**SAN DIEGO COUNTY FOOTBALL OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION**, **INC.**

***A Federal Non Profit Tax Exempt Corporation – www.sdcfoa.org***

**THE WEEKLY BULL – Sept. 23, 2015**

**Agenda**

1. Attendance
2. Review of Weekly Bulletin
3. Communication Groups
4. Video Study Session
5. Rules & Mechanics Make Up

**Thank You Mike Downing** – Thanks to Mike and Cathedral Catholic, we have two meetings per year in the north county thus saving approximately 80 officials the extra drive south. Thank you, Mike. We all appreciate your organizing this meeting and the extra work it takes. All remaining meetings will be at West Hills!

**Gene Beck Update** – If you didn’t know, Gene was diagnosed with some operable cancer and the successful surgery took place on the 10th. I spoke to him today and he sounds great. He feels the hangover of the surgery but gaining back his strength and appetite every day. Great to have you back, Gene!

**What is Your Weekly Routine?** – Scott Reilly from the Mountain West Conference presented the things he does to keep himself sharp during the season. What is your routine. Having one can be a good way of using a routine to build confidence and readiness. Some things you can have in your weekly routine are:

* Study of a particular rule including case book examples
* Read the Weekly Bull and view the Instructional Video
* Make a phone call to a crew member or crew chief
* Review your dead ball and pre-snap rountine
* Help evaluate last week’s game video
* Scout the next week’s teams
* Review our philosophies and axioms
* Work on your fitness and flexibility

**Communication** – As much as this is a very emotional game, we still must be in control of ourselves and our words. Coaches who are constantly complaining are not really communicating. Neither are officials who ignore coaches. If we are really communicating we are asking questions to get an explanation, not ask a question so they can argue back. Referees can help by asking the coach “What did you see?” or, “Coach, I’m going to give you an explanation, but if you’re just going to yell at me, I’m going back to the field and restart the game.” Negative comments about the quality of our calls is understandable, that’s just disagreement (at a reasonable level), but comments about us personally or us as an official crosses the line of good sportsmanship.

**Differences Between Imperial County and San Diego** – Please note my request that we immediately end any reference to “the way we officiate in San Diego” to visiting teams from Imperial County. This causes much confusion in them as we are all part of the CIF San Diego Section, and abide by the same football rules of the NFHS. Please end all reference to any special rules for the Free Blocking Zone. We all know the rule. It was printed in last week’s email. We will enforce the rule. Our coaches want consistency in our mechanics and in the application of the rules. We are all doing just that, in San Diego and in Imperial County. The same can be said for teams visiting from LA, Orange County, or elsewhere. The only differences are the use of the 25 Yard Line Tie Breaker and the requirement to use the 100 yard X 40 yard field in 8-man. That’s it!

**Back Judges** – We still have back judges in the middle of the end zone with plays at goal line or end line. Get to one or the other, not in no man’s land!

**Running Clock** – When we reach a point differential at halftime or in the 3rd quarter and you think the coach may be interested in running the clock, please ask the coach who is behind, not the coach from the team that is well ahead. Common sense, please.

**Keep Your Mouth Shut** – Please continue to be careful not to make comments to innocent spectators who might turn out to be the coaches wife or a school administrator. These innocent spectators are quick to report your comments to administration, the CIF or to the medial. Keep all comments to yourself and save them for the locker room.

**Keeping the Restricted Area Clear** – We seem to be doing a reasonably good job with this thankless task. Our focus is on the field, but for safety reasons, the restricted area needs to be clear at the start of the play. So far so good! One thing to keep in mind is that it is the same for both sides. We are on the same crew, so do your crewmates a favor and do the same work for both teams.

**Chain Crew & Timer** **–** It is a bonus to officials and teams to have a mobile, well trained chain crew, especially if the tempo of the game is fast. Too late for this week, but schools having their clock operator and chain crews available for when the officials arrive on the field 30 minutes prior to kickoff is a must.  Having a chain crew, no matter how experienced, arrive at the coin flip is unacceptable. Tracking down a chain crew distracts from the official’s and coach’s pregame preparation.

**Trouble with Chain Crew Members** – Please remind chain crew members to be quiet and respectful in the opponent’s team bench area. If the crew is having trouble navigating the team box area they should report the problem to the head linesman. If trouble develops the head linesman will handle, and inform the referee. I would prefer that the referee be the official who makes the final decision to replace a chain crew member, not the head linesman.

**Breast Cancer Awareness Month** – I want to remind all coaches that the SDCFOA supports Cancer Awareness Month and allow teams and individuals to wear pink during the month of October. This year, you will notice our officials using pink whistle in an effort to be more uniform in their observance of this important event.

**Covering the Back Pad** – For safety reasons these pads need to be covered. I know we’re busy getting jerseys pulled back down and pants pulled down over the knees, and this is just one more thing, but these are all safety issues and must be dealt with.

**Strip and Progress Stopped** – We’ve included two tough plays in the Instructional Videos this week. Both involved stripping the ball, or attempting to strip the ball. Remember, if you see a struggle for possession of the ball it is most likely progress stopped. Enjoy the plays!

**Aiding the Runner** – Please note if a team lines up with three players in I Formation behind the QB in a short yardage situation and they then proceed to run a QB sneak and have the three runners push the QB from behind we’d have aiding the runner. This is only if it is obvious, by virtue of this special formation that they are planning to push, pull or lift the QB to a first down.

**Taking a Knee** – There was a discussion between a referee and a coach about this play as the game was winding down. The coach knew that there is nothing in the rule book that prevents the defense from going after the ball when the offense takes a knee. This is precisely why a referee should ask the offense if they are taking a knee and offering that information to the defense. If the defense indicates that they are going after the ball, then the referee must share that info back to the offense so they are ready to play football. We are not coaching, just sharing information as we end the game. Almost all teams do well in this situation.