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

**THE WEEKLY BULL - November 23, 2020**

**Covid Update** – On November 16th, “Governor Newsom and Dr. Mark Ghaly from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) disclosed that the release of updated youth sports guidance has been postponed. Therefore, the current guidance remains in effect, and CIF competitions are not allowed until new guidance is provided.” This press release at least confirmed that the updated guidelines have been developed for youth sports, but their release has been postponed due to the increase in cases throughout CA. So we know they have a plan on how to safely conduct high school competitions, but we need to daily counts to go down first. I’m guessing another announcement of some sort will come after Thanksgiving or into early December giving clarity to the currently anticipated practice start date of December 12th. Don’t be surprised if they postpone that start date and move it back into January. It is possible to further condense the schedule to a six-game schedule, but they will not move the whole 10-game season back in the calendar. That is not possible. We are getting down to the wire here!

**Rules and Mechanics Testing** – Initial information is that the results of our on-line testing went very well. Completion and passing rates are outstanding! We will follow up with any who didn’t get this done but thank you all for a great job under these circumstances. Do we want to continue with on-line testing? This question will be placed on the end-of-the year survey.

**2020-21 Mechanics & Philosophies Manual** – The distribution of these is scheduled to begin this week. Look for an announcement that will let you know where, when and how to get your hands on the new manual.

**Back Judge Clinic** – Wednesday December 2nd at 7:00 pm on Zoom. The invitation will be sent today to all members via Arbiter as we hear from **Kevin Rathbun and Jace Carlson** about the Back Judge position. Kevin is a member of the Big Sky Conference (D1) who is one of our all-time best back judges in our Association’s history! Even if you work another position, you will want to hear Kevin and find new “nuggets” of information that you can add to your own position or to your crew. Jace Carlson has been fortunate enough to have been working the Back Judge position in high school in Utah this season, so he will be sharing his experiences working in this strange “Covid Environment”. Everyone will benefit from this presentation. Enjoy and get even better!

**Back Judges – Great Pre-Snap, Stay Active and Be Involved** – In preparation for the Clinic, take some time to review your pre-snap checklist? Count on every play? Down and Distance? Location of best player and tendencies? How about your positioning? Is your width and depth optimum on scrimmage kicks? Shading the proper side of the field? Eyes on the key players especially when pressed? Transitioning from man, to zone to ball? Getting your vision to blockers leaking through to the Line Backer level (2nd level)? Maintaining your cushion? Getting the old ball out on all free kicks and punts? Clock aware at the beginning of every dead ball? Are you involved in every major penalty by either holding a spot or covering a flag. Relaying clock status to the referee. BJ has a tremendous amount of responsibility. That is why our most accomplished officials work back there. Know your responsibilities, convey confidence in your crewmates, and be a real leader on that side of the football!

**Reporting Fouls** – How are we doing in this area? Referees rely on the crew to be calm, collected and complete when reporting foul information. Many of the “huddles” we see are caused by incomplete or scrambled information being provided to the referee. Clay Reynard NFL FJ has a little trick that helps him calm down prior to starting to report the foul info. Clay will always swing by his flag to buy a little time to calm his heart rate and to collect his thoughts before speaking. Maybe alter the speed of your approach to buy a little time, or pause a moment when you get to the referee before beginning to speak. **Don Carey refers to a “cleansing breath” just prior to speaking**. Let your heart rate decline just a bit and collect your thoughts…then start.

**Full information will include (check with your referee on the preferred order, or develop your own…but be consistent and thorough:**

(a) Status of the ball (During the run, pass, kick, run back, live ball/dead ball,etc.)

(b) Foul (Holding)

(c) Team (Offense, Defense, kicking team, return team, etc.)

(d) Number (Number 78)

(e) Spot of foul (At my flag, at line of scrimmage, etc.)

(f) Result of the play (Complete/incomplete pass, interception, etc.)

(g) Status of the clock (inbounds/out-of-bounds, etc.)

**Will I Get Film of My Game!** – We are truly blessed in San Diego to be allowed instant access to our game film on a weekly basis…Thank you coaches! I’m glad that we greatly appreciate the opportunity to self-evaluate, evaluate as a crew, and always get better! If for some reason, you don’t get your game film, please contact your crew chief or another crew member who can share the game film with you, or you can contact me and I’ll share it with you. We will get film from our scrimmages. This will be an important first look for the 2020 season.