Running Game Mechanics

Marking progress is by far the activity officials for most during a play and the most common play is the run. The activities we are observing during a running play are somewhat simplified as compared to a passing play. During a run we do not worry about Offensive pass interference, defensive pass interference, ineligibles, passes crossing the love of scrimmage, when the kick end, etc. Blocking, but no more predicate the success of any play so that the running plays. Therefore, it is on blocking that most of out play mechanics are focused. All officials watch for illegal action by both A and B during any play. This allows us to concentrate on the 12-15 players involved directly in the play.

I. When run is read
   A. All officials do not move until forced
   B. Referee:
      i. Find point of attack.
         1. Know where the ball is
         2. You must always know what is being done with the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
      ii. Watch blocking back going into hole
      iii. Watch action of pulling/trapping the line men
   C. Umpire:
      i. Find point of attack
      ii. Watch the 2-3 A players at point of attack
         1. Observe what they do and what is being done to them.
         2. You may have to move to avoid pursuing linebackers.
   D. Linesman and Line Judge:
      i. Have an idea of where the run is going
      ii. Watch men on the end of the line
      iii. Watch wide outs going back in to block linebackers
      iv. Mark end of run
   E. Back Judge:
      i. Find point of attack
      ii. Watch tight end blocking
      iii. Help with wide out on linebackers

This is our basic coverage for all runs as they start out and as they continue of the middle and between the tackles. If the play develops as a run going outsides the tackles our focus may change but not necessarily the players we are watching. Depending on the type of run play (pitch sweep, option, trap, etc.) responsibilities are added and/or dropped accordingly.

II. Runs outside of the tackle
   A. Referee
      i. Observe blocking backs and pulling line men and blocks against them
      ii. Protect the QB after hand off or pitch
      iii. Move only to maintain cushion.
B. Umpire
   i. Pivot to point of attack
   ii. Watch linemen (T-G-C-G-T)
   iii. Be aware of defensive linemen holding or pulling offensive linemen
   iv. Help with backs that come through the hole to block linebackers
   v. Focus on traffic inside the runner.

C. Linesman and Line Judge (runs to your side)
   i. Know status of the ball
   ii. Watch tight end and be aware of split receivers blocking back towards the ball
   iii. Focus on traffic outside of the runner
   iv. As run goes around the end watch the seal block on defensive end and outside linebacker.
   v. Get progress

D. Linesman and Line Judge (runs away from your side)
   i. Watch traffic behind Umpire and Referee as they move away
   ii. Maintain distance from play
   iii. Be prepared for play to come back to your side

E. Back Judge
   i. Watch tight ends or second receiver in or at point of attack
   ii. As run goes around the end focus on traffic in front of the runner.
   iii. Maintain distance from the play
   iv. You have goal line responsibility always, unless you started on the back line.

As you can see, the players(s) that each official watches do not really change. Our coverage provides us with 4 sets of eyes around the ball (Wingman, BJ, U, R). As the play progresses down field so should our box. Worst case is that we lose the referee and the ball is triangle. As mentioned above, each official should know the whereabouts of the ball without watching it. There should be only one whistle, primarily, that stops the play for progress and that is the covering wing official’s. The Back Judge, Umpire, and off side wingman should never have the first whistle as they should not be aware of the ball being down.