Steve’s Weekly Bull – Week 2

**Dead Ball Action** – We had four ejections this week. The kids were hyped and had their first taste of real football this season. Unfortunately, these kids won’t be playing their second game for a while. Officials, do all you can to use your presence and voice to control this extra action. Let’s keep our eyes away from the ball when we aren’t needed. Again, a strong voice, at just the right moment, can prevent a penalty or worse!

**Dressing for Games –** Horizon HS and others use other school’s fields for their home games. When this happens, access to locker room facilities can be difficult. Check ahead and see if their will be a facility of some kind. By contract, we are supposed to have a facility for dressing, privacy, and safety. Check ahead.

**Music and Lyrics –** If you notice music with lyrics that are inappropriate for a high school event, you are a spectator just like anyone else so politely point out the problem to the administration and get on with your game responsibilities. Let them take care of their work and we’ll take care of ours.

**TD and Coach on the Field or Official Runs into Coach in Restricted Area** – The down counts and the TD stands. The other team can choose to enforce the penalty on the PAT or on the kick off.

**10 Players on the field when a player on the sideline recognizes that he is the 11th player. -** If the player enters the game after the snap, then we have illegal participation. If the player enters before the snap but is on the defensive side of the ball (assuming this is an offensive player) then we have illegal substitution. We do not shut this play down as it may take away an advantage gained by the defense. Live ball foul.

**Free Blocking Zone** – If the QB is 2 ½ yards deep in pistol, then we may have a situation where the ball remains in the zone and BBW would be allowed by players on the line and in the zone at the snap. BUT, we’ve yet to see a QB not immediately step back as the ball is snapped thus the ball is immediately out of the zone and no BBW.

**Safety Concerns with a Field** – If the referee requests that padding be added to an area of the field thus making it safe in the referee’s eyes, then please assist in addressing the need. As soon as a referee indicates that an area of the field is unsafe, and the school does nothing to remediate the situation, and an injury occurs, the school will have a very tough time explaining their failure to address the unsafe situation. Referees, on the other hand, must use good judgement and not just invent things for the home school to address. Let’s work together on this.

**Timers** - Timers should report to the press box for instructions 30 minutes before game time. Sometimes the timer will meet with the Back Judge on the field or in the locker room which is absolutely acceptable.

**Visiting Officials** should not insert themselves into any game duties.  Home schools are responsible for timers and chain crew.  If you are a visiting/observing official, do not offer your services because you are an official and know how to do the task.  Leave that up to the home team.  If they ask, then you can oblige...but don't you ask.

**BBW by linebackers** - If the linebackers are not in the free blocking zone at the snap, then they are ineligible to block below the waist.  We have video of LBs coming up and cutting the FB or lineman when starting 4 yards deep and out of the zone.

**Losing a Down**- We had a 5 down series.  HL has primary responsibility on this.  Referee and HL must make eye contact and confirm down on each play.  If there is a question, then huddle up and recreate the series...play by play.  It's more complicated than just matching who has what down...in this case 4 officials had 4th down yet it was 5th down.  It's not as simple as a majority vote.

**Goal Line Mechanics**- Remember your goal line and reverse goal line mechanics from the 5 and in.  And please remember to clear the sideline so that you can position yourself on the goal line and well outside the field of play (I suggest at least 3 yards off the pylon!)

**Eyes off the runner -** I have a lot of video of crew members all watching the runner or the pass fall incomplete. Get your eyes off of the player with the ball if you don't have runner responsibilities.  Someone should have the blocks in front of the runner and some should have clean up behind and away from the play.  This is very important when there is a change of possession.

**Action on receivers -** More video of receivers being attacked after the ball has been released down field to the other side.  Also holding of TE on pass over middle and LB hitting receiver as he comes over middle and the pass goes deep.  We have to be looking at this action if we are the away official.  Covering official has the pass down field.

**Escorting Teams** - Be aware of when teams are using the same entrance and exit.  We need to police that area and assist in the process.

**Reporting Exactly What Happened -** This is very difficult but vital to our credibility.  With Hudl video now available immediately after the games, what we reported is matched against what can be seen in the video.  If a player is taunting, excessively celebrating, or any other non-contact unsportsmanlike act, then the foul is unsportsmanlike conduct.  If there is a contact foul, ie. hitting, hitting late, roughing in the pile, then we have personal foul....not unsportsmanlike.  Know the difference and report it correctly.

We had a great start to the season.  A great week #1.  Now we must improve for week #2.  The improvement between week #1 and week #2 should be our greatest improvement over the course of the season.  Let's make it happen! - Steve