

# San Diego County Football Officials Association Memo

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**To:** Crew Chiefs, Head Coaches, and Athletic Directors

**CC:** SDCFOA Instructors & Staff

**From:** Steve Coover, Instructional Chair SDCFOA

**Date:** 9/24/2009

**Re:** **Weekly Bulletin #3**

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## **Inadvertent Whistles**

Unfortunately there were three reported inadvertent whistles last week. This is unacceptable and we must keep our focus on every play. Our mechanics direct us to not blow the whistle until we see the ball, in possession, and on the ground, out-of-bounds, or progress stopped. Every crew needs to review this mechanic before kick off this week!

## **Knee Down**

Today's athletes continue to amaze us all with their athleticism and speed. This challenges us all to be in position to view the actions of ball carriers and determine if they are truly down. Last weekend a play was ruled down and thank goodness the covering official got himself in good position to make the call. What was most amazing was the athletic move of the runner as he spun and placed his hand on the ground to maintain his balance. We have to be ready for these MVP-type moves! Stay focused.

## **Sell Your Call**

We had a goal line play where the official ruled the player down prior to the ball coming out and rolling into the end zone. A scramble ensued and all heck broke loose only to have the Head Linesman indicate to the referee that he had the runner down. The ruling was correct, but it would have helped prevent the ensuing chaos had he repeatedly blown his whistle and pointed to the ground indicating the runner is down. This is a big call, SELL IT!

## **Halftime**

Another crew chief asked if we could shorten the 3-minute warm up period if both teams are ready to go. The answer has to be "No." We are legally required to provide a 3-minute warm up. If we shorten it we are not providing what the rule book states and are open to legal actions if an injury were to occur.

## **Punt Break Down and Ineligibles Down Field**

Point of emphasis - if a punt breaks down prior to the kick, the U and R should be thinking ineligibles down field. Seems pretty basic but we had one last week and sure enough, the punter passed the ball and we missed ineligibles. I believe if the R is also thinking about this, he can help the U get it right, even if it is delayed.

## **The Goal Posts are Out-of-Bounds**

The ball is at the 7 yd line going out. Offense is in "wildcat" formation and the snap goes over the QB's head. The QB eventually recovers the ball in the end zone but seeing he's very close to the end line, pushes off on the goal post to help change his direction. Ruling: the player is out-of-bounds in the end zone. The result of the play is a safety.

## **No Time to Stand Around**

Changes of possession, penalty enforcement, and time outs: if you find you have nothing to do; you're probably not doing your job. Help get a ball in or out, relay information to another official or a coach, check the number of timeouts, or verify the penalty enforcement is correct. Don't rely on a snapper or quarterback to get the ball in. Be proactive, go get the new ball, and get it into the umpire so he can spot it.

## **8-Man Football and Proper Numbers**

Reminder - eight-man football has no numbering rules. Players are eligible by position and ineligible by position....not by number. All numbers are OK. #79 could be an eligible receiver if he is eligible by position.

## **Locker Rooms**

Please remember that we are guests in the locker rooms at our schools. Please respect the equipment and personal property in the locker rooms and coaches offices. Keep excess mud and dirt from your cleats from being tracked into the locker rooms by removing them before entering the facility. Never help yourself to any food or beverages. We are guests so be respectful.

## **Access to Locker Rooms**

We've had two incidents reported where officials were not given proper access to locker room facilities either before or immediately after the games. In one case a large scale construction effort was underway and make-shift facilities were provided. In the second, the game was a home game at another school site. Please work with game administration to make sure the crew has "someplace" to dress and make sure your crew has access immediately after the game. This is a major safety issue and we cannot take chances with after-game access. Don't rely solely on the game administration to seek you out, you seek them out and make sure access will be provided. Don't leave the field if you're not sure who has the key!