

Plays at the Pylon

Relevant Rules for Pylon Plays

8-2-1-a: "A touchdown shall be scored when a ball carrier advancing from the field of play has possession of a live ball when it penetrates the plane of the opponent's goal line. This plane extends beyond the pylons only for a player who touches the ground in the end zone or a pylon."

2-31-3-b: "The goal line and goal line pylons are in the end zone."

2-12-2: "The goal line at each end of the field of play runs between the sidelines and is part of the vertical plane that separates the end zone from the field of play. The two goal lines are 100 yards apart. The plane of the goal line extends between and includes the pylons, which are out of bounds. The entire goal line is in the end zone. A team's goal line is that which it is defending."

4-2-1-c: "A player who touches a pylon is out of bounds."

4-2-4-d: "The most forward point of the ball when declared out of bounds between the goal lines is the point of forward progress. Exception: When a ball carrier is airborne as he crosses the sideline (including a striding runner), forward progress is determined by the position of the ball as it crosses the sideline."

Relevant ARs for Pylon Plays

The ball being directly over the pylon is treated the same as the ball being inside the pylon. (AR 8.2.1.II, V)

The ball touching the pylon is a touchdown. (AR 8.2.1.V)

If the ball hasn't broken the plane of the goal line, extended or not, when the player touches the pylon, it is not a touchdown. The ball is dead by rule once the pylon is struck, and normal forward progress rules apply. (AR 8.2.1.I, VIII)[*Example: Think of a situation where the player is striding and his forward foot hits the pylon while the rest of his body is somewhere around the 1 yard line.*]

Other Relevant Considerations for Pylon Plays

1) The player's body/arm/leg/etc. crossing directly over or inside the pylon is not relevant - to get the goal line extended, the player must touch the ground in the end zone (which includes the goal line and pylons - see 2-31-3-b)

Three ways a runner can score a touchdown:

1. Live ball crosses the goal line plane, over or inside the pylons (including making contact with the pylon itself) while in player possession
2. Live ball is already crossing the EXTENDED goal line plane when any part of the runner's body touches the ground in the endzone
3. Live ball crosses the EXTENDED goal line plane subsequent to the runner touching the ground in the endzone, and before he touches anything out of bounds.

Play Scenarios

#	Situation	Score?	Why?
1	Runner crosses goal line with possession of the live ball. Both runner and ball crosses inside the pylon.	Score	#1
2	Runner steps on the goal line with possession of the live ball. Runner is inside the pylon and the ball is outside of the pylon, already breaking the plane of the goal line extended.	Score	#2

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3	Runner steps on the goal line with possession of the live ball. Runner is inside the pylon and the ball is outside of the pylon at the 1 yard line, but breaks the plane of the goal line extended before the runner's next step.	Score	#3
4	Striding runner reaches the point of the ball across the goal line inside the pylon at the exact instant his foot touches out of bounds	Score	#1 (Spot of forward progress is on the goal line, which is a TD. 4-2-4-d)
5	The runner has the ball in his right hand. His left foot hits inbounds at the one-foot line, his right foot hits the ground to the right of the pylon (OB) then he sticks the ball across the plane of the goal line extended (i.e., outside of the pylon).	No Score	Ball is dead on OB step. Spot at most forward point or where ball crossed the sideline.
6	Runner gets hit near the goal line, causing him to become airborne. Both runner and ball cross goal line extended outside the pylon and land out of bounds in the white.	No score	Spot where ball crossed the sideline. No contact means no extended goal line. (See consideration #1)
7	Runner gets hit near the goal line, causing him to become airborne. The runner's body hits the pylon before the ball penetrates the goal line.	No score	Dead on contact with Pylon. Spot at most forward point.
8	Runner crosses goal line extended with possession of the ball. Runner crosses over the pylon and ball is outside the pylon.	No score	Spot where ball crossed the sideline. No contact means no extended goal line. (See consideration #1)
9	Runner gets hit near the goal line causing him to leave his feet. Both runner and ball cross inside pylon.	Score	#1
10	Runner dives and crosses goal line with possession of the ball. Both runner and ball cross over the pylon.	Score	#1
11	Runner gets hit near the goal line causing him to leave his feet. Runner crosses over the pylon and ball crosses outside the pylon.	No Score	Spot where ball crossed the sideline. No contact means no extended goal line. (See consideration #1)
12	Runner dives (airborne) and crosses goal line extended with possession of the ball. Both runner and ball cross outside the pylon.	No Score	Spot where ball crossed the sideline. No contact means no extended goal line. (See consideration #1)
13	Runner dives (airborne) and crosses goal line extended with possession of the ball. Runner crosses outside pylon but reaches out and touches pylon with his hand with the ball across the goal line outside the pylon.	Score	#2
14	Runner dives (airborne) and crosses goal line extended with	No Score	Spot where ball crossed

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	possession of the ball. Runner crosses outside pylon but reaches out and touches pylon with his hand while the ball has not yet crossed the goal line extended.		the sideline. Ball is dead when pylon is touched, and hasn't yet broken plane of goal line extended.
15	Runner dives and crosses goal line with possession of the ball. Both runner and ball cross inside the pylon.	Score	#1
16	Runner dives and crosses goal line with possession of the ball. Both runner and ball cross over the pylon.	Score	#1
17	Runner dives (airborne) and crosses goal line extended with possession of the ball. Runner crosses inside pylon but his first contact with the ground is out of bounds 2 yards beyond the goal line. The ball crosses outside the pylon.	No Score	Spot where ball crossed the sideline. No contact means no extended goal line. (See consideration #1)
18	Runner dives (airborne) and crosses goal line extended with possession of the ball. Runner crosses over pylon, landing out of bounds 2 yards beyond the goal line while the ball crosses outside the pylon.	No Score	Spot where ball crossed the sideline. No contact means no extended goal line. (See consideration #1)
19	Runner dives and crosses goal line with possession of the ball. Runner crosses outside pylon and ball crosses inside pylon.	Score	#1
20	Runner dives and crosses goal line with possession of the ball. Runner crosses outside pylon and ball crosses over pylon.	Score	#1
21	At the right-hand goal line pylon: The runner has the ball in his right hand. His right foot hits inbounds at the one-foot line, he sticks the ball across the plane of the goal line extended (i.e., outside the pylon) and then his left foot goes inside the pylon but comes down on the sideline.	No Score	Spot where ball crossed the sideline. No contact means no extended goal line. (See consideration #1)
22	At the right-hand goal line pylon: The runner has the ball in his right hand. His right foot hits inbounds at the one-foot line, he sticks the ball across the plane of the goal line extended (i.e., outside the pylon) and then his left foot goes inside the pylon where it touches down inbounds.	Score	#2
23	At the right-hand goal line pylon: The runner has the ball in his right hand. His right foot hits inbounds at the one-foot line, then his left foot goes inside the pylon where it touches down inbounds, and then he sticks the ball across the plane of the goal line extended (i.e., outside the pylon).	Score	#3
24	At the right-hand goal line pylon: The runner has the ball in his right hand. His right foot hits inbounds at the one-foot line, then his left foot goes inside the pylon where it touches down inbounds, but before he sticks the ball across the plane of the goal	No Score	Spot where ball crossed the sideline. Ball is dead when pylon is kicked, and hasn't yet broken plane of

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	line extended, his right foot kicks the pylon.		goal line extended.
25	At the right-hand goal line pylon: The runner has the ball in his right hand. His right foot hits inbounds at the one-foot line, he sticks the ball across the plane of the goal line extended (i.e., outside the pylon) and then his left foot goes inside the pylon where it hits the pylon prior to touching down inbounds.	Score	#2
26	At the right-hand goal line pylon: The runner has the ball in his left hand. His left foot hits inbounds at the one-foot line, he sticks the ball across the plane of the goal line inside the pylon and then his right foot immediately steps in the white to the right of the pylon.	Score	#1

Explanations/concept by Zach Smith (rzachsmith@gmail.com) Play scenarios by Ed Camp.