

Extra Point ... or ... Two Point Conversion?



After a football team scores a touchdown they get to either kick for an extra point or run a play and try to get in the end zone for a two-point conversion. In 2015 the NFL changed the distance of an extra point kick from 20 to 33 yards. The NFL made this change to make for more excitement immediately after a touchdown. In the past an extra point was pretty much automatic, in fact it was made 99.3% of the time! Now the extra point is no longer automatic, you actually need to stay tuned to see if your team gets their one extra point or maybe they will even go for two, with a two-point conversion. The rule change has worked. Through the first four weeks of the 2018 – 19 NFL season, teams are going for two points about 12% of the time, which is a record high. Through the first four weeks, teams have made 290/304 extra point attempts.

1. What percent of NFL extra point kicks were made during the first four weeks of the NFL season? What percent were missed? What percent were made? How does this compare to the past?

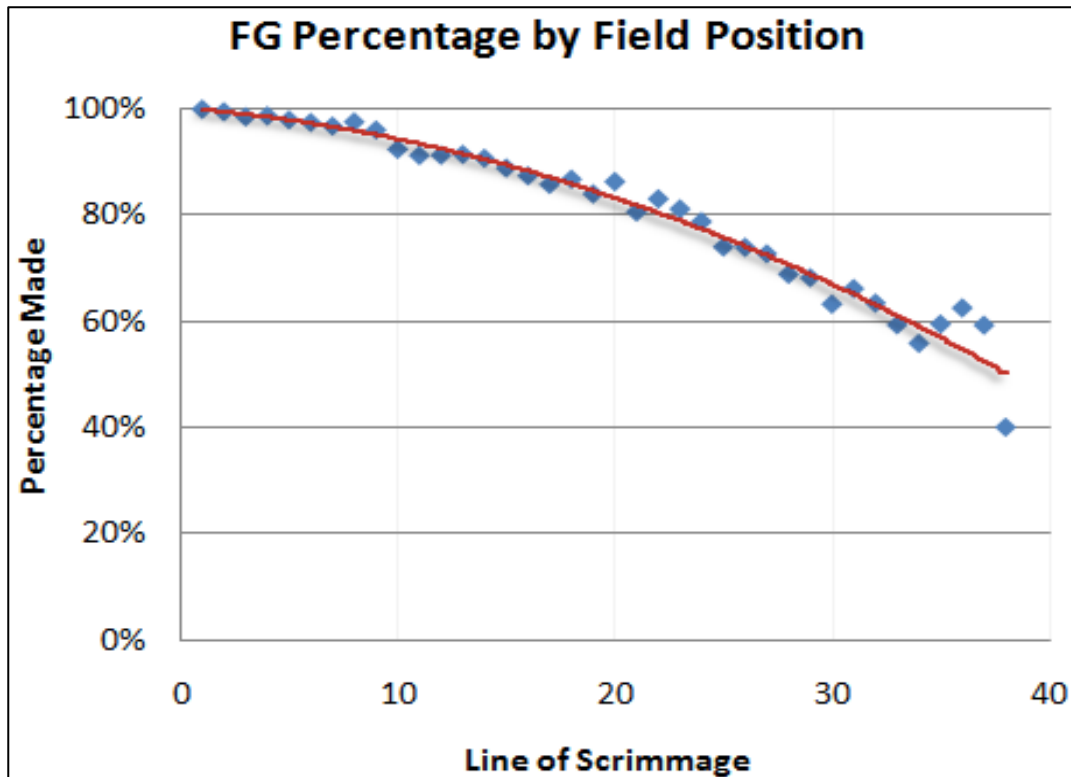
How about two-point conversions? Historically, two-point conversions are successful about 50% of the time. This percent varies, depending on if you include two-point conversion plays that resulted from a botched extra-point kick. There have been 23 out of 37 two-point conversions made through the first four weeks of the 2018 season.

2. What percent of NFL two-point conversions were successful after four weeks in the 2018 season?

3. Considering what you know about the success rate of extra points from the new kicking distance and the success rate for a two-point conversion, which makes more sense over the long run? If the percentages hold true would you expect one-point extra points or two-point conversions to total more points over time? Be sure to show your reasoning.

4. What assumptions are you making and what other variables are you ignoring when you simply compare extra points and two-point conversions by success rate? How does that factor into the comparison of the two choices or how does it affect a coaches thinking?

5. How could you change either the value of an extra point, the value of a two-point conversion (include decimals) or change the yard line of the line of scrimmage in a two-point conversion or the distance of an extra point so that an extra point and a two-point conversion have the same expected value? Be sure to explain your reasoning. You can use the data from this activity and/or the graph below. The graph shows historical data of field goal percentage by field position. The line of a scrimmage on an extra point is now at the 15-yard line. The actual kicking distance is about 17 or 18 yards greater than the line of scrimmage (10 yards for the end zone and 7 or 8 yards back from the line of scrimmage). Data collected and graph by Bill Burke at: <http://www.advancedfootballanalytics.com/>



Source: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/23/upshot/the-nfl-extra-point-has-changed-but-deuces-still-arent-wild.html?_r=0

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