**SAN DIEGO COUNTY FOOTBALL OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION** – **FLAG FOOTBALL WEEKLY BULL – July 21, 2025**

**Conference Meetings**– Tom Ables and I plan to meet with every conference before the start of the season.  It is up to the conferences to schedule the meetings and Tom and I will attend.  The conversations are very helpful to both coaches and officials.  Here is the contact information for Tom Ables and Steve Coover:
**Assignor:**        Tom Ables       assignsdcfoa@gmail.com
**Rules:**Steve Coover  cooversteve@gmail.com

**Please Check Your Schedules in Arbiter – All Levels**  – Do this every week to make sure your officials have been assigned properly!

**HUDL** – The SDCFOA is an extensive user of Hudl.  If you want to exchange a play(s) or game with us to evaluate, please complete a one-way exchange with **San Diego County Football Officials – Encinitas**.  We have 5 different conferences but will get it no matter which conference you want to share it with.

**The Field**– All fields must be 80-yards by 40-yards.  Do not plan on using a field that does not meet those CIF and NFHS rules.  The Grossmont schools are having lines painted to connect the lacrosse field lines that are exactly 40-yards apart in the middle of the field.  They use some sort of water-based paint that lasts the enrire season.  If you use that configuration, the officials will use the goal posts as the hash marks (you don’t have to paint them).  Another option would be to use the home sideline and draw the opposite sideline 40-yards from the sideline.  The hash marks then, would need to be measured, and cones placed just out of the back of the endzone at 23-yards apart, centered in the middle of the offset field.

**Flags** – CIF State Interpretation is CA will always use 2 FLAGS, and officials will be encouraged to conduct “flag checks” consistently and continuously throughout the game, especially following a scoring play.
Flags will always be removable from the belt
Pop-style flags are legal as long as the manufacturer does not designate them as “adult.”
Velcro flags must be worn with the Velcro on the outside of the belt.
Each flag must be on the outside of each hip • Flag size
No less than 1.5” X 14” : No more than 2’ X 16”
Flags may be “cut” or altered to meet the size requirements, as long as it does not: FUNDAMENTALLY ALTER the flag, the attachment, or the defender’s ability to pull the flag.
Game officials will have the FINAL SAY on the legality of all flags in any contest.
Flags may have logos or other markings
Flags do not have to be a single color
The flag’s primary (base) color MUST contrast with the primary (base) uniform shorts and the area where the flag hangs.
Definition of contrast - a thing having qualities noticeably different from another

**Blocking** – Definitions can be found in Rule 2.  There is no restriction on where a legal screen block can occur, and obviously the legal screen block allows for the non-contact obstruction to be a “moving” screen block.

**Illegal Blocking is defined as…“ART. 1 . . .** Blocking is obstructing an opponent by contacting them with any part of the blocker's body.”

**Legal Screen Blocking is defined as…“ART. 2 . . .** Screen blocking is taking position to obstruct the path of an opponent without contacting the opponent with any part of the blocker’s body.”

**Declaring Punt or Play?** – At the conclusion of a 3rd down play that ends short of the line to gain, the referee will turn to the offensive sideline and ask, “Punt or Play?”  The flank official on that sideline will ask the same question.  If the coach of the team on offense does not answer, the referee will ask one more time.  If there is no response, the referee will mark the ball ready for play and the offense must play (not punt) within 25-seconds.  If the offense then chooses not to play, they must call a timeout and then declare they wish to punt.  Remember, after receiving the snap, the kicker has 5-seconds to punt the ball or a delay of game penalty will be called and the clock will start on the next snap.  Finally, if the offense declares that they are punting, the referee will mark the ball ready for play (25-seond play clock).  Then the referee will observe the defense to see if they are substituting as a result of the offense’s choice to kick the ball.  If they are subbing, the referee will hold up the snap giving the defense adequate time to substitute.  But the referee will not hold up the snap beyond the 20-second mark thus giving the offense time to snap the ball and provide the 5-seconds to kick the ball.  All of this is necessary to prevent illegal consumption of time by the team ahead in the score.

**Can a Defender Jump and Block a Pass?** – Yes as long as there is absolutely no contact with the passer or the passer’s arm.

**Tips for Communicating with Head Coaches**:
Never, never, never ignore a coach’s request.  You may have to inform the coach that you will have to wait a play or two to get the information to-or-from the other officials, but never ignore!
Make eye contact. A coach wants to be assured that he has your attention.
Avoid “squaring off with the coach” rather, turn your body slightly at an angle.
Refer to the coach as “Coach” or “Coach Jones”.
Keep your communication brief and formal.
Avoid joking and sarcasm.
Adopt a neutral tone and avoid any personal remarks.
Stick to the issue at hand in a straightforward way.
Ask them to help with a problem player. Be sure to identify the problem in explicit terms, without making the player to be an evil person. Sometimes it’s hard to do, but it can be accomplished with a careful choice of language.
Remember: get used to the coach having the last say.  This will most likely end the conversation.
Remain calm under all circumstances. Let coaches have their say. When a coach approaches to protest or argue, adopt an instant “listening mode” and let the aggrieved individual finish his remarks. Don’t interrupt.
Use non-confrontational body language. To be aware of body posture, facial expression, head tilt and arm position, one must say, “I am going to appear receptive and contemplative. I can think best and measure my words that way. I am determined to not escalate the problem.”
If you make a mistake, admit it. A simple apology is sufficient; do not elaborate or rationalize (i.e. make excuses)
When a coach raises their voice, lower yours. A soft voice has a way of triggering a reciprocal soft reply.
Support fellow officials. Never betray partners by showing that you doubt their judgment. Instead, indicate faith in someone else’s decision by saying the partner had a better view of a more favorable angle than the responding official or partner.
Give praises to promote sportsmanship. When a coach makes a gesture of consideration for the opponents or towards the official, be sure to acknowledge it. Sometimes a smile and nod of the head are enough.
Keep your ego under control. Often a mere glance will carry a significant message, whether it’s negative or positive, whether it is meant to curtail dialogue or to encourage it. A quizzical expression can signal a desire for additional input, whereas a frown may denote closure.
Don’t use your hands when talking to a coach. Your gestures will reveal more than you’ll want to convey.