

CFOA NEWS

CFOA Newsletter

Volume 6

CFOA Members – As the season is moving forward, it seems like our job is getting more difficult than just officiating between the lines. We have had several incidents across the country and even in our own back yard with personal fouls and unsportsmanlike like acts from officials/players and coaches. Below is a **DISCUSSION topic for contemplating and learning** that Vic Winnek posted of the California Football Officials Association Facebook page that really holds true to the changes we have seen over the years.

League plays starts soon and the intensity rises as every game determines their post season playoff possibilities. I would encourage you to read the discussion topic and implement it as a **best practice** for you and your crew.

Regards,

Bobby Kennedy
California Football Officials Association
Instructional Chairman

DISCUSSION topic for contemplation and learning: What is said on the field used to be left on the field; often time officials will say things to players to control the game, to give encouragement, to let them know the standard or where the threshold is on calls [and this changes from game to game, time and score in a game, the competitive effect, etc.). Umpires often time use "salty language" [not profanity or slurs or negative words] but language that is at the players level to get their attention or to get game control. This kind of verbal interaction with players builds a rapport during the game. It is a part of the game that is not commonly known by the lay person. With changing times and with players now making public comments to media or on social media about what officials say, is it something we as officials need to change,? Should we just remain silent during games and makes calls and no calls and not give a rationale to a player? Should we not use humor or salty language?

This is a topic to think about and to discuss and to always be aware of what you say and how you say it, and to whom you speak.



Paul Caldera and his Orange County crewmates

“Give Back—Help others get better...”

- Unknown

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Late Hits & Unnecessary Roughness

Let's not forget to refer to late contact or unnecessary contact fouls with the same terminology as we've always used.

These fouls are personal fouls.

Reserve the term targeting for actual targeting fouls (taking aim, initiating contact, with the helmet, shoulder, arm, wrist or hand, above the shoulders). Most of the fouls we're going to see are late hits or unnecessary roughness so be accurate in your report.

De-Escalate Conflict in 5 Easy Steps

Mirror Yourself!

Know how to de-escalate yourself you need to clearly understand what do you want and how you want to see yourself you can ask yourself "Am I getting the right response?" or "Have I made myself clear?"

Listen Before You Speak

Listen to your coach/player, but if you are hearing the same words again and again, then you need to apply your **problem solving conflict resolution skills**. You can ask by saying "Have I heard it right that _____?"

Mind Your Language

When you are participating in conflict, you need to have control over your language you should not use improper language and abusive languages while in a conflict

When to Stop and When to Go

You need to understand when to continue putting your points forward and when to withdraw your words. Always try to show respect to the opponent's point of view.

Understand Body Language

You need to know the proper signs and symbols of the body language while you are in a conflict when you are applying the body language make sure it communicates properly to others.

Coaches Venting their Frustration

– An "appropriate level" of a coach's venting should and must be accepted. But there is a line that should not be crossed. Coaches may not be on the field exhibiting their displeasure with a call. Officials must be available to go to the sideline and discuss/inform at the sideline! Officials will be supported when flagging inappropriate behavior by coaches and failing to do so will negatively affect the efforts of future crews. All coaches know where that line is and stay well away from crossing it. Never get personal. A call can be horrible but the official may not be characterized as such. Mutual Respect is required at any all times.



Misconception vs. Truth

Misconception Two feet required inbounds for a catch

Truth Only one foot required inbounds for a catch

Misconception Defense can be “offside” and get back

Truth No one can enter the neutral zone and get back

Misconception Uncatchable pass rules out interference

Truth There is no “uncatchable” rule in high school football

Misconception Quarterback out of the pocket can ground the ball

Truth Intentional grounding is not related to the “pocket”.

Misconception Restrictions on punt team players going downfield

Truth No restrictions on when punt team can go downfield.

Misconception Missed Field Goal goes back to line of scrimmage

Truth Missed Field Goal is treated like a punt. It becomes dead when it enters the end zone.

Misconception Automatic first down on face mask personal foul

Truth Only automatics are roughing's (4) passer, kicker, holder and snapper.

Misconception Interference possible on all legal forward passes

Truth No interference if ball does not cross the line of scrimmage.

Misconception Defense can return ball for a score on a missed PAT.

Truth Once defense obtains possession on a missed PAT, the play is over.

Misconception FG/PAT holder can throw a pass from the knee.

Truth Holder must rise from knee to continue to play.



Never forget that you're "on stage." If you let your guard down, people might take advantage and besmirch your image. This official may have been ill, but no one will ever know that. The scene does not reveal whatever discomfort he may have had. He just chose to recline at an unfortunate time.

Plays That Cause Crew Problems

- Not seeing the entire play (being too quick)
- Change of possession—missing below the waist blocks
- Pick plays (OPI) near the goal line
- Not catching obvious late hits out-of-bounds
- Kick returns—missing point-of-attack fouls
- Incorrectly enforcing a penalty
- Not seeing the receiver voluntarily step out-of-bounds
- Blowing a fumble dead; Let replay fix it, 90% of the time it is a fumble
- Kicks at the pylon
- Pooch free kicks
- Short free kicks
- Missing a late hit inbounds
- Getting beat to the goal line
- Missing 12 on offense or defense or 12 men leaving the huddle late
- Not shutting down a false start
- Missing clock problems (starting/stopping)
- Missing chop blocks
- Forward progress (correct spot)
- Telling coaches “it wasn’t my call”
- Not enforcing sideline decorum
- Hurry-up offense late in half or game
- Not stepping up to “save” the crew to get the play correct
- Batting and kicking violations
- Missing the BIG CALL

When the Game is Over

When the game comes to an end, leave the field of play quickly to avoid confrontation with coaches, players, or fans.

Ensure all crew mates arrive at designated meeting place.

Avoid speaking to anyone before getting into the locker room.

When possible lock the door once all crew mates are in locker room.

The walls have ears.

Many locker rooms are next to coaches offices or team locker rooms, be aware of speaking about players or coaches while in the locker room.

Complete any required paperwork or reports while the information is fresh in your mind.

Conduct a self-appraisal of how you officiated the game. What went well, what did not go well. Where can the crew improve, etc.

Learning from Postgame Conferences

A solid pregame meeting is a part of serving the student-athletes well before you step onto the field. A solid postgame meeting is part of serving the athletes better the next game. Having a postgame discussion is an idea that works.

What we can learn from the game just completed can be more educational than all the discussions about what we should do. The postgame meeting shouldn't take as much time as a pregame and perhaps doesn't require a formal structure like many officials use before the contest. It has been said, the pregame meeting gets you ready for this game; the postgame gets you ready for the rest of your life. Postgame discussion can also be about calls officials aren't sure about. Asking our partners if they agreed with a call or if they thought we kicked a call brings good feedback. Often we find we were correct and shouldn't worry. Other times, we find we missed the call and know we must work harder the next game.

The most challenging part of a postgame meeting is commenting on our partners. While we may ask them for feedback on our performance, not everyone is so welcoming of commentary. However, it makes us all better when we are honest, without being cruel. "Tom, I thought your twenty five second counts were very fast against white." "Tom, I felt like you were too deep as back judge on obvious running plays." Those are opinions that can lead to learning and improvement. It is not appropriate to have a laundry list of grievances with any one official, but an item or two offered respectfully is valuable. Remember that good criticism leads to good learning leads to good learning.