

## Mentoring New College Officials

Referees are leaders and as such are expected to mentor and share information with new officials to enhance their opportunity to learn the college game and be successful. This can be accomplished by:

- Providing the necessary basic information
  - the game is faster and longer
    - conditioning is a must
    - you may have less time to react to the action
    - you have to be in the right place to make the right call
    - you have to be knowledgeable and confident in your ability to correctly rule on plays
  - The college game is a coach's vocation
    - We are under more scrutiny
    - It is not a hobby or added responsibility like some high school coaches
    - Coaches are more knowledgeable about the rules and mechanics
    - The coaching staffs are larger and have specific talents and responsibilities
    - Many coaches played and were successful at the college and professional level
  - There isn't much that escapes the game films
    - Coaching staffs review each game film play by play and position by position
    - Film clips or the entire film is sent to the Supervisor of Officials
    - We are held accountable for our performance or lack thereof
  - We must display a certain Professionalism both on and off the field at all times
    - We dress professionally
    - Our communication is civil and refined
    - Our interaction is more conservative and businesslike
    - Our KSA's (knowledge, skills and ability's) are more pronounced due to the level of challenge and scrutiny we endure
    - We are prompt to assignments and meetings
    - We are responsible for our actions
- Building Confidence and Performance
  - Identify individual potential and assist new officials in working into that potential
  - We need to make them feel part of the team and prepare them for their new journey
  - We need to encourage them to speak out, ask questions, and involve themselves in discussions
  - We need to encourage them not be afraid to question you if they don't understand or need more detailed information. There no such thing as foolish questions
  - We need to use our and their mistakes as a learning tool and build trust without damaging ones confidence or desire to continue to be open with their communication, especially during the game
- Setting expectations
  - Establish the importance for a good knowledge of the rules and mechanics
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- Continually talk about the philosophy of the college game, such as, making good quality calls (get the train wrecks) and the importance of good communication skills with the crew, players and coaching staffs
  - Always challenge them to do better, learn more and continue to make improvement.
  - Encourage them to attend study sessions, participate in email discussions and continually ask more experienced officials questions.
- How can we "blend" a good high school official into a good college game. And in reverse, how can we "blend" an official that's doing both into a good high school game?
- High School Officials on Saturday
    - Stay focused on the college game.
    - Don't talk Friday night officiating on Saturday.
    - Use travel and the pregame as opportunities to prepare for that day's game.
    - Instill confidence by continually challenging them and anticipate they will take time to really learn the game and interact with you and the crew comfortably.
    - Don't forget that you were in the same position not too long ago.
  - College Officials on Friday night
    - Stick to the mechanics of your high school association. Always remember when working for multi supervisors you have to work the mechanics and apply the officiating philosophies of the supervisor who assigned your game.
    - Don't talk about what "we" do in college.
    - Take the opportunity to be more thorough in your pregame discussion and use your college experience to discuss the philosophy good officiating, i.e. quality calls, field presence, and communication skills.
    - Use the skills of any other college official in the game to help your goals
    - Take time to mentor young officials at the high school level as you do at the college level.
- Now that we have all of this information, what do we, as R's, do with it once we get back home to our games?
- Use it.
  - Make the necessary modifications to fit your pre-game, mentorship and philosophy of officiating.

## THE COMMON SENSE APPROACH TO OFFICIATING

### I. PHILOSOPHY

1. JUDGEMENT IS THE APPLICATION OF COMMON SENSE, AND COMMON SENSE TELLS US THAT EXTREMES ARE AS UNDESIRABLE IN OFFICIATING AS IN ANYTHING ELSE.
2. YOU CALL FOULS TO MAKE A GAME FAIR AND SAFE. DON'T JUST CALL FOULS.
3. IT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE RULES TO PENALIZE A PLAYER WHO BY REASON OF AN ILLEGAL ACT HAS PLACED HIS OPPONENT AT A DISADVANTAGE.
4. DON'T BE PICKY OR OVER-TECHNICAL, AND NEVER SEEK FOULS OR HUNT TROUBLE.
5. ALWAYS BE SURE OF A FOUL AND NEVER GUESS. NO PHANTOM FOULS.
6. IF IT DIDN'T EFFECT THE PLAY OR TAKE AN ADVANTAGE OF AN OPPONENT, IT IS NOT A FOUL.
7. LET THE PLAYERS DECIDE THE GAME. AVOID TECHNICALITIES THAT DON'T EFFECT THE GAME.
8. PREVENTIVE OFFICIATING IS OUR BEST WEAPON TOWARD MAINTAINING GAME CONTROL.
9. CONCENTRATION IS KNOWING OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AND MENTALLY REVIEWING THEM BEFORE EACH DOWN. ALWAYS BE AWARE OF THE SCORE, THE SITUATION, AND THE TIME LEFT.

### II. MECHANICS

1. ELIMINATE THE "IRRITANTS"
    - How do we appear to the coaches?
    - Are we doing anything during the pre-game activities that would send the wrong message?
    - Are we sending the message that we consider their game the most important of the day and therefore we're going to give them 110% ?
  2. IF YOU ARE IN DOUBT, DON'T THROW THE FLAG OR BLOW THE WHISTLE. DON'T GUESS WHAT HAPPENED.
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COMMON SENSE OFFICIATING  
MECHANICS cont'd

3. DON'T BLOW YOUR WHISTLE UNTIL YOU SEE THE BALL ON THE GROUND IN PLAYER POSSESSION! NOTHING SAYS YOU HAVE TO BLOW YOUR WHISTLE TO KILL THE PLAY. IF YOU CAN'T SEE THE BALL, DON'T BLOW YOUR WHISTLE!  
LET THE PLAY KILL ITSELF
4. IF YOU'RE IN DOUBT, THE PASSER'S ARM WAS GOING FORWARD AND IT IS AN INCOMPLETE PASS INSTEAD OF A FUMBLE.
5. WHEN IN DOUBT, THE PASS IS FORWARD RATHER THAN BACKWARD BEHIND THE NEUTRAL ZONE.  
  
WHEN IN DOUBT, THE PASS IS BACKWARD RATHER THAN FORWARD BEYOND THE NEUTRAL ZONE.
6. WHEN IN DOUBT, THE RUN HAS ENDED RATHER THAN A FUMBLE.
7. BE SLOW AND POSITIVE IN DECLARING POSSESSION ON FUMBLES.
8. BE CONSISTENT IN DECLARING THE BALL DEAD.
9. CONCENTRATE YOUR EFFORTS ON THE POINT OF ATTACK, NOT AWAY FROM THE BALL. (BUT ALWAYS CATCH A PERSONAL FOUL WHEN "MOPPING UP")
10. AFTER CALLING A FOUL, CONTINUE TO OFFICIATE.
11. LET'S USE OUR HEAD WHEN A SUBSTITUTE IS TRYING HIS BEST TO EXIT THE FIELD. IF HE HAS PASSED THE WING OFFICIAL CONSIDER HIM OFF THE FIELD. IF YOU TURN TO WATCH YOU MAY MISS THE PLAY. CALL IT CONSISTENTLY ON BOTH SIDES!
12. PICK UP YOUR FLAG IF YOU KNOW THE FOUL WASN'T THERE.
13. IF IT INVOLVES PLAYER SAFETY CALL IT !
14. CONSISTENCY: IF A TOUGH JUDGEMENT CALL HAS TO BE MADE, MAKE SURE THE SAME CALL IS MADE THE SAME WAY FOR THE OTHER TEAM.
15. A WORD OF WARNING PROPERLY DELIVERED GOES A LONG WAY.
16. ON EMOTIONAL PLAYS WHEN A TEAM ATTEMPTS TO MAKE A FIRST DOWN, BRING OUT THE CHAINS AND LET THE CHAINS DECIDE IT.
17. TALKING WILL GET YOU IN TROUBLE.

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## RE: Tomorrow Night's Agenda (6/24/15)

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From: **William Mara** (wbmara@hotmail.com)  
Sent: Sun 6/28/15 10:56 AM  
To: William B Mara (wbmara@hotmail.com)

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From: kbrownell@gracenote.com  
To: wbmara@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Tomorrow Night's Agenda (6/24/15)  
Date: Wed, 24 Jun 2015 12:51:13 +0000

Here are my notes, Billy. Great seeing you again last night. Thanks for having me.

Here are my thoughts regarding quick talking points in advance of our WNE meeting on being a crew leader. Let me know if you need anything else.

- Set the example in everything you do
- Two critical areas: COMMUNICATE and COMMITMENT
- Be an integral part of the crew dynamic
- Know crew mates like family (all crew mates should be contacts in your phone)
- As Charlie Kalis says, "Control what you can control"

### **Be a leader on the field**

- SJ should mean "Stealth Judge"; don't let the crew make a correctable mistake
- Own responsibility for clock (R should depend on you for snap/wind when needed)
- Make sure enforcement of penalties is accurate (SJs line up 20 yds downfield, so always know what yard line we started from)
- Opportunity to talk regularly with both coaches since we switch sides at halftime
- Help with pace of the game (ball exchange; getting teams off sideline after timeout; keeping teams on sideline during media TO)

**Be a leader off the field**

- Lead by example
- Always be early (to the hotel, in the lobby for dinner, for pregame meetings)
- Get involved in regular dialogue with crew mates to go over video/test
- Offer to step up and handle dinner responsibilities for the crew (taking pressure off R)
- Send out random test/mechanics questions during off-season to maintain communication
- Be the rules expert on your crew
- Be aware of how you dress at all times (travel to hotel, travel back home after game)

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