

## ELECTRIC CLOCK OPERATOR (ECO) PLAY CLOCK OPERATOR (PCO)

The ECO holds the previous line of scrimmage until absolutely sure that spot is no longer relevant. (5 and 7 man). If clock control is wired, adjust to length of cord and ability to move down field around players and coaches; **prior to the game, lay out the cord in the restricted area and test the clock operation.**

If the clock is operated wirelessly, work from the sideline on the press box side of the field. Prior to game time, test the wireless remote operation from one end zone to the other. Make mental note of any dead zones to be avoided during the game.

When a Play Clock is used and operated by other than TSSAA Officials, there are no changes in ECO duties or mechanics. However, the ECO and Back Judge should monitor the Play Clock to ensure it is working and being operated properly. Inform the Referee of any discrepancies. The PCO shall be in full uniform **if** assigned by the local association.

When both the Play Clock and Scoreboard Clock controls are wireless AND both are operated by TSSAA Officials, the following mechanics will apply:

- I. Both operators will work from the sideline on the press box side.
- II. The ECO will be initially positioned on the line of scrimmage, and the PCO will be initially positioned even with the Referee or deeper, **if necessary**, to have a clear view of the Linesman or Line Judge starting the Play Clock.
- III. When the play ends, the ECO moves up the field keeping a mental note of previous line of scrimmage.
- IV. When play ends, the PCO moves initially to the previous line of scrimmage and then to the pre-snap position keying the Referee, keeping a mental note of previous line of scrimmage.
- V. Both the ECO and PCO maintain position with a good view of the Referee.

The Referee will instruct the PCO to reset the play clock to 25 seconds by pumping one hand up and to 40 seconds by pumping both hands up.

Following the Pregame Coaches Conference, the ECO will ensure the game clock is set to expire at the kickoff time.

### KICKOFF MECHANICS

- I. The ECO will be positioned on the receiving team's 40-yard line in all situations.

- II. The PCO position is on the receiving team's 20-yard line with an unobstructed view of the Referee.
- III. The ECO and PCO will hold their open hand above their head to indicate to the Referee they are ready.
- IV. The ECO and PCO will stay on sideline until the Referee gives the ready for play and then back out of restricted area.

## SCOREBOARD CLOCK MALFUNCTION

- I. The ECO stays on the press box sideline using a stopwatch with a countdown timer (this should be taken to each game).
- II. Use radio to communicate time remaining in the half.
- III. Confer with Referee on how often the remaining time is to be announced on the radio.
- IV. Notify Referee when 4 minutes remain in the half.

## 2:00 RULE AT END OF HALF

The ECO will radio the Back Judge and Referee when there are two minutes left in the half. If there is a subsequent foul, the ECO will monitor the radio to see if the offended team chooses to have the clock started on snap.

## RUNNING CLOCK IN 2ND HALF (POINT DIFFERENTIAL OF AT LEAST 30)

There are only three times a running clock may be stopped:

- I. A charged Team time out
- II. Injury
- III. Score

On the kickoff during running clock situations, the clock starts when the ball is kicked. To start the 4th quarter, the clock will start on the snap.

During running clock situations, the PCO will not start the Play Clock until both teams are on the field and ready to participate. Also, the Play Clock will be held or reset to 25 seconds to prevent a delay of game penalty.

## OVERTIME

- I. The ECO will secure the clock controls, wired or wireless.
- II. The ECO will attend the Officials meeting in the middle of the field.

- III. In conjunction with the Referee, the ECO will position himself on the line of scrimmage for all overtime plays. He will remain at the previous line of scrimmage until the ball is marked “ready” for the next play.
- IV. If a PCO is used, his position is on the sideline close to Referee.

## OVERALL

The ECO is an important member of the crew. Responsibilities (including starting the clock on the Referee’s silent wind for 1st downs inbounds) require the ECO to be in the game more than ever before. The ECO (and PCO) will work together with the Back Judge on clock and timing issues. Both the ECO and PCO should observe their respective clocks whenever they change the status, i.e., On to Off or vice versa. If the clock fails to respond, make note of the time when the malfunction occurred and notify the Back Judge.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PLAY CLOCK OPERATORS

### Before the Game

- Determine how you will set the play clock to 40/25 seconds.
- After testing the equipment, set the play clock to 25 for the start of the game.
- Advise Officials of any stadium-specific oddities in timing.

### 40-Second Clock

1. When the covering Official signals the ball is dead at the end of a play (inbounds, out of bounds, 1st down, incomplete pass, etc.), the play clock shall be set to 40 and started (after scanning the field to ensure no penalties). DO NOT wait for the ball to be spotted):
2. The play clock shall be set to 40 and started on the Referee’s signal when play resumes after an Official’s timeout related to a stoppage for:
  - injury of defensive players only
  - loss of helmet by defensive players only
  - equipment repair for defensive players only
  - administration of a penalty (accepted or declined) by the defense only

**When in doubt, set to 40 – the crew will correct as necessary.**

If the play clock needs to be reset to 40, the Referee shall signal (both palms up in an over-the-head pumping motion) to communicate the play clock shall be reset to 40 seconds and started immediately.

### **25-Second Clock**

If an Official signals the game clock to be stopped for any of the following reasons, the play clock should be set to 25:

- Penalty administration for foul by the offense or offsetting penalties
- Timeout (team or media)
- Measurement
- Defensive/receiving team is awarded a first down (change of team possession)
- After a score (FG, TD, safety)
- After a try
- Start of each period
- Start of a team's series in an extra period
- Either team is awarded a new series after a legal kick
- Other unusual/administrative stoppages

**In the above situations, the 25 second play clock will start on ready for play signal from Referee.**

If the 40 second clock is running and the ball has NOT been spotted by 25 seconds, the Referee shall signal (one palm up in an over-the-head pumping motion) the play clock shall be set to 25.

### **Other Procedures**

- Set the play clock to 25 on kickoffs and start it when the Referee gives the ready-for-play signal. We do not want Delay of Game fouls on kickoffs if they can be avoided, so the Referee and/or Back Judge may pump their arm to reset play clock if it's approaching 0.
- Reset the 40/25 second clock if ball is snapped when the play clock is close to zero -- RESET so the play clock does not show 0.
- Leave the play clock at 0 when the Back Judge drops a penalty marker for Delay of Game: we want the whole stadium to see 0. Reset to 25 after the Referee announces the penalty.

**End of Periods**

- Do not start the play clock at the end of a period if the game clock is (1) running or (2) will start when the Referee gives the ready-for-play signal, and the play clock is higher than game clock.
- The guiding philosophy is the play clock should run only if a delay of game foul is possible; if not possible, the play clock should be left at 25/40.

**Overtime**

- Throughout overtime, the 40/25 second play clock will continue to run as it did during regulation.

**If Play Clock Fails During Game**

- The play clock will be turned off until the problem is corrected.
- The Referee will notify both coaches the play clock will be kept by the Back Judge.
- The Back Judge shall raise and hold one hand overhead with 10 seconds remaining on the play clock and shall visually count down the last 5 seconds on the play clock.
- When the problem is corrected, the Referee will notify both coaches.