted 70 seconds, the pulling team is permitted at least 20 seconds after the receiving team does so, regardless of the 90-second maximum. Face the team whose limits are expiring and announce each warning while giving the appropriate hand signal (to aid players who cannot hear and the Observer at the far end of the field). When the receiving team has signaled readiness, the Observer on their end of the field should face the pulling team with one arm extended straight up, fingers extended parallel to each other, palm facing forward (see Appendix 2). All substitutions must be made before the receiving team signals readiness. Treat the game start-time and the end of half-time as described above for pulls, but give the teams more advance warning, as described in Appendix 1, so that players aren’t caught by surprise.

Each team receives one warning per game for violating the time limits for pulls. After a team has received its warning, any further time violation results in assessment of a team time-out (with the resulting time extensions). If a team has no time-outs remaining, the following penalties apply:

- If they are receiving, they begin with the disc at the midpoint of the end zone they are defending, after players set up and a check is performed.
- If they are pulling, the receiving team begins with the disc at mid-field, after players set up and a check is performed.

Time-Outs

An Observer should track the time-outs taken by each team on the score sheet. When a team takes a time-out, an Observer should inform the team how many time-outs that they have remaining, and it is helpful to inform the teams of this periodically in any event (such as when the end of a half or game is near). If a team with possession of the disc has no time-outs remaining and calls a time-out during play (live disc), it is a turnover; there is no effect on possession (the time-out simply is not acknowledged/granted) if the time-out was called during a stoppage in play (dead disc).

Ruling Outcomes

If an Observer upholds a call that is contested (e.g., agrees with the thrower that s/he was fouled on the throw), the outcome of the play is that which it would have been if the call was not contested; if the Observer upholds the contest (overrules the call), the outcome is that which it would have been if no call had been made. If there are multiple calls, the Observer(s) must determine exactly what each call was and in what order they were made, generally working backward (from last call to first) to determine the appropriate outcome. After any ruling, players return to the locations that they would occupy under the Rules in the absence of Observers, depending on the ruling (i.e., whether the call was upheld or considered not to have been made), and play restarts with a check.

Observer Stoppages

Observers have the authority to stop active play in certain situations (such as to deal with significant conduct issues or safety issues such obstructions on the field) and to extend play stoppages, or time limits between

points, to handle disputes or other administrative matters. If an Observer stops active play, the stoppage is retroactive to the time at which, in the Observer's opinion, play was affected by the incident.

Pre-game Discussion with Teams

Arrive at the field early enough to talk with the captains or coaches of both teams (preferably together) without interrupting the teams' own pre-game talks or warm-ups. Introduce yourself and the crew, and ask if the teams have played with Observers before. Where teams have had experience playing with Observers, it likely is sufficient simply to explain that you will be following the typical protocol on active/inactive calls, that penalties can be assessed for repeated off-sides or time-limit violations, that the misconduct system is in effect, and explain any significant differences that may be in effect for the particular game or tournament.

Where one or both teams have not played with Observers before, the Observer meeting with the captain(s)/coach(es) should at least cover the following points:

- The Observers' primary purpose – to keep the game moving; intervene where requested or necessary to avoid protracted disputes.
- Rulings are final – players need not agree to request Observer intervention; if one player requests, then the Observer decides, and rulings are final.
- Active calls – for time limits and boundary calls (and others where applicable for the specific game or tournament), the Observer will make the call and play generally continues.
- Time limits – Observers will actively track and announce them to the players.
- Inactive calls – for other calls, it is up to the players; if no call is made, or if one is made, but they agree themselves on a particular outcome (right or wrong), their decision stands.
- Do-overs – there may be cases where no official is in position to confidently rule; if so, we'll send it back rather than "guess" or go with our gut, just as players would absent Observers.
- Identify the crew, and what their roles and responsibilities are (Linespersons, Observers, etc.).
- Misconduct – explain that if players engage in actions that warrant it, misconduct fouls may be assessed, and that repeated instances may result in penalties
- Ask if they have questions and respond as needed.

V – Personnel

Tournament Head Observer

Helps select, train and coordinate the Observer crew for the tournament. Works with the tournament director and/or Competition Director to schedule Observers for specific games. Works with the Competition Director and other Observers to address officiating issues that arise during the tournament, and communicate information regarding those issues to the crew. Assesses performance of the crew, including collecting and analyzing feedback from teams.

Game Head Observer

When more than one Observer is working a game, one Observer (as assigned by the Tournament Head Observer) will serve as the Game Head Observer. The "special" empowerments of the Game Head Observer are:

- 1) S/he is the only person who can **eject** a player for misconduct (s/he doesn't have to physically **see** the violation; it can be brought to his/her attention by another Observer or linesperson).
- 2) If a rules **implementation** problem arises (not what the call is, but what do the rules require as a result of that call), the Game Head Observer is the final on-field authority.

The duties of the Game Head Observer include:

- 1) Keeping track of misconduct warnings or assessments – possibly ejecting a player accordingly – and relaying that information to the Tournament Head Observer and Competition Director either immediately or directly after the game.
- 2) Introducing the crew to the captains and conducting the pre-game discussion with one or both captains/coaches, as necessary.
- 3) Being the final arbiter on “fuzzy” rule interpretations.
- 4) Overruling calls by another Observer or linesperson, but only in VERY limited instances.

VI – Player Misconduct

The conduct system described below is for use at all UPA Series events. Observers are empowered to sanction teams or individual players who commit deliberate or dangerous infractions, demonstrate patterns of repeated violations, or otherwise show disregard for the Spirit of the Game.

The highest UPA Authority in attendance controls the implementation of the conduct system in UPA tournaments – in descending order: Executive Director, Championship Director, National Director for the relevant division, UPA Event Coordinator, Tournament Director. Tournament directors at other events also may utilize the system, if a majority of team spokespersons so approve before play begins.

This conduct system does not supersede or restrict the function or use of the Tournament Rules Group (TRG) or the standing UPA Conduct Committee. Both of these avenues remain available for resolving conduct disputes, including the specific cases addressed by the procedures described below. The TRG remains the official mechanism for processing complaints filed with the UPA while a tournament is in progress.

For the purposes of this system, “player” means any person on the roster of a team competing in a particular tournament, as well as coaches, managers, trainers and others considered as partisans for the team, including significant others, parents and fans.

Components of the Misconduct System

Team Misconduct Foul

A Team Misconduct Foul (TMF) can be assessed against a team for unsportsmanlike conduct by one of its players, such as deliberate fouling, dangerous play, taunting, fighting, swearing, repeated marking fouls, or unwarranted calls and/or contests. The first two TMFs issued to a team are noted on the score sheet, but no penalty ensues. A third or subsequent TMF for a team in a single game results in a Misconduct Penalty against that team. There is no limit to the number of TMFs or Misconduct Penalties a team can accrue during a game, and TMFs do not carry over beyond the game in which they are issued.

Misconduct Penalty against the defense

The disc is put into play on the center line, either at the brick mark closest to the end zone that team is defending, or at the point of possession, whichever is closest to that end zone.

Misconduct Penalty against the offense

The disc is put into play at the end zone mark in the end zone that team is defending, or at the current point of possession, whichever is furthest from the end zone that team is attacking.

Misconduct Penalty assessed between points

There is no pull. If the penalty is against the receiving team, they put the disc into play at the end zone mark in the end zone they are defending. If the penalty is against the pulling team, the receiving team puts the disc into play at the brick mark closest to the end zone they are attacking. Each team may substitute players as usual and normal time limits apply.

Personal Misconduct Foul

A Personal Misconduct Foul (PMF) can be assessed against a specific player for particularly egregious conduct or a pattern of such behavior. A PMF is a formal warning for unacceptable behavior and puts the player on notice that any further such actions will result in ejection from the game.

Any player receiving a second PMF during a single game is suspended for the remainder of that game. If this occurs in the second half of the game, the suspension remains in effect for the first half of the team's next game. A player who receives three PMFs in a tournament is suspended for the remainder of the tournament. Assessment of a PMF is non-reviewable for the duration of the game, although it may be appealed to the TRG after the game.

One TMF is automatically assessed against a team whenever one of its players receives a PMF.

Ejection

A player may be ejected from a game for particularly egregious conduct or a pattern of such behavior. Any player who intentionally strikes an opposing player, or a coach, spectator, Observer or Linesperson, shall be immediately ejected from the game. Any player who strikes in retaliation also shall be ejected. No formal or informal warning is necessary before an Observer ejects a player, and an ejection need not be preceded by a TMF or PMF.

If an ejection occurs during the second half of the game, the ejection remains in effect for the first half of his/her team's next game. If a player receives more than one ejection in a tournament, that player is suspended for the rest of the tournament, and a formal complaint may be filed with the UPA. An ejection is non-reviewable for the duration of the game, although ejections which carry over to future games may be appealed to the TRG after the game.

One TMF is automatically assessed against a team whenever one of its players is ejected.

Game Forfeiture

If five PMFs are assessed against players on a single team during a game, that team forfeits the game. For this purpose, an ejection is equivalent to two PMFs. For example, if three or more players on a single team are ejected, that team forfeits the game. If the situation arises where both teams would be required to forfeit the game due to multiple player ejections, the Competition Director shall convene the TRG and determine the appropriate outcome based on competition considerations.

Behavior Warranting Sanctions

Battery

Intentionally striking another player with a part of the body, a disc or anything else, or any clear attempt to do so, warrants an ejection. This includes, but is not limited to: punching or kicking, or attempting to punch or kick, someone; spiking, or attempting to spike, a disc on someone; and spitting on someone, or spitting at someone but missing. If a player spikes the disc without intending to hit another player, and it does hit an opposing player, the Observer may assess a PMF.

Swearing

At the Observer's discretion, a TMF or PMF may be assessed for swearing, especially if directed at another player, coach, spectator, Observer or linesperson.

Deliberate Fouling

A TMF or PMF may be assessed at the discretion for a particularly hard, dangerous or deliberate foul.

Pushing/Shoving

Unwarranted aggressive (e.g. shoving) or dangerous (e.g. tripping) behavior is grounds for a TMF or PMF, at the Observer's discretion.

Taunting

Repeated or prolonged taunting, or excessive verbal abuse of players, fans or UPA officials, warrants a TMF, and possibly a PMF, depending on the severity of the offense. The Head Observer determines which form of sanction is appropriate, considering whether there appears to be an attempt to intimidate or otherwise gain an advantage over the opponent by such actions, and also the intensity level of the game. Also to be taken into account is whether there is an attempt to "call out" the other person. Walking away from an incident while jawing or mocking is different than aggressively moving toward the other team's sideline or being in an opponent's face. One is a case of bad taste and manners, and should be discouraged, possibly with a TMF; the latter is verbal assault and may warrant harsher sanctions. There is a difference

between saying that a call is (expletive deleted) and that the player making the call is (expletive deleted), the latter being more likely to warrant a TMF or PMF.

Sideline Encroachment

If, after being warned, players on a team continue to crowd the sideline and interfere with play or Observer movement, the Observer may issue a TMF.

Poor Sportsmanship

If, in the Observer's opinion, a team demonstrates a pattern of poor sportsmanship or disregard for the Rules by committing intentional, repeated or flagrant infractions, a TMF should be issued. If such a pattern is demonstrated by a single player, that player should be issued a PMF. Behavior warranting such sanctions also includes repeatedly making unwarranted calls or contests, especially during the other team's fast breaks in order to gain an advantage. However, a flagrant foul (such as tackling an opponent) does not require a pattern to result in a TMF or PMF. Similarly, a single particularly violent "harmful endangerment" infraction can be grounds for a PMF or an ejection, at the discretion of the Observer or Linesperson who witnessed the incident. Finally, a single particularly egregious demonstration of disregard for the rules (such as an intentional infraction or clearly unfounded call) can be grounds for a TMF.

Implementation

Any Observer may assess a TMF or PMF. The offense must have been witnessed by at least one official. Play generally stops briefly for any TMF, PMF or ejection, while the player(s) and both team captains are notified, the infraction is recorded, and any heated situations diffused. However, Observers may choose to let play continue and assess a penalty at the next convenient stoppage, especially if they determine that stopping play would disadvantage the infringed team. For the purpose of the stall count, a TMF or PMF assessment is treated as a violation.

After a Misconduct Penalty is assessed, the offense is given a 30 second warning to assume stationary positions. Offensive players may set up anywhere on the playing field, and after all of them have assumed stationary positions, the defense has 20 seconds to match up. If both teams are assessed simultaneous Misconduct Penalties, the fouls offset and play continues with a check after the players are notified and the infractions recorded. It is up to the non-penalized team to decide whether to accept the standard field position penalty or whether the disc stays where it is.

An ejected player must immediately leave the general tournament area, as directed by the Competition Director; failure to do so results in a forfeit for that player's team. If a player plays in a game from which s/he has been ejected, that player is suspended for the entire tournament, and the player's team also forfeits that game. A team whose player is ejected may substitute another player, and the opposing team also may exchange a player if they wish. All players must remain in the positions they occupied when play stopped (no set-up), unless the ejection also triggers a Misconduct Penalty, in which case players may set up anywhere on the field. The Competition Director and Head Observer for the tournament must be notified of any ejection as soon as possible and at the latest immediately after the game is completed. The Competition Director must ensure that the scorekeeper, the Head Observer for the game and team captains are informed about previously sanctioned players (PMFs or ejections) before any game in which such players are on the roster of a participating team.

Any other behavior described by Article X of the UPA Bylaws may warrant a TMF at the Head Observer's discretion. Finally, any behavior that would warrant the issuance of a TMF, but which occurs in a game without Observers, can result in sanctions upon a complaint filed to the TRG.

Appendix 1 – Guide to Timekeeping

Situation	Watch	Observer Announces	Notes
Before Pull (to receiving team) (to pulling team)	0:50	20 seconds for a hand	Stand on the field, close to the team so they can hear you. After the ten second warnings, arm chop the remaining time.
	1:00	10 seconds for a hand	
	1:10	20 seconds to pull	
	1:20	10 seconds to pull	
After off-sides (to receiving team) (to pulling team)	0:00	20 seconds for a hand	Don't forget to reset the watch as soon as off-sides is called.
	0:10	10 seconds for a hand	
	0:20	20 seconds to pull	
	0:30	10 seconds to pull	
Time-out (during point)	0:40	30 seconds to set, offense	Be close to the huddle, so they can hear you.
	0:50	20 seconds, offense	Be very loud and make it clear that these warnings pertain to the offense.
	1:00	10 seconds, offense	
	1:05	5	
	1:07	3, 2, 1...offense freeze!	
	1:10	Defense, 20 seconds	Give the first defensive warning immediately following the offensive freeze.
	1:20	10 to check, defense	
	1:30	Offense start when ready	
Time-out (between points)	0:10*	1 minute for a hand	Once the watch reaches 1:10, reset it and use normal before pull timing. Following the "one minute" warning. Reset again for additional time-outs if necessary.
	0:30*	1 minute to pull	
Halftime	4:40	5 minutes	At 8:30, reset the watch and switch to before pull timing after the "one minute" warning.
	7:40	2 minutes	
	0:10*	1 minute for a hand	
	0:30*	1 minute to pull	
Disc off playing field proper	0:00	20	Remember that this includes bricks. Give extra time for far out-of-bounds discs as necessary. Make sure to be audible to the (likely) thrower.
	0:05	15	
	0:10	10	
	0:15	5	
	0:17	3, 2, 1, disc-in	
Disc on playing field proper	0:00	10	Be very loud when this occurs in the middle of the field.
	0:05	5	
	0:07	3, 2, 1, disc-in	
Observer time-out (between points)	N/A	N/A	If it is necessary to take time between points to discuss something, stop the watch temporarily.

Resuming Stall Counts

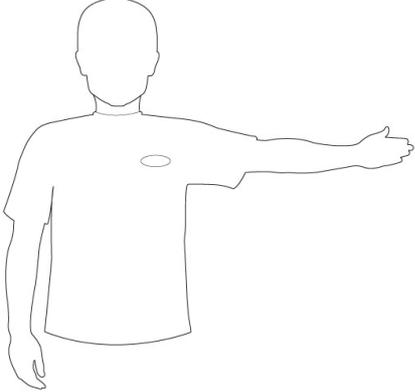
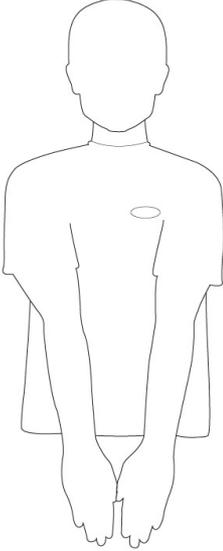
Count is resumed with the word "stalling" followed by the number listed below:

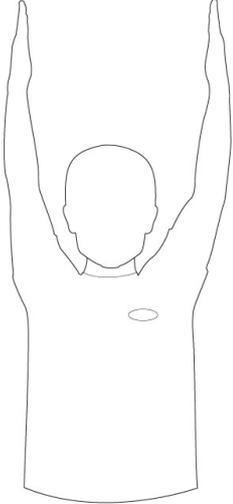
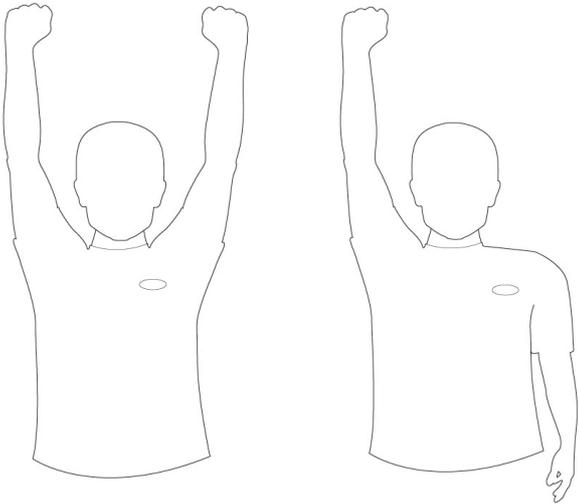
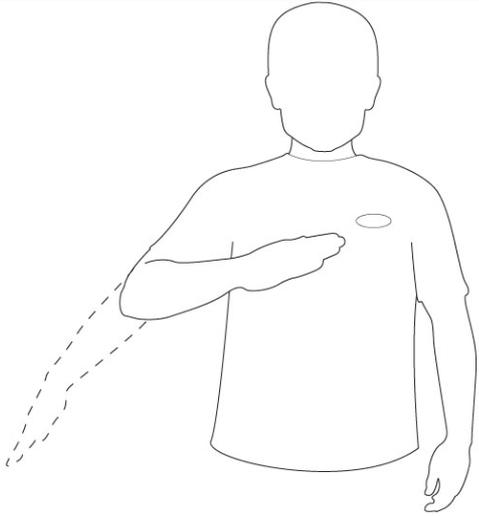
- Uncontested defensive foul or violation 1
- Uncontested offensive foul or violation..... count reached plus 1, or 9 if over 8
- Contested foul or violation count reached plus 1, or 6 if over 5
- Offsetting calls..... count reached plus 1, or 6 if over 5
- Unresolved calls count reached plus 1, or 6 if over 5
- Pick..... count reached plus 1, or 6 if over 5
- Marking violation (no stoppage) count reached minus 1, no "stalling"
- Contested stall
 - First call 8
 - Second and subsequent due to fast count 6
- Defensive technical time-out count reached plus 1, or 6 if over 5
- Offensive technical time-out count reached plus 1, or 9 if over 8
- Obstruction within 5 meters of playing field..... .count reached plus 1, or 9 if over 8

Appendix 2 – Hand Signals

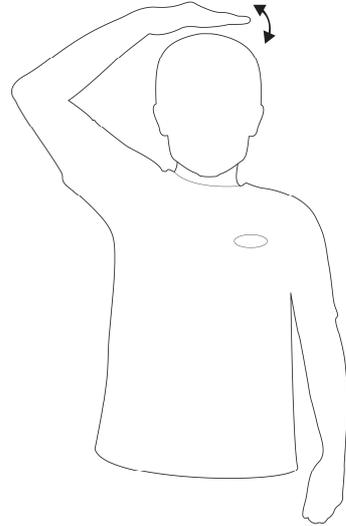
Active Calls

The Observer making the call should give the appropriate hand signal when as the ruling is made and announce the call so that it is audible to impacted players.

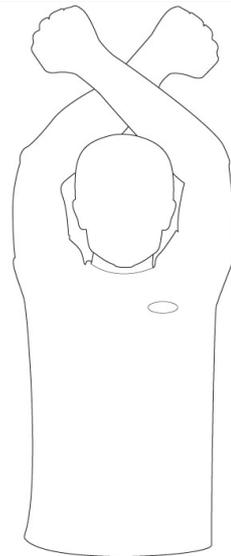
<p>In/out-of-bounds. Point with one arm extended, flat palm, thumb on top parallel to fingers, towards playing field proper (in)/away from playing field (out)</p>	
<p>In the end zone. Point with both arms, flat hands, palms down, all fingers parallel, into the goal.</p>	

<p>Goal. Raise both arms, fully extended, straight up, palms facing inward (similar to a touchdown signal in football). Hold signal for a count of three while standing still. Signal only after it has been determined that (i) the receiver made the catch in the end zone (initial point of contact completely in the end zone), and (ii) there are no unresolved calls that might negate the score. This is indicated by the other Observer giving the all-clear signal.</p>	
<p>Time limits. 20 seconds – two closed fists raised above head; 10 seconds – one closed fist raised above head; last 10 seconds are counted with arm chop.</p>	
<p>Second count (arm chop). Used for 20 or 10 second countdowns; flat hand, palm down, thumb in, stationary above elbow, lower arm extended at one-second intervals between a 45 and 90 degree angle to the ground.</p>	

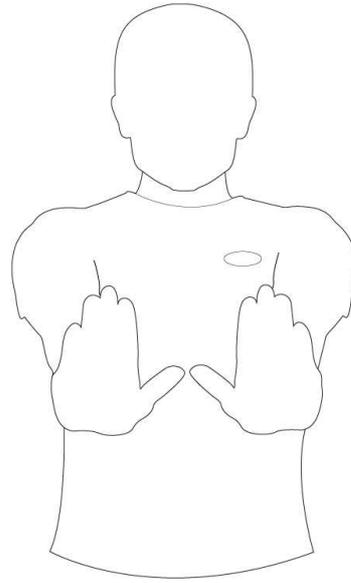
Time violation (on pull). Right hand on top of head, palm down, fingers extended parallel to each other, patting top of head.



Off-sides. Arms crossed overhead in an “X”, hands closed in a fist, wrists forward.



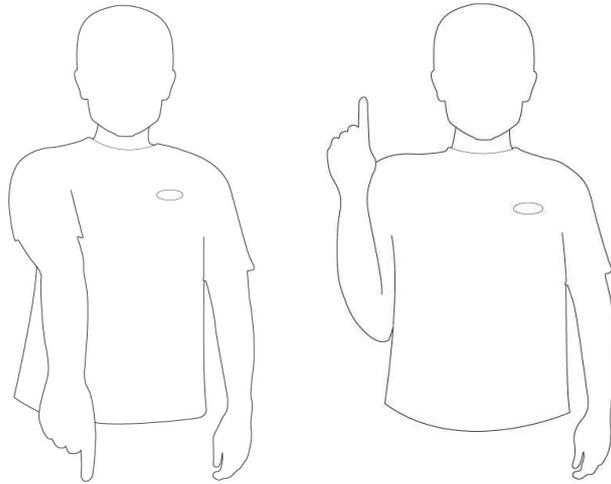
Force-out foul. If a player is considered in-bounds due to a force-out foul, motion towards out-of-bounds using a pushing motion with both palms outward, and verbally call “force-out!” as well. Note that this is now an active call, and play must be restarted with a check afterwards.



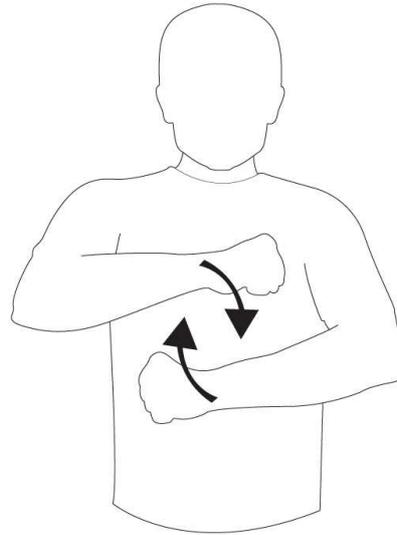
Other Calls

Signal only after player resolution or observer ruling, for benefit of benches and spectators.

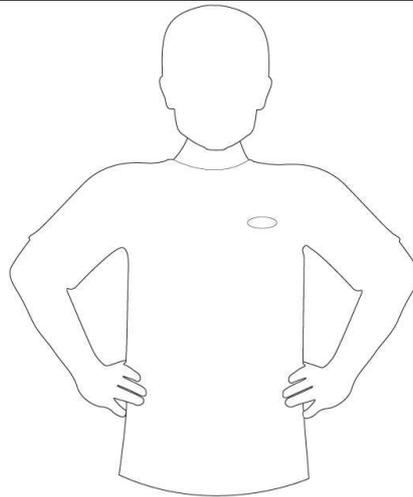
Disc down or up. Down – index finger straight arm pointing down at 45 degree, verbal ‘down.’ Up – elbow down forearm vertical index finger pointing upward, verbal ‘up.’



Travel. Two fists circling one another 1.5 times (when observer's active call, verbalize "travel" while raising flat hand palm forward straight armed overhead, then signal).



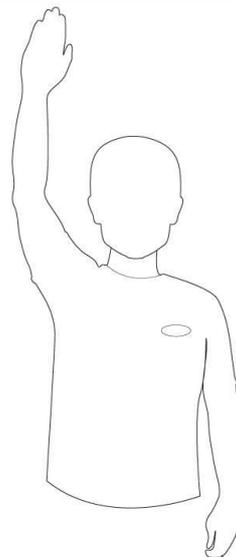
Pick. Hands on waist, thumbs to back, 4 fingers on front.

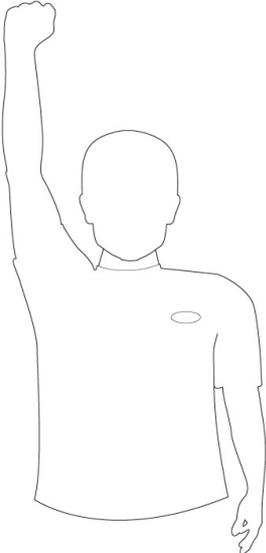
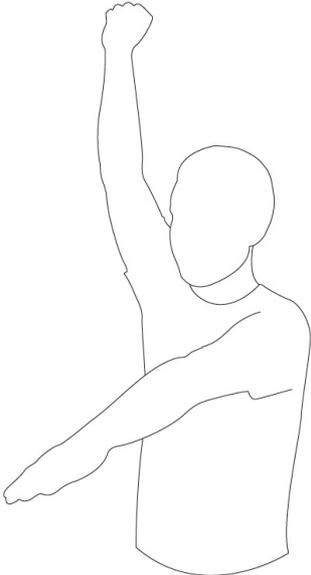
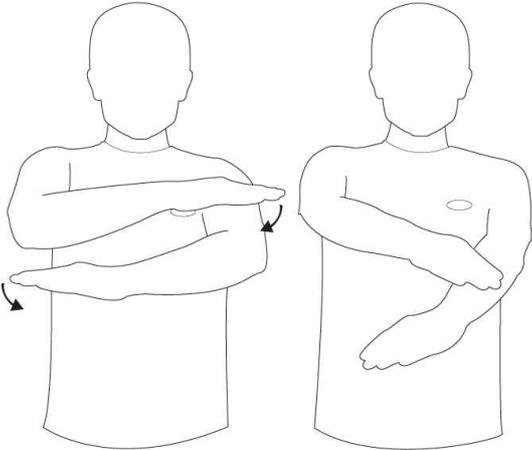


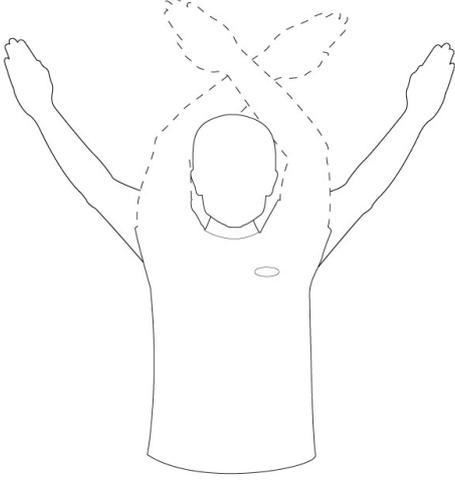
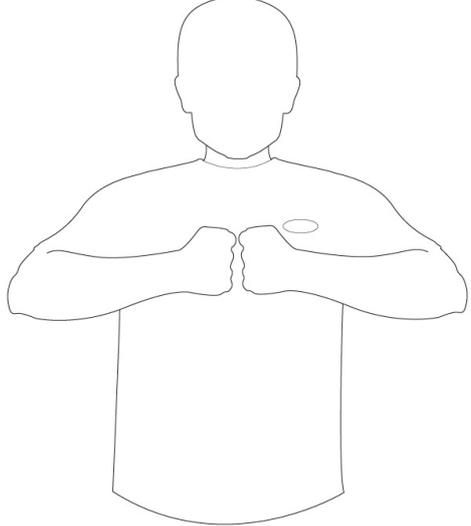
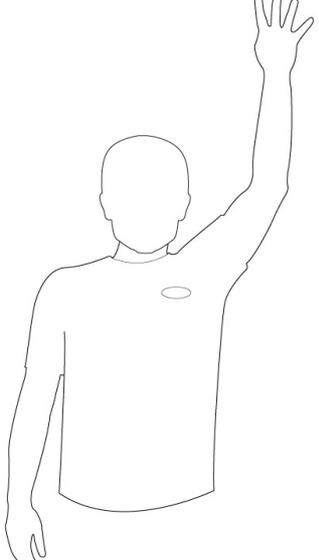
Call on the field. One arm extended straight up, fingers extended parallel to each other, palm facing forward.

Also used between points for:

Receiving team ready for pull.

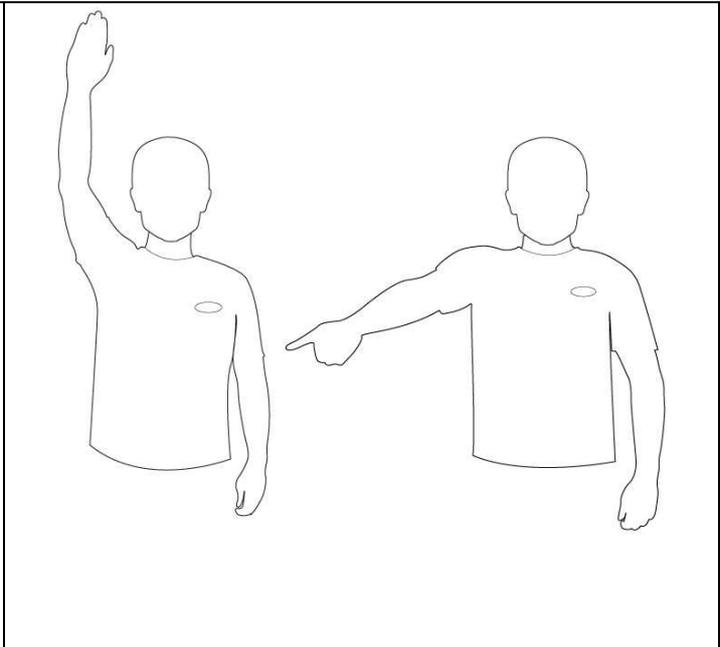


<p>Foul called. One arm extended straight up, fist closed.</p>	
<p>Foul resolution. “Bird-dog” offender’s waist (raised fist and flat hand, palm down, straight arm pointed at offender’s waist).</p>	
<p>Overruled foul. Two open hands palms down cross and uncross arms to “wipe away” called foul.</p>	

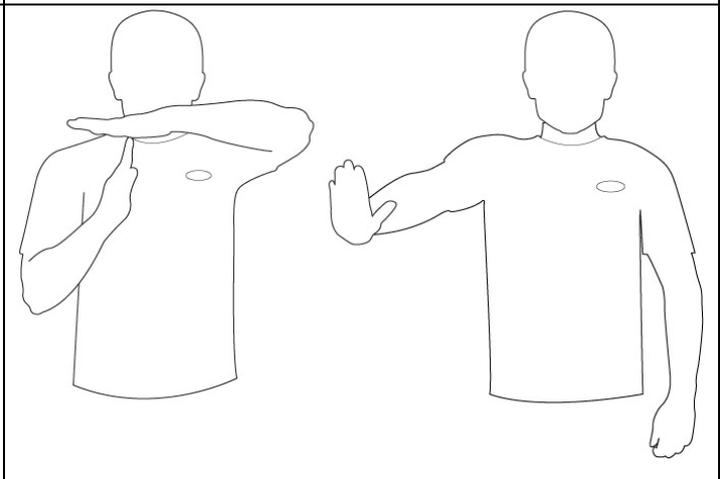
<p>Play has stopped/Play is being stopped. Wave both extended arms crosswise overhead. Verbally echo this call as well, but first be very sure that the thrower has acknowledged that play has stopped, except for cases where the Observer is stopping active play.</p>	
<p>Contest. Two fists bumped together in front of chest, back of hands facing outward; used when call is contested but does not come to the observer.</p>	
<p>Announcing stall count before restart. Indicate with appropriate number of fingers: Stalling 1-5 is one handed, stalling 6-9 is two handed, raised over head...announce "stalling 1-9," whichever count is applicable.</p>	

Restarting play.

- If players are checking disc in - After announcing stall count, pause briefly and chop arm down to horizontal, pointing at disc and announcing “you may check the disc.”
- If Observer is checking disc in - After announcing stall count, leave one open flat hand arm straight overhead, ask “defense ready?” Pause briefly and then count down “3-2-1,” at that moment chop arm down while pointing towards the disc and announce “disc in.” (If Observers are counting the stall, this marks the restart of the stall count. If the players are counting the stall, this marks the time when the marker should tap the disc in.)

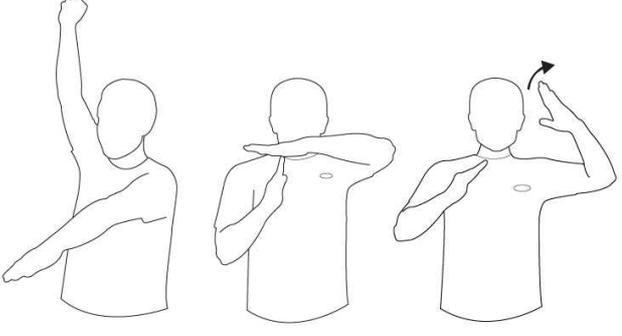
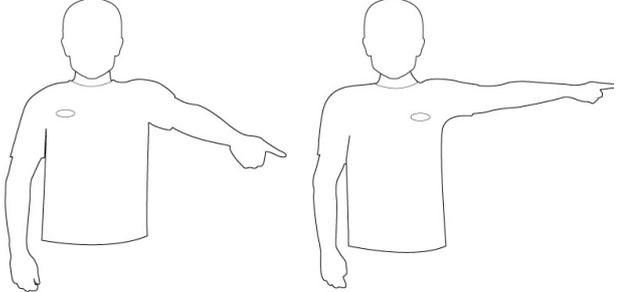


Time-out. “T” made with both hands followed by flat hand palm forward straight armed point in the direction of the team calling time out.



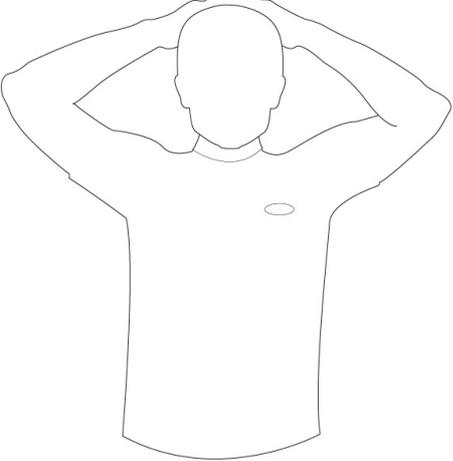
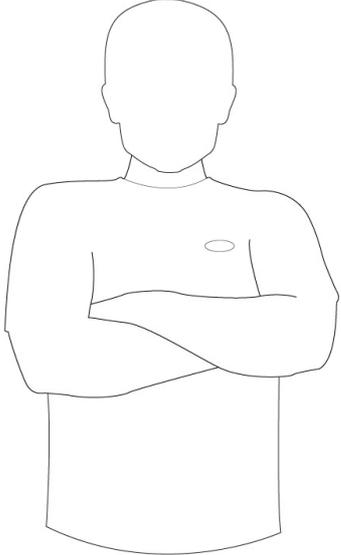
Misconduct Signals

Utilize misconduct signals when assessing misconduct foul or penalty.

<p>TMF and PMF. “Bird-dog” individual or team sideline as appropriate, followed by exploding “T” (like timeout).</p>	
<p>Ejection. Index finger pointed at player followed by pointing away from the fields.</p>	

Observer Crew Communication

Signal subtly to other officials, as appropriate.

<p>I saw the play/can make the call. One or two hands, palm down, on top of head.</p>	 A line drawing of a person from the chest up, wearing a short-sleeved shirt. Their hands are placed on top of their head, with fingers spread, palm down.
<p>I did not see the play/cannot make the call. Arms crossed in front of chest.</p>	 A line drawing of a person from the chest up, wearing a short-sleeved shirt. Their arms are crossed in front of their chest.

