

**LIBERTY BELL FOOTBALL OFFICIALS  
CLINIC  
ACE CONFERENCE CENTER  
LAFAYETTE HILLS, PA  
SATURDAY, MAY 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2006**

**FOOTBALL**

**OFFICIATING**

**PHILOSOPHIES**

## **Mechanics:**

### **Counting Players on Offensive Line of Scrimmage**

To be in a legal formation the offense must have at least seven players on the line of scrimmage at the snap. The responsibility for counting these players has always been primarily with the linesman and line judge.

As you know it is extremely difficult to count the players on the line of scrimmage, as we generally cannot tell how many players are on the other side of the snapper. We have always done this by counting the players in the offensive backfield. If there were five players in the offensive backfield then we could be sure of having one of two fouls. Either there were not seven on the line or the offense had twelve players at the snap. If we had five in the backfield then we would throw a flag at the snap for "Not having seven on the line." In the instance where the referee and umpire had 12 players participating at the snap we would pick up our flags.

There is only one downside to this method. That is when the offense has only ten players and four are lined up in the backfield. In this instance the linesman and line judge will probably not pick up the foul. In twenty-four years in the conference, I have known this to happen only twice and both times the infraction was caught and penalized.

So we don't need a knee-jerk reaction where we spend a lot of time developing a mechanic for something that happens less than one time a season, but we do need a method to be sure we catch and call this foul.

It has been suggested that we develop a set of hand signals to be used by the linesman and line judge to indicate the number of players on the offensive line. In doing this we need to keep the number of signals to a minimum and make them as simple as possible. We must also remember that teams often shift just before the snap, which will cause us to have to change our signals. We don't want to be so busy concentrating on and giving signals that we lose our concentration on other important duties such as shifts, false starts, alignments, snap infractions, covered receivers and etc. We already have signals for:

- (1) The widest man off the line. (Open hand pointing back toward offense backfield)
- (2) Unbalanced line to our side. (Open hand on chest)
- (3) Covered receiver. (Closed fist held straight out toward other wing official)

### **Responsibility for calling foul when there are only ten offensive players:**

1. When the referee and umpire count only ten offensive players, they should be alerted that the possibility of a foul exists. At this time they are the only officials that are aware of a possible foul.

- (a) They should then try to count the number of backs. If there are four backs, they will have a foul at the snap.
- (b) The R & U may be hesitant to look away from the ball to count the backs, but if the offense is in a scrimmage-kick formation the R & U will probably be able to see all of the backs.

## WHEN IN QUESTION

### ***Catch, Interception, Recovery***

1. When in question, the catch, recovery or interception is not completed.

### ***Blocking***

2. Blocking below the waist is the initial contact below the waist with any part of the blocker's body against an opponent, other than the runner. When in question, the contact is below the waist.
3. An obviously delayed block at the thigh or below against an opponent (except the runner) who is in contact with a teammate of the blocker, is in the act of disengaging from the first blocker or has just disengaged from the first blocker but is still confusing him. When in question, the contact is at the thigh or below.
4. A block in the back is contact against an opponent occurring when the force of the initial contact is from behind and above the waist (*Exception: Against the runner.*). When in question, the contact is below the waist.

### ***Fumbling, Muffing, Batting, Touching or Blocking a Kick***

5. Touching of a ball not in player possession denotes any contact with the ball. It may be intentional or unintentional, and it always precedes possession and control. Intentional touching is deliberate or intended touching. When in question, a ball has not been touched on a kick or forward pass.

### ***Kicks***

6. Kicking the ball is intentionally striking the ball with the knee, lower leg or foot. When in question, a ball is accidentally touched rather than intentionally kicked.

### ***Passes***

7. A forward pass is determined by the point where the ball first strikes the ground, a player, an official or anything beyond the spot of the pass. All other passes are backward passes. When in question, it is a forward pass rather than a backward pass when thrown in or behind the neutral zone.
8. When in question, the ball is passed and not fumbled during an attempted forward pass.
9. A catchable forward pass is an untouched legal forward pass beyond the neutral zone to an eligible Team A player who has a reasonable opportunity to catch the ball. When in question, a legal forward pass is catchable.

### ***Timeouts***

10. Any official may stop the clock for an injured player(s). When in question, the clock shall be stopped for an injured player.

### ***Ball in Play-Dead Ball***

11. When it goes out of bounds other than a kick that scores a field goal after touching the uprights or crossbar, when a runner is out of bounds, or when a runner is so held that his forward progress is stopped. When in question, the ball is dead.

### ***Opportunity to Catch a Kick***

## WHEN IN QUESTION

12. It is a contact foul if the kicking team contacts the potential receiver before, or simultaneous to, his first touching the ball. When in question, it is a contact foul.

### ***Forward Pass***

13. If to save yardage or conserve time, a forward pass is thrown where no eligible Team A player has a reasonable opportunity to catch it. When in question, the Team A player has a reasonable opportunity to catch the pass.

### ***Safety***

14. The ball becomes dead out of bounds behind a goal line, except from an incompleting forward pass, or becomes dead in the possession of player on, above or behind his own goal line, and the defending team is responsible for the ball being there.

### ***Roughing or Running into Kicker or Holder***

15. When in question whether the foul is "running into" or "roughing" the foul is "roughing."

## MECHANICS

### **MECHANICS MUST BE THOROUGHLY DISCUSSED AND COORDINATED IN THE PREGAME CONFERENCE TO COVER ALL PLAYS**

#### KICKOFFS

- Regardless of the mechanics you are using to cover the kickoff, the side judge and field judge must allow kicker to go by them and then move down under control. They must focus on their area of coverage and their keys and work "THEIR SIDE OF THE STREET." Help is needed from the linesman and line judge when possible.
- Umpires move downfield under control and cover the middle area behind the flow of players.
- Above all, every official must focus and discipline themselves to see the whole play.

#### SCRIMMAGE KICKS (PUNTS)

- Back judge has receiver and the ball. Secondary help with blocks around receiver.
- Side judge and field judge position yourself on the sideline depending on field position. You must focus on gunners and be able to see through the action.
- Side judge and field judge must focus on ~~blocker~~<sup>CHASER</sup> in front of receiver. Do not focus on the receiver. Help with blocks at the corner.
- Side judge and field judge must be ready to take runner after he turns upfield.
- Linesman and line judge move downfield after kick crosses "LOS." The distance varies with playing conditions and quality of kickers.
- Linesman and line judge move downfield under control and support coverage of the second wave of blockers. Focus on your area of coverage. Help if possible with blocks at the corners. Be ready for reverse mechanics.
- Umpire 10 yards off "LOS" moves downfield under control after separation of players take place. Cover players in the middle of the flow or to the sides if necessary
- Referee is to clean up behind umpire

**"IBW"**

**When in question, the block is legal**

## SOME GUIDELINES AND THOUGHTS PRESENTED BY COORDINATORS

- We basically use as a guideline the direction of the player being blocked takes after the block. A hand or shoulder into one of the numbers on the back of the jersey also dictates a block in the back.
- Field judge, side judge, and back judge must see chaser from beginning to end. Hand on back and hand on side “which one exerts force or push. Direction the man blocked can be a key. When in doubt....not a foul!
- Unless the numbers are involved in the block, then most times the block is legal. A hand on the side and one on the back, but not touching the numbers, is legal. If contact initiates on the numbers whether one or both hands, a foul would then be called.
- Bottom line is that the block has to be clearly in the back. Be sure they know the rules and the definitions associated with it. The bottom line is the block has to be clearly in the back, no hands or head in front or side.
- For an illegal block to occur, initial contact (even back of the shoulder) blocks are legal. If in doubt, no foul.
- Clearly in the numbers. Consider the direction he falls – forward a foul sideways no foul.
- The guideline for an IBW is whether the player blocked goes head first after contact. If a player goes sideway when contacted, then it is not to be ruled a block in the back.
- If the blocker is coming from the side, one hand can be on the side and one hand on the back. The official is to read if he does down on his “nose,” a foul; or goes down on his side, not a foul.
- It is a foul when the block is clearly in the back and the player that is blocked goes down to the ground in a straight line from his running position. It is not a block in the back if the blocked player goes sideway. If one hand is in the back and the other hand is somewhere on the body it does matter, the key is how does the blocked player fall or land.
- I have my officials look for the position of the hands and if any number is covered by one or two hands and the push occurs it is a foul.
- Try to determine initial contact. If from side, no foul; if from the back a foul. A hand in back is also what we look for but one hand in the back and one hand on side of shoulder we are back to above. To a lesser degree, we look at how the player blocked “initially” falls – to the front (foul) or towards side (no foul). Key word is *initially* and this gets tough. For example, a player can initially fall sideways and land on his stomach and hands, in fact, that normally happens because the player will twist and try to regain his balance by getting his hands under him

- Contact should be clearly in the back. A general rule, but not the gospel, would be that contact should block out at least one number on the back of the jersey to be clearly in the back. Whether a player lands on his “nose” or “side” should not be a determining factor.

The severity of the contact does not determine if action in the back is or is not a foul; sometimes, a light contact in the back is all that is needed to spring the runner for a big gainer.

### Mechanics

Our deep officials should put themselves in position to see through the action. On punts, we put our deep side men about five yards in front of receiver and adjust with the kick, but keep their eyes on the gunners. After ball has crossed the neutral zone after a punt, we expect our head linesman and line judge to move downfield moving with a purpose to help with the action. We start our umpire out 10-12 yards off the LOS and ask him to move downfield with a purpose as soon as action in his line has started to separate. We ask our referees to clean up action behind the umpire, after action and potential action against the punter has subsided.

- If the contact is simultaneous or in front first, the block is legal.
- If the initial contact is in the back, the block is illegal.
- Mechanics - when the contact is “gray” it is considered to be a legal block.

ET:mld

## Fumbles & Catch, No Catch Situations:

Without question the biggest problems and most controversial calls have come from situations involving loose balls from fumbles, whether a forward pass is a catch or no catch, or whether a forward pass is a catch and fumble or is an incomplete pass. Hopefully we can develop methods or mechanics that can assist us in making these determinations.

On the field, these situations usually occur in a fraction of a second and we have only one look at it and must make a determination based on what we saw in that fraction of a second. At field level this is often very difficult due to the number of players between the official and the ball and the ball being screened by the runners or receivers body.

Due to the improved quality of the cameras and replay equipment, what actually happened is usually determined on video. Of all the slow-motion videos from several angles, one of them will usually show what actually happened. We are able to see the ball come loose when the runner's knee is inches above the ground. At normal speed this is impossible to see. The same holds true with a pass that is trapped under the receiver's body.

As you know, there are no ironclad solutions to these situations, but listed below are some guidelines for us to follow. The ideal solution would be to let the officials use the replay equipment to make our determination, but that is not now an option. The way it now stands, everyone in the country except the officials knows what happened on the play.

### Fumbles:

- 1. When you see the ball come loose before runner is down.**  
Throw beanbag as near to yard line where fumble occurred and continue to officiate. If you see a loose ball but did not see it come loose, do not throw the beanbag.  
*Throwing the beanbag indicates that we have seen a fumble.*
- 2. When you see the ball come loose after you are positive the runner's knee is down or his forward progress has been stopped.**  
Blow whistle and go to spot. You may point to the ground to sell the call.
- 3. When the runner goes down and the ball has come loose, but you did not see it come loose.**  
Do not sound whistle or throw beanbag at this point.  
Do not point to ground or pat knee.  
Continue to officiate the loose ball until it is recovered by either the offense or defense and subsequently becomes dead.  
Once the ball has been recovered, drop the beanbag as near as possible to where you think it may have come loose. This does not indicate a fumble but gives us a reference point if we later decide that the runner was down.  
This now becomes a crew call and we must meet to discuss what happened. Offer any information that you may have.

### Forward Passes, Catch or No Catch:

- 1. When you are positive that the receiver did not possess the pass and that the pass is incomplete.**  
Blow whistle and give incomplete pass signal.



2. **When you are positive that a diving catch has been made and the receiver is down.**

Blow whistle and go to spot. A catch signal is not necessary. Once you are sure another official is not giving an incomplete signal, you may give a catch signal.

3. **When you are unsure as to whether the receiver has caught or trapped the pass.**

If you are the nearest official, run towards spot while looking for help. If you see a fellow official looking for help, move in to offer assistance. All involved should discuss what happened and tell what you saw.

Do not give any signals while moving in to help. If you are unsure, then do not give a signal.

One thing we don't want are conflicting signals.

After discussing what you saw and arriving at a decision, then give the proper signal.

4. **When the receiver is hit immediately after receiving the pass, the ball comes loose and you are positive he had control of the ball and had made a catch.**

Throw beanbag to indicate that you have a fumble and continue to officiate.

5. **When the receiver is hit immediately after receiving the pass and you are not sure as to whether he had control of the pass.**

Do not throw a beanbag or give an incomplete pass signal but continue to officiate the loose ball.

Once the ball is dead, get together and exchange information. Remember that if there is any doubt, it is an incomplete pass. It is much better to come to a decision and then give a signal, than to throw a beanbag or give an incomplete signal and then have to reverse that call or even worse, to have conflicting signals.

If the loose ball is recovered by a player of either team and advanced continue to follow the play. If it is later decided that it was an incomplete pass, the ball will be put in play at the previous spot. If it was a completed pass and fumble, the ball will be put in play at dead-ball spot. (No beanbag is necessary).

### **Catch or No Catch at Sideline or Endline:**

In most cases these situations involve being in position and good judgment.

When the ball becomes dead buy yourself time by giving the timeout signal. There is no hurry to give a catch or incomplete catch signal. As you are giving the timeout signal, let your mind digest what your eyes have seen.

If you are positive as to what you have seen, give the appropriate signal.

If the catch is made between two officials, make eye contact with each other and even possibly communicate before giving a signal.

If you are some distance from the play and see the ball being bobbled or a foot on the line, go to the covering official and tell him what you saw, but do not signal. Give him the opportunity to make or change his call.

## **Forward Progress:**

On the majority of plays, the Linesman and Line Judge determine forward progress. The field judge and side judge determine forward progress on long plays.

Determining forward progress requires good concentration, for many times we are behind the forward progress spot when the ball becomes dead.

When this is the case, we must make a mental note of the spot on the ground that is under the foremost point of the ball when it becomes dead.

Forward progress on 3<sup>rd</sup> down and 4<sup>th</sup> down and long. Should FJ and SJ be on front stake? If so, at what distance?

Should we determine a specific number of yards that we will use to go into this mechanic?

When runner is hit and driven backward, at which point do we blow ball dead?

What if ball is stripped after runner is being pushed backwards?

When runner is hit inbounds near a sideline and driven backward and out of bounds?

When an airborne receiver is hit and driven back after receiving pass?

When the quarterback is hit and driven backward, the LJ & HL should get spot.

On plays that end near the front stake, many times the offside wingman has a good shot at the forward progress and can offer help to the official, whose side the play is on.

When this happens, he should come up and give an inconspicuous spot with his foot forward and the official to whose side the play has been run should remember that he has help if he needs it and look over to the other side before determining his final spot.

## FOOTBALL OFFICIATING TIPS

### Communication

- Do not miss a down. Remember the sequence of plays in every series of downs. ALL officials should check on the down and distance to be gained on all plays.
- Officials should be aware of a possible first down measurement. Prevent moving the ball on plays where it will be close, by communicating to the covering official.
- Communicate the goal line, and be there.
- All signals should be deliberate and distinct at all times.
- R, U, and deep officials will use a closed fist to signal 11 players.
- All officials will signal 4<sup>th</sup> down fumble rule. Rolling arms.
- Fumbles – drop the beanbag at the yard line where the ball becomes loose. Don't just throw the bag at the play.
- Handle and pass the ball properly and accurately. Use the underhand pass in relaying the ball.
- You can see twice as much if you are stationary and in good position.
- Do not get too close to the play. You can see more farther away. You can move in easier than you can back out.
- Be an observer on every play.
- Don't sell the obvious.
- After the whistle, try to prevent piling on, clipping, roughing the passer or kicker by letting the players know you are right on the play or through talking or decisive action.
- When tempers begin to heat, get to the players faster to head off problems.
- Do not blow your whistle on anticipation. However, if you do blow your whistle, do not allow the play to continue even though the whistle should not have been blown. Never pretend a whistle didn't happen.
- All officials should record all charged team time outs, the winner of the toss, and the score.
- Referee will call intentional grounding, but a crewmate can help him pick up the flag.

## FOOTBALL OFFICIATING TIPS

### Timing

- All officials should be aware of the game clock status.
- Give the time-out signal when the ball is out-of-bounds. Do not wait until you move to the spot to begin signaling. Seconds may be lost.
- Keep the game moving, but never rush.
- Be consistent in declaring the ball dead. Do not take any yards away, and do not give any away. Rule it the same in the middle of the field as you do around the goal line.
- Recognize time-outs when requested. Any official may call a time-out if, in his opinion, a player appears to be injured.
- The last two minutes of the game are usually extremely important.

### Focus

- Read the play and then let the play declare itself.
- Be guilty of staying with your key too long, rather than not long enough.
- Be slow and positive in declaring possession on fumbles. Do not be in a hurry to signal too soon. Call time out and find the ball.
- Officials should not carry on idle conversations with the coaches, players, or chain crew. Concentrate at all times. Officiate on play at a time.
- Slow down. It is better to be right than quick.

### Demeanor

- Call what you see. Remember to be calm and courteous, without being demonstrative.
- Football is an emotional game. Players and coaches get excited. Stay calm.
- Let coaches and players know that you are cooperating with them.
- Move with a purpose.
- Never lose your composure.
- Do not show emotion in enforcing a penalty.
- Avoid such actions as placing a hand or shoulder or pointing a finger at a player or coach.

## FOOTBALL OFFICIATING TIPS

### When in Question

- Catch, recovery, or interception is not completed.
- Contact is below the waist and therefore a clip.
- Contact is at the thigh or below, and therefore is a chop block.
- Ball has not been touched on a kick or forward pass.
- Ball is accidentally kicked rather than intentionally kicked.
- Forward pass rather than a backward pass when thrown in or behind the neutral zone.
- Ball is passed and not fumbled during an attempted forward pass.
- Legal forward pass is catch able.
- Clock shall be stopped for an injured player.
- Ball is dead (runner so held that forward progress is stopped).
- Ball is dead (runner loses possession as he contacts the ground).
- It is a touchback, not a safety.
- It is twisting, turning, or pulling the facemask.
- It is roughing, rather than running into the kicker.
- It is legal use of hands, rather than holding or illegal use of hands.
- Departing player has left the field prior to the snap.
- Offensive players are legally on the line.
- Offensive players are legally in the backfield.
- It is a block at the side, rather than at the back.
- The passer has not intentionally grounded the ball.
- The defensive back has legally initiated contact.
- Defensive signals are legal.
- Players are legally moving, rather than in illegal motion.
- The pass is backward, rather than forward beyond the neutral zone, or when there is no neutral zone.
- The ball is dead in the field, rather than out of bounds.
- A player is inbounds, rather than out of bounds.
- A player has been forced out of bounds by an opponent.
- Team A player has met the nine yard mark requirements.
- Don't throw the flag.
- Don't blow the whistle.
- As to caught or "trapped"? – The pass is incomplete.
- A ball has been muffed rather than caught.

## FOOTBALL OFFICIATING TIPS

### Forward Progress

- **Football is a game of inches. Make correct forward progress spots.**
- **The ball becomes dead when anything other than the hand or foot touches the ground. The spot is the position of the ball corresponding to the ground when it becomes dead (not where a knee touches). This is the spot of forward progress, and the ball must be properly spotted at this spot.**
- **Take a snapshot in your mind where the ball is when the play becomes dead. Give the runner everything he has earned.**
- **When the ball becomes dead, go in as far as practical to mark the spot. Do not run around or jump over players.**
- **Face out-of-bounds if the runner is out-of-bounds, being alert for late hits or other illegal contact. Stop the clock when they go out, not when you get to the spot.**
- **Offside officials should always be in position to help with supporting spots.**
- **Wing official must mirror opposite official. If an official has definite knowledge of a player down, and has a more accurate spot, they should come all the way in and take responsibility.**
- **On plays close to the front stake, officials must come all the way in to give the spot. The Umpire should give the ball to them to spot.**
- **Use downfield foot to spot forward progress.**
- **Never walk off a spot until the Umpire acknowledges that he has the forward progress spot.**
- **If ball becomes dead between the numbers and the sideline, place that ball on the ground, or another ball on the ground. A new ball is relayed. Do not throw the first ball out until the second one is spotted at the hash mark, and no possibility of a measurement exists. There should always be a ball on the ground.**
- **Wing officials should get most of the spots, deep officials should not move towards the wing officials until the ball is dead.**
- **Goal line – when ball is snapped outside the 5-yard line, deep officials will have spots from the 2-yard line in, and the goal line.**

# *"Improving Judgment"*

by Brian O'Cain

## WHAT IS JUDGEMENT?

Judgment is the key to good officiating. Few would argue with such a statement, but what is judgment? The word suggests some personal trait that is inborn in some and lacking in others. Rather than a personal trait, Webster's dictionary defines judgment as the process of evaluation by discerning and comparing. Applying this definition to football officiating, we can say that judgment is the process of evaluating player actions with respect to rules in order to make game decisions. This says that judgment is how we make a decision on the field not whether an individual decision is correct. The yardstick for measuring on official's judgment is the consistency of his decisions over time. A problem in consistency indicates flawed judgment. Improving judgment requires a conscious effort to evaluate and strengthen each part of the decision making process, which minimizes errors and improves consistency.

## EVALUATING THE PROCESS

The factors that make up the decision making process are mechanics, rules knowledge, experience, concentration, anticipation and attitude. The following provides a general discussion of how each factor contributes to decision making.

**Mechanics:** Mechanics are the rules of positioning and coverage responsibilities. Improper mechanics will cause the official to be out of position with a poor view of the action. Having a poor view results in the official guessing at what can't be seen. The more critical the missing information is to the decision, the greater the chance the decision will be wrong. Usually, the missing information is not significant and does not effect the decision. However, mistakes are more likely if you are frequently in the position of guessing about what can't be seen.

**Rules Knowledge:** Accurate decisions on the field require an in depth knowledge of the rules. This means an appreciation for the spirit of the rule as well as the letter. The spirit brings the rule to life by indicating what purpose the rule was meant to serve. Generally, the purpose is either to prevent a team from gaining an unfair advantage (advantage/disadvantage), to ensure player safety, or to help maintain game control. In making foul decisions, the spirit of the rule must be considered. For instance, player action that violates the letter of an advantage/disadvantage rule but does not produce an advantage may not be a foul. Player safety fouls, on the other hand, must be called regardless of whether or not an advantage has been gained (these are the personal fouls). Game control fouls involve Unsportsmanlike behavior and hinge on the intensity of the game. If the game is under control, warnings to players and coaches about Unsportsmanlike actions may control the situation. However, if the game is extremely intense, fouls may be the only way to avoid loss of game control.

Without a good working knowledge of the letter, as well as the spirit of the rules, officiating consistency will be lacking. This results from rulings rendered without a clear understanding of the difference between a technical violation and a "quality" foul.

**Experience:** Experience knows what a foul looks like. The experienced official has seen hundreds of plays, and stored the memories away for reference. These memories constitute a set of mental images that differentiate between legal and illegal actions. They form naturally by observing the same type of action many times. The images make a written rule come alive and allow fouls to be recognized on the field. Recognizing fouls is easier than viewing the action and trying to recall if the working of the rule allows the act.

### **Be prepared mentally and physically.**

Think about game situations during the week to prepare yourself. Study and review. Be early for the pre-game conference and regard it as a mental exercise. Participate. You may know where to be and what to look for, but that won't do you any good if you're not physically in condition to do the job. Start now your pre-season physical conditioning program.

### **Cooperation.**

Cooperation means looking at the tough ones, not away from them; it means being pleasant; it means quietly and privately questioning any doubtful ruling, not openly and loudly; it means that you go to another official and give him the desired information without waiting to be dragged in and questioned; it means that everyone helps each other and makes the game the pleasant experience it should be.

### **Reporting a foul.**

In reporting a foul, tell the referee what the foul is by using both jersey color and offense/defense terminology. For example say, "I have blue 27, offensive pass interference, at this spot." If a fellow official corrects you and says that blue is the defensive team, you'll be able to correct your error in reporting. You know it was blue, not white - but you could get mixed up on offense/defense. If you do not use the color system in reporting, no one can correct an offense/defense reporting error. Most of us are familiar with a basketball officials error when he says, "White out here!" and then points the wrong direction for the way white is going. He is certain of the color and corrects the error by pointing in the right direction!

### **Box in the play.**

Just keep in mind that all play should be observed from the outside looking in. That way one official is available for coverage of each sideline and end line as well. You're open for criticism when you rule from a hash mark whether a pass receiver caught a pass just in or just out of bounds. Box in the play.

### **Never wait for another official to call a foul you are sure should be called.**

Get the number of the player fouling if possible, but this is secondary to continuing to officiate.

### **Call them right.**

Never sacrifice accuracy for speed in making decisions. In case of crew disagreement, take your time to come up with the correct ruling. ~~They won't remember your name later for having taken extra time to come up with a~~ proper ruling, but just award a team five downs and they will remember you for it at your funeral.

### **Reverse the question.**

When you fellow official tries to help you on the field and asks you a question about your call, don't end the conversation by giving him your answer! Reverse the question, ask his opinion, "What do you think?" For example, end A7 on a buttonhook pattern slipped to one knee six yards down the field. From the knee down position A7 muffs the pass a foot above the ground, it bounces off the ground back into his hands and he attempts to advance. The head linesman, from a screened position behind A7, blew his whistle and came to the spot of the knee saying, "Completed catch right here, the ball is dead, the knee was down." A fellow official from across the field comes to the linesman and asks, "Are you sure he caught it?" Don't answer his question. Instead, reverse the question, ask him what he thinks. He will say "No catch. He muffed it. Incomplete!" And then you can tell him, "Thanks - that is good enough for me." The head linesman's ruling is reversed, and correctly so. If the head linesman had not reversed the question and asked the line judge's opinion, he would have been a dead duck on the call. He was screened. He guessed. And wrong. The human eye doesn't always see everything. Give thanks for your fellow official that has courage to stick his neck out for you. He has nothing to fear, it is his call now, but he knows he is right. Officials, don't forget, those coaches have had for over fifty years "instant replay" as they run and re-run the game movies of your call. Nothing new there. End up with the right call! Picking up a penalty flag wrongly thrown isn't a no, no.



# "Points to Ponder"

- Player safety is your number one concern after your own.
  - Make the tough call.
  - Don't get emotionally involved.
  - Be quick, but don't hurry.
  - A pre-game conference is a must.
  - If you look like an official, you'll perform like one.
  - Count the players.
  - Correct obvious errors.
  - See leather.
  - Know the down and distance.
  - Sell the call but don't over-officiate.
  - Call what you see but see what you call.
  - Don't guess - know.
  - If 2 officials are marking a spot, 1 could be doing something else.
  - Let the mind digest what the eye has seen.
  - What effect did it have on the play?
  - It's what you learn after you know it all that counts.
  - On the wings, don't get trapped inside.
  - After throwing your flag continue to officiate.
  - 4th down, kill the clock.
  - Take a second to take a look.
  - Attitude, consistency and competence make a good official.
  - The only part of officiating to emphasize is your signaling.
  - Be decisive. Indecision gives the impression of uncertainty.
  - Never stand still during an entire down. People will think you are lazy.
  - If officials are close enough to touch, there is generally something wrong.
  - Don't get mad and don't get even.
  - It's more important to get it right than to look good.
  - False pride has no place in officiating.
  - You're only as good as your next call.
-

# "When in Doubt"

- Don't throw the flag!
- Don't blow the whistle!
- The catch, recovery or interception is not completed.
- A ball has not been touched on a kick or forward pass.
- A ball is accidentally kicked rather than intentionally kicked.
- It is a forward pass rather than a backward pass when thrown in or behind the neutral zone.
- The ball is passed and not fumbled during an attempted forward pass.
- The clock shall be stopped for an injured player.
- The ball is dead (runner held so that forward progress is stopped).
- The ball is dead (runner loses possession as he contacts the ground).
- It is a contact foul (interference with the opportunity to catch).
- It is a touchback not a safety.
- It is legal use of hands rather than holding or illegal use of hands.
- A departing player has left the field prior to the snap.
- Offensive players are legally on the line.
- Offensive players are legally in the backfield.
- It is a block at the side rather than at the back.
- The passer has not intentionally grounded the ball.
- The defensive back has legally initiated contact.
- Defensive signals are legal.
- Players are legally moving rather than in illegal motion.
- The pass is backward rather than forward beyond the neutral zone or when there is no neutral zone.
- The ball is dead in the field rather than out of bounds.
- As to disintegration of the clipping zone, assume it is intact.
- A player has been forced out of bounds by an opponent.
- It is a touchback rather than the ball belonging to Team B near the goal under original momentum rules.
- As to "caught or trapped"; the pass is incomplete.
- A ball has been muffed rather than caught.
- A player has attempted to focus attention upon himself by a delayed, excessive or prolonged act.

**DO'S AND DON'TS THAT WILL ENHANCE THE REFEREE'S PROFESSIONAL IMAGE  
WHEN USING THE MICROPHONE AND / OR GIVING SIGNALS**

<b>DO'S</b>	<b>DON'TS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at playing field level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shout. It shows excitement.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say "first down." Your signaling of direction determines which way we go.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look up to TV booth.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be firm on physical signals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say "first down this way."</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think what you are going to say during the preliminary signal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State on punt returns "during the runback." (<i>Say "during the return."</i>)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate statements with signals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move arms up and down on delay of game signal.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signal from shoulders, not hips on declined penalties, missed FG's and extra point attempts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have hands open on false start. <i>Close your fists.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turn toward team and signal direction on time out signal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll up your sleeves when wearing long sleeve shirts.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay with holder and kicker longer on try-kicks and FG attempts, then drop whistle from mouth prior to turning to TV (press box). BJ/SJ will blow whistle on play.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signal the number of the next down to HL immediately at completion of play. Let the play finish, then later communicate with HL.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use loss of down signal as well as proper statement if you have a combination penalty.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be too quick at the end of the quarter. Make sure there are no penalties and get clearance from HL then announce.....</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State "incidental face mask, 5-yard penalty, or 5-yard face mask."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use personal foul signal when you call running into the kicker.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with head coach by going to the bench. Don't yell from the middle of the field.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look towards TV (press box) when winding the 25-second clock. Look toward LOS.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announce the following when appropriate offense/defense, kicking team / return team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chew gum or tobacco.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signal holding smoothly. Don't pump.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signal TD after long touchdown. The covering official will take care of this.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure you get proper player numbers on fouls.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say illegal procedure. There is no such foul.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Properly communicate with TV, when appropriate, at the end of each period.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go too fast on double or multiple fouls. Slow down and get all the facts straight before you announce.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain unusual plays; e.g., fumble forward out of bounds, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to TV too fast after fourth down punts. Clear everything, make sure no flags are down.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain on Illegal Formation what it is, "Only six men on the LOS."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wave arms on Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say on offsetting dead ball fouls, "Dead ball, personal foul offense...Dead ball foul defense. Offsetting dead ball fouls, third down."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk to your position after signaling ready for play.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announce when a player is disqualified and advise the coach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signal time-out prior to a TV time-out signal, after field goals or tries</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say on kickoffs OB, "Kickoff out of bounds, ball will be put in play at the 35 yard line, first down.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announce each time-out, i.e., first second, or third.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zip up shirt so the undershirt does not show.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signal personal foul before roughing the kicker, 15-yard facemask, and interference with the opportunity to catch.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announce on post scrimmage kick enforcement's "During the kick, holding defense, #27, 10 yards from the end of the kick or from the spot of the foul, first down and signal direction</li> </ul>	

## CONCENTRATION BEFORE THE PLAY

### Referee

1. Look to linesman, gain eye contact and the signal down and check the down box.
2. Check game clock and play clock and down and distance with the HL while monitoring the spotting of the ball (keep note of the previous spot).
3. Before moving to position, communicate with the U about down and distance.
4. While moving into position, scan the field, crew and both huddles counting the offense.
5. Turn and jog to position (counting team in the huddle) ~~+2 yards deep, and one yard outside TE. Favor the side of the quarterback's arm.~~ **Reference Mechanics, Philosophy and Things To Remember Page 2.**
6. Count the offense and signal the U, HL and LJ ~~after a 2nd count~~ Signal with straight arm towards the LOS (line of scrimmage) **hold signal until QB starts his count (first sound).**
7. As the offense breaks the huddle, pick up the formation noting, strengths and defensive - adjustments, and match-ups. Scan the down linemen and note the number of the set backs.
8. Establish the pocket area.
9. As the offense approaches the LOS ~~recheck both clocks~~, note T or shotgun quarterback.

### Umpire

1. Always know down and distance. Help the referee with status of clock.
2. Always know the lateral position of the ball.
3. Count the offensive players and signal to the referee
4. Position yourself 5-7 yards off the ball. Vary position between the tackles away from the tight end when possible. Avoid being shoulder to shoulder with the linebackers. (check uniforms).
5. See the snapper's hand(s) on the ball. Think snap infraction.
6. Key on the center and the two guards.

### Line Judge

1. Status of the clock: Say the time to yourself on every play. If the clock is stopped, signal R whether to snap or to wind.
2. Down/Distance: Possible play situations, i.e. 3rd and long, expect a pass. Inside the 20 Yard line, communicate with the FJ regarding who has the goal line.
3. Observe referee as he assumes position behind huddle. Check his signal for eleven offensive players. He may ask for clock status now, so be ready to signal.
4. ~~As the team breaks the huddle, count 11 and signal. Look to the HL for the same.~~
5. Check number of tackle on your side.
6. Check number of the #2 receiver on your side. On punts, check number of flyer on your side and up-back on your side.
7. ~~Confirm 7 players on the LOS.~~ **Count the Backs.**
8. Confirm legal formation.

## SUGGESTED REFEREE PENALTY SCRIPT

### Additional Suggestions

- Practice your signals, enunciation, and delivery, in front of a mirror.
- Coordinate your signals with the oral explanation.
- Pause appropriately to allow the stadium PA system to maintain clarity.
- Refine and develop your microphone skills, even in stadiums where there is no microphone available. Deliver the information orally in conjunction with your signal(s), as if you were using a microphone.
- Practice the pace of your signals. Pause between signals so they do not run into each other.
- Look out at playing field level; **do not look up** to the press box.
- Give preliminary signal as **soon as possible**. **Step** to an open area. Everyone is watching and waiting for your communication.
- **Practice some more.**

### Things to Remember

- There is no such penalty as Illegal Procedure in college football. When using signal 19 for a kicking player being beyond the ball when it was kicked, (6-1-2-b), it is for encroachment not offside.
- The only time a personal foul signal should be given in combination with another signal is when we have a roughing the kicker or holder, kick catch interference and 15-yard face mask.
- When making the ball read for play, (2-2-4), use S1 (Chop) or S2 (Wind) not both.

## **WHISTLE MECHANICS**

### **REFEREE**

The Referee should sound his whistle to declare the ball dead when the QB is sacked or when the play ends behind the line of scrimmage as long as the Referee sees the ball is dead. The wing officials are responsible for the forward progress spot.

The Referee should take care before sounding his whistle to declare the ball dead on any play that gains yardage as the ball may not be visible to him on these plays.

On all running plays, after observing the ball exchange, the Referee should follow the direction of the play and observe action around the point of attack (POA). Do not give up responsibility for the QB until the play moves away from the QB, at which time the off side wing official will assume responsibility for the QB.

At the conclusion of the play, the Referee should focus on the periphery of the dead ball spot as dead ball awareness is critical during this period. Ball awareness is necessary, ball watching is not.

### **UMPIRE**

On running plays and short pass plays, the Umpire does not have primary whistle responsibility. He should always delay sounding his whistle and allow the wing officials to declare the ball dead unless he sees the ball dead. If the wing officials do not declare the ball dead due to lack of ball visibility, the Umpire should sound his whistle, even if it is delayed, to prevent unnecessary dead ball activity. This discipline will allow the Umpire to concentrate on blocking at the POA and to observe the area around the ball carrier during the duration of the play.

On all plays, after the ball is declared dead, the Umpire should hustle, but not hurry, to the dead ball spot observing action around the periphery of the dead ball spot while moving toward the ball. Dead ball awareness is critical during this period. Ball awareness is necessary, ball watching is not.



## OFFICIALS FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- 1. Study and understand the rules.** Just about anyone could digest the rulebook and regurgitate it on command. Soon, those "rulebook lawyers" have to figure out success takes more than quoting chapter and verse. It takes a **special** individual to study the rules **diligently** and then understand their **intent** and **proper** application. Rulebook study, even just for five minutes, should be part of your **daily** routine.
- 2. Conduct local study groups.** How do you obtain that understanding of the rules? By talking about it within local study groups. Officiating wisdom is passed down through the ages. Take advantage of that by becoming active in a local study group. However, **don't** take a local guru's advice as **gospel**; he may not be up to date on **current** philosophies, etc. Information **sharing** is just a part of the total learning experience. By **sharing** with different officials in different settings, you'll begin using some items and weeding out others.
- 3. Keep yourself in peak physical condition.** Reduce your potential for injuries by **staying** in shape. More importantly, as an official you have an **obligation** to the game, its participants and **your** officiating brethren. If you're **overweight**, you are likely to get **hurt**, be **out of position** for calls, **lose stamina** as the game progresses and create a **negative perception** toward officiating in general. Promote a positive image and feel good about yourself by being in **top** physical condition.
- 4. Work scrimmages.** Spring and preseason scrimmages are a great way to **maintain** physical fitness and work the officiating kinks out before the games count.
- 5. Arrive at the game site early.** Always allow ample time so you arrive comfortably **ahead** of schedule. There's nothing worse than rushing and not having a chance to **mentally** adjust **prior** to the start of the pre-game conference.
- 6. Be properly attired in a clean uniform.** Your appearance gives a **distinct** and **lasting** impression. Items should be shined, pressed and up to date.
- 7. Relax.** If you **appear** tense and nervous, players, coaches, fans and fellow officials will pick up on it. Make sure your muscles are relaxed **before** taking the field. There's a way to be intense and in tune with the game with out looking like you're stressed out. **Work on it.**
- 8. Hustle but don't over hustle.** You must work hard to get into **position** and display **maximum** effort, but hustling too much can have a **negative** impact on your positioning and how you are **perceived**.
- 9. Communicate with crewmembers.** Use each other to make penalty administration flow smoothly with **minimal** errors. If something seems awry, **take the time to talk** to crewmember(s) to gather more information and make the **right** call. **KEEP IT BRIEF.**

# CALLING FOULS

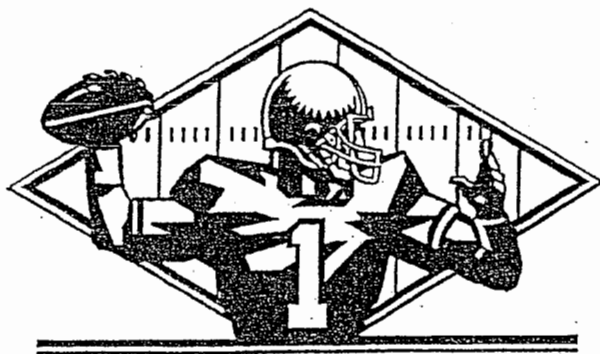
## Common Sense and Good Judgement

1. BE IN THE BEST POSITION POSSIBLE TO MAKE A CALL.
2. NEVER ANTICIPATE A FOUL. LET IT HAPPEN.
3. CONFIRM THE FOUL MENTALLY, THEN MAKE A DECISION.
4. ALWAYS BE SURE OF THE FOUL - NEVER GUESS.
5. IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE A FOUL, YOU DON'T.
6. IF YOU DON'T SEE THE WHOLE PLAY, DON'T MAKE THE CALL.
7. NEVER LOOK TO CALL FOULS. (EVEN-UP NUMBER OF FOULS.)
8. DON'T LET COACHES OR CROWD NOISE HELP YOU MAKE THE CALL.
9. DON'T BE TOO PICKY OR OVER-TECHNICAL. (MARGINAL FOULS)
10. ANY FOUL THAT HAS A MATERIAL AFFECT ON THE PLAY OR TAKES ADVANTAGE OF AN OPPONENT, SHOULD BE CALLED IMMEDIATELY.
11. IF THE FOUL INVOLVES THE SAFETY OF ANY PLAYER - CALL IT.
12. DON'T MISS PERSONAL FOULS.
13. DON'T DISQUALIFY PLAYERS UNLESS NECESSARY.
14. FOULS SHOULD BE CALLED THE SAME WAY AT THE 5 YARD LINE AS THEY ARE CALLED AT THE 45 YARD LINE.
15. BE CONSISTENT. IF YOU DIDN'T THINK SOMETHING WAS A FOUL EARLY IN THE GAME, DON'T CALL IT LATE IN THE GAME.
16. DON'T STOP OFFICIATING AFTER YOU THROW THE FLAG FOR A FOUL. CONTINUE TO OFFICIATE.
17. THROW THE FLAG IN THE AIR SO EVERYONE SEES IT. THERE SHOULD BE NO MYSTERY FLAGS.
18. WHEN CALLING A FOUL, YOU MUST KNOW WHO COMMITTED THE FOUL, WHEN IT WAS COMMITTED, AND WHERE IT WAS COMMITTED.
19. IF YOU CALL A FOUL, YOU BETTER KNOW THE PROPER ENFORCEMENT. YOU SHOULD BE AN EXPERT ON THE FOULS AND ENFORCEMENTS PERTAINING TO YOUR POSITION.



20. IF YOU MAKE A MISTAKE, PICK-UP THE FLAG.
21. FOULS SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE COACH IN A PROFESSIONAL MANNER. ALWAYS GIVE THE PLAYER'S NUMBER AND THE FOUL THAT WAS COMMITTED.
22. ALLOW SOME LATITUDE BEFORE THROWING A FLAG ON A COACH.
23. USE COMMON SENSE MAKING CALLS AT THE END OF THE GAME.
24. LET THE PLAYERS DETERMINE THE OUTCOME OF THE GAME.
25. REFEREES: TRY NEVER TO LET THE CAPTAIN MAKE A POOR CHOICE ON THE PENALTY ENFORCEMENT. IF THE CHOICE IS NOT AN OBVIOUS ONE, TRY TO GIVE THE CAPTAIN THE CHOICE THAT IS MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO HIS TEAM.
26. ASK YOURSELF, "WHAT PREVENTIVE OFFICIATING ACTIONS CAN I MAKE IN A GAME TO PREVENT FOULS".
27. REMEMBER: NO FAN EVER PAID TO SEE AN OFFICIAL OFFICIATE!

**LITTLE THINGS TO REMEMBER**  
**Axioms**



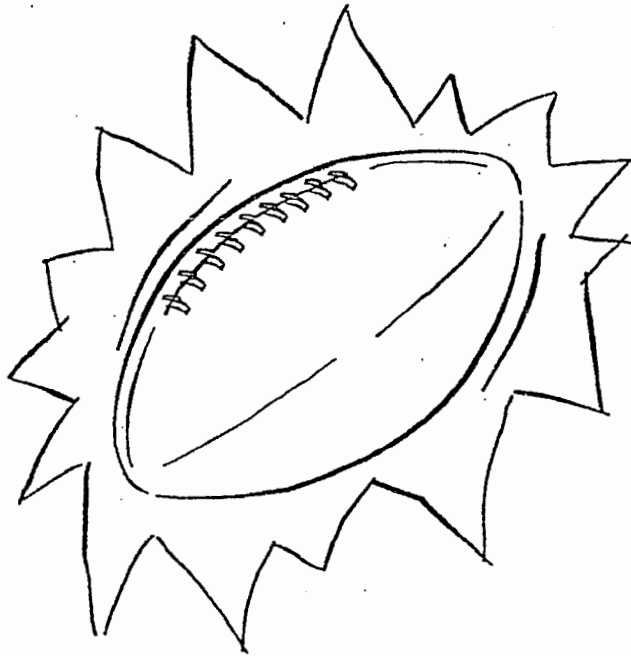
## OFFICIATING AXIOMS

1. Don't blow your whistle unless you see the ball.
2. Don't Lose a Down. You will never find it (Pass the down around the horn on every play)
3. Count the defensive players on every down in every sequence of downs (COUNT)
4. Know who your eligible receiver is on your side of the line
5. Be slow but positive in declaring possession on fumbles. Be sure you see the ball all the way
6. The play doesn't end when the whistle blows. Watch for late hits !
7. Don't anticipate incompletions before they occur. The receivers are unbelievable
8. Never guess on a foul. Misses can be explained, but never guesses.
9. Know the eligible receivers, especially your own (*know the Mechanics in the Book*)
10. Remember you are responsible for the entire END LINE
11. Be alert on passes when receivers touch end line and returns to catch the ball, Touching the end line makes him ineligible until the ball is legally touched.
12. Keep your eyes open when pass is first touched downfield. Remember that pass restrictions are then over for both teams.
13. Watch for IBW and illegal blocks on punts. IBW has to be SEEN and has to be on the back of the numbers and not from the side.
14. Be sure to alert the deep receiver on punts who gives fair catch signal to be sure to get his hand extended above his head and hand waved from side to side.
15. Watch the Tight End's movements when he crosses the line in case he contacts defensive player illegally (prior to pass) KEY ON TIGHT END . Delayed Call.
16. Game sense is very important as far as your positioning is concerned.
17. Watch player action on your side between you and the umpire unless involved in a run, pass, or kick.
18. On sweeps watch downfield blocking in front of the runner. Be alert for fumbles and hand to hand passes beyond the line.
19. Watch for illegal use of hands by linebackers on forward pass plays.
20. Be alert on fourth down fumble rule.
21. Move to intended receiver as soon as pass is thrown. Don't get too close.
22. Watch for pass interference between you and the line. If in doubt on a Trap, hold up on your signal. Look for help. If no help is given, make the call. Lots of luck.

23. It is your responsibility that nobody gets behind you on forward pass plays.
24. End line as well as goal line is your responsibility on long passes.
25. On punts downfield follow ball carrier until he is picked up by another official downfield. Then clean up behind play.
26. Be alert for legal recovery by Team A after first touching by B.
27. If B gives a signal (valid or invalid) for a Fair Catch, he may NOT block or initiate contact
28. Know Intercepting Momentum rule cold.
29. Be familiar for choices after a Fair Catch
30. What is your "*Minimum viewing distance*" (can see from feet to head!)?



## PHILOSOPHY ON CALLING FOULS



### DEFENSIVE HOLDING – ON PASSING PLAYS

To have defensive holding on a receiver, it must **RESTRICT OR HINDER** his movement ( he stumbles or loses a step getting off the line of scrimmage). Just grabbing his jersey isn't enough.

### OFFENSIVE HOLDING – ON RUNNING PLAYS

To have offensive holding by your tight end or receiver, he must *control* that defensive man's movement, and it must be at point of attack.

On the line of scrimmage – make it a take down !

### IBW – ON KICKS – SCRIMMAGE AND KICK OFFS

Make Sure you see the whole play.

Remember on scrimmage kicks you have the receiver. After you leave the receiver , watch action around him. The Blocks happen quickly – make sure you see the hands or body directly on defenders back (*in the numbers*) before you call the foul. If you are not certain don't call it !

### FREE KICKS

You are a good distance away from action – be 150% certain the block was illegal before you call it – Make certain that the block occurs at the "point of attack" and be certain it's not a touchback on the play. Delay your flag until you know the status of the ball.

### UNSPORTSMANLIKE – UNS

Be certain you saw the entire play to be sure you have the right call. If you are not sure do not throw your flag – just break it up.

### TAUNTING – TNT

Finger pointing, standing over a player taunting him, spiking the ball at a player's feet and any act that shows up the opponent must be called – "*Call it Early*" to prevent having to call it late in the game.

## DEALING WITH IRATE COACHES AND PLAYERS

Don't Argue with coaches or players.

If you can answer a question, do it politely and in a respectful tone - if not walk away.

Don't have rabbit ears

If something is said directly to you – *of a personal nature* - give the player or coach a chance to back down ("*would you like to repeat that*" or "*what did you say?*") – if what you heard is not repeated then just walk away.

## OFFICIALS' TIPS

The following items apply to all officials and should be part of their officiating procedure. Preparation is the key to successful officiating. Items that apply to specific positions in officiating are listed on pages 11 to 28.

1. Each officiating position is of equal importance.
2. Officials will assume their correct positions as given in the rule book and **OFFICIALS MANUAL**.
3. Every official should become familiar with and carry out his primary responsibilities first; then assist in those areas where concurrent responsibility lies.
4. Remember sequence of plays in every series of downs. This is a crew responsibility.
5. Do not miss a down. Officials should check on down and distance to be gained on all plays.
6. Work together. If a rule has been interpreted incorrectly or confusion exists on a play, take a Referee's time out to clarify the situation. While officials should be decisive and prompt in their calls, this cannot always be held to and under the above situations, it is much more important to be right than rapid. Keep conferences to a minimum.
7. Remember, a player is in an emotional game and may possibly get excited. You must be calm. Let them know you are cooperating with them. Do not give them any short answers.
8. If an argument starts, or looks as if it may start between players, step in the middle and try to prevent it. Do not throw anyone out of the game unless you have seen all of the action and you are sure it warrants disqualification by rule.
9. In the disqualification of players, good judgment must be used at all times. Make certain you are in full control of the situation at all times.
10. The official must designate the player on whom the penalty is called when such information is positively known.
11. When requested, tell coach who the penalty is on and what the player did to warrant a flag when the opportunity presents itself. Try to cooperate without getting involved.
12. No official has the right to tell a player that he will be fined.
13. Abusive or foul language directed by a coach or player to an opponent or official must be penalized immediately.



14. Do not be indifferent with captain or players.
15. Do not get too close to the play. You can see more from farther away. You can go in much better than you can back out. Do not lose your value as an observer on the play. Also, you can see twice as much if you are stationary and in good position.
16. Call rule infractions immediately. Never be dramatically decisive, over demonstrative or consciously conspicuous in any of your actions on the playing field.
17. Be slow and positive in declaring possession on fumbles. Do not be in a hurry to signal too soon. Call time out and find the ball.
18. Any disqualification or anything unusual should be submitted to the Director of Officiating Operations by FAX or phone call the morning following the game.
19. Do not talk in front of men holding chains.
20. Do not over emphasize the calling of a penalty or take an attitude that will create resentment. The only part of officiating to emphasize is your signaling.
21. At no time should an official be irritated or annoyed in enforcing a penalty. On the other hand, he should not be too familiar with a player, avoiding such actions as placing a hand on a player's shoulder.
22. An official should be firm and maintain discipline at all times.
23. Officials should not carry on idle conversation with the coaches, players or chain crew during a game. To do his work properly the official must concentrate at all times and he cannot do this if his mind is distracted.
24. All officials should know who the acting captains are.
25. Recognize time out when requested. Any official may call time out if, in his opinion, a player is obviously injured.
26. All officials should keep a record of team time outs and should also check each other for accuracy.
27. Officials should be aware of a possible first down measurement. Prevent moving the ball by letting the official on the ball know it will be close to a first down. Yell "hold it" or "close" or any other prearranged signal.