

San Diego County Football Officials Association 2015

Common Sense and Good Judgment Approaches To Football Officiating

Adapted from California Football Officials Association instructional material

Football Officiating requires the proper application of the Rules of the Game combined with Common Sense. Common Sense dictates that extremes are as undesirable in Officiating as in any other endeavor. As Football Officials we should consider the following:

- Avoid contact with Coaches both before and after the game.
- Coaches are not your friend.
- Never react emotionally.
- A word of warning or caution at the right time, with the correct tone goes a long way.
- Develop and deploy a repeatable Pre-Snap Routine
- Concentrate on each play, one play at a time.
- Be involved in each and every play, both physically and mentally.
- All officials must know Down and Distance, Time and status of the clock for every play.
- Be consistent in marking the ball ready for play and declaring the ball dead.
- Timing and Forward Progress are critical aspects of the game.
- Never sacrifice accuracy for speed when making officiating decisions.
- Go Slow; do not be in a hurry to make an error.
- Analyze and process the entire action before throwing the flag.
- If the action did not involve player safety, affect the play or disadvantage an opponent, it is not a foul.
- Never guess or assume as to what may have happened.
- Do not nit-pick or be over technical in applying the rules.
- Always be sure when calling a foul, no phantom fouls.
- If you are in doubt do not throw the flag or blow the whistle.

- If you did not see the entire action it was not a foul.
- If you think it was a foul, it was not a foul.
- Continue to officiate after calling a foul.
- Never seek out fouls or hunt for trouble.
- Pick up your flag when thrown in error.
- When a play is over it is over forever, do not dwell on it.
- Do not compound an error with another error.
- Go slow, and be positive when declaring possession of fumbles and loose balls.
- Let the play kill itself.
- Never blow the whistle unless you see the ball.
- Under officiating is as big a problem as Over Officiating.
- Never anticipate fouls, let the play unfold.
- Be felt rather than heard as much as possible.
- Warn, never threaten.
- Officiate in a manner so that no one will ask the names of the officials.
- Preventative officiating is the best tool for maintaining game control.
- If you did not see the approach, it is never a clip.
- Holding fouls require a material restriction.
- Be a great dead ball official.
- We are members of Officiating Crews. The game is either well officiated or poorly officiated.