Football is a game of field position and territory. The rules penalize a team if they don’t gain a certain amount of territory in a certain number of plays. The rules award a team who gains a minimum amount of territory in a certain number of plays by granting them more plays to gain yet more territory. Marking a team’s forward progress may be the most fundamental duty of football officials.

Our wing officials are our progress officials. They should get 98% of all progress marks. They square-off to get that progress. They go parallel with the sideline, either in-bounds or out of bounds, then square at a 90 degree angle to mark the progress of the ball carrier. Forward progress is a plane not a spot. By squaring-off we get to the plane faster than by running a banana route to the spot. Inexperienced officials think forward progress is a spot, but it is not, it is a plane.

Once a wing officials “squares” he has marked the progress and then he “closes” under control.

Once he “squares” he doesn’t need to have his head down staring at a piece of sod. He should have his head up and be “rubbernecking,” fulfilling his dead ball duties.

Randy Campbell former CSFOA member and current PAC 10 official sites officials with their heads down looking at the turf as the number one mechanical flaw he sees when he watches high school football. He is famous for saying, “The ground has never committed a personal foul.”

Below is a video clip of an official who thinks forward progress is a spot, runs a banana route which closes him to quickly and he puts his personal peril in jeopardy and he doesn’t cover the play well.

BAD WING MECHANICS ON FORWARD PROGRESS AND FUMBLE

https://youtu.be/F4L3A-RICVM