

OSAA Football

Pre-Season Bulletin 1

Wednesday, August 18, 2010

Again this year, weekly bulletins will highlight rules and mechanics issues that come to my attention. Please contact me with any unusual play situations that I can share with officials and associations across the State.

Fitness and Appearance

Football officiating is about fitness and appearance, position and movement, judgment, game control and poise, communication skills and relationships. It is also a vigorous avocation that demands an official be in excellent physical condition, able to give the very best, on every play, in every contest. Pre-season preparation applies to both mental and physical fitness. It is easier to maintain a level of fitness instead of getting in shape, falling out of shape and getting back into shape over and over again. **You cannot officiate yourself into shape.**

Check Your Equipment

Pre-season preparation includes updating one's uniform if necessary. Don't compromise your professionalism and the reputation of your association by attempting to make that shirt and pants last another year. Game control starts with your appearance and the professionalism that goes with it. Take the time to review your uniform so that you present a clean, crisp, neat look. As we all know, "you never get a second chance to make a first impression." Many officials work more than one game per week and may need to have multiple uniforms available.

It is also important to review your other officiating equipment, flags, whistles, bean bags and other officiating supplies that make your uniform complete. **Be fit; be neat, be sharp.**

Taking Care of Business

Pay special attention to your loved ones. They sacrifice a lot to enable you to do what you do. During the season, make sure your commitments to your officiating are compatible with your responsibilities at work and at home. Your job is what pays the bills; don't take chances with your livelihood. Confirm all your dates, times, sites with your crewmates. Be sure you have your cell phone with you when you travel and carry important phone numbers with you.

What Are You Doing to Make Yourself Better

- Watch other officials work and learn from them.
- Learning is an on-going process; you can never stop learning.
- Dedicate yourself to becoming a better official –be coachable.
- You become better by understanding your mistakes and working to correct them.

Practice In A Mirror

Signals.....Facial Expressions..... Voice and Articulation.

Practice what you are going to say to coaches and players in difficult situations and how you are going to say it.

Learn how to deliver the message, especially when coaches won't like what you have to say.

Be aware of the messages you send out to others. **Bad body language will silence good work.**

Learn the Rules and Mechanics

You need to learn the rules, not just read the rules. Knowing the rules instills confidence in your officiating. You may have got the play right, but explain to yourself why the rule is that way or why you are sure you got it right.

Know the mechanics! There is no excuse for being out of position on the field. It's not enough to know where you should be positioned; you must know why you are there and what to look for. If you are in the right position to make the call, coaches will be less likely to question your judgment.

And Finally.....

This will be my last year as an on-field official; after 50 years of high school and college officiating, it's time to hang up the whistle and flag. I'm sure lots of memories will come to mind when my last game rolls around in mid-October! I plan to stay active as your State Rules Interpreter, active with OAOA and active with officials' education and training in the camps and clinics that I participate in every year.

I'm looking forward to another great season on the gridiron. Please let me know if there is anything I can do for you or help out your association in any way.