**SAN DIEGO COUNTY FOOTBALL OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION - THE WEEKLY BULL – October 16, 2024**
**Meeting This Wednesday** – Wednesday, October 16th at 7:00 pm at Mira Mesa High School.  This will be the meeting where our certified officials will meet our candidates who are running for the Board.  So, the agendas will be a little bit different:
**All Crew Chiefs and Instructors will meet in the Theater at 6:00 pm for our regular Crew Chief Meeting.**
**1st and 2nd Year officials will meet at 7:00 pm in their respective classrooms as usual.**
**All certified officials will meet in the Theater at 7:00 pm to hear from the candidates.**
After the certified officials hear from the candidates, we will adjourn to our regular classrooms for our instructional meeting to include The Bull; Calibration; and Instructional Video.

**Voting for Board Members** – The voting for Board Members will be conducted electronically by Ed Zapolski our Executive Secretary.  Only Certified Officials vote for the Board of Directors.  The email announcement for voting will be sent out after the Wednesday meeting.  The window to cast your electronic vote will be one week.  If you don’t get an email announcement, make sure to contact Ed directly.

**Attendance and Tests** - Make sure you’ve passed both exams.  The links to take the tests are listed below  Also check the sign in sheets to make sure you’ve met the nine (9) meetings requirement.  Please note your attendance at the position clinic and the banquet count as meetings.  If you’re one short I will look to see if you attended an additional clinic and give you credit. If you’re seriously short of attendance, please email your request for a one-year waiver from requirements to me.  I will forward to the Board for their consideration.  Meeting these requirements keeps you eligible for the 2024 draft and the playoffs!  Here are the testing links:
**RULES TEST:**
[https://www.classmarker.com/online-test/start/?quiz=vpc66ccdc61b71e3](https://click.pstmrk.it/3s/www.classmarker.com/online-test/start/%3Fquiz%3Dvpc66ccdc61b71e3/5f_U/Sq24AQ/AQ/d83d5cfb-6e5c-44a5-b1f4-af10157a8646/1/kG8Cj0pGcZ)
**MECHANICS TEST:**
[https://www.classmarker.com/online-test/start/?quiz=rt666ba6967bf92a](https://click.pstmrk.it/3s/www.classmarker.com/online-test/start/%3Fquiz%3Drt666ba6967bf92a/5f_U/Sq24AQ/AQ/d83d5cfb-6e5c-44a5-b1f4-af10157a8646/2/TnSEZyzu5r)

**Final Call for Service Anniversaries** – Please contact Rick Christensen if you have earned a service award: 1975 (50 years), 1985 (40 years), 1995 (30 years), and 2005 (20 years).

**Tackle Playoffs** - Tackle playoffs begin Friday November 8 and follow every Friday at 7:00 until November 22.  Finals are: Open-Saturday November 23;  Divisions I thru V are Friday November 29 and Saturday November 30; Division VAA are Thursday November 21 and Division VI are Friday November 22.  **Please make sure your Arbiter Calendar is up-to-date.**

**Flag Playoffs** - First Round  Division I and III Wednesday November 13;  Division II and IV are Tuesday November 12.  2nd Round Division I and III are Saturday November 16; Division II and IV are Thursday November 14.  All Semis are Tuesday November 19 and Finals are all on Saturday November 23.  **Please make sure your Arbiter Calendar is up-to-date**.

**Remenders on Flag Rules** – **No Run Zones** prohibit a team from running the ball past the LOS unless it is first passed forward or backward.  Handing the ball to a teammate who runs beyond the LOS is a foul for an Illegal Run 5-yards, live ball foul, previous spot, loss of down.  In addition, when in the no run zone, the offense is not allowed more than 3 players within 4-yards of the ball at the time of the snap.  That commonly includes the center, QB and one other player.  Illegal Formation 5-yards live ball foul, previous spot.

**Flag Football Rule Book is Making Its Appearance at Games** – Sometimes we get confused with the rules of this sport that is new to many of us.  Coaches have copies printed, or even on their phones to view at the appropriate time.  Don’t be insulted by this!  I recently enforced a Leaping Foul called by an excellent young flank official.  I was not certain of this foul (page 17), nor was the assistant coach.  I informed him that our official was quite certain this is a foul but if you find the lack of such a rule in the book on your phone I’d love to see it.  Minutes later he advised me that he, indeed, found the rule prohibiting Leaping.  Before the game, halftime, after the game, or even during some time outs, we might be able to quickly check the rule book.  Don’t be offended.

**Holding and Illegal Contact** – When a player attempts to pull a flag, and instead, grabs the belt or the jersey, this could result in a Holding Penalty/Illegal Contact if the runner’s progress is impeded by the grab and/or pull.  Physically impeding the progress of the runner can be holding (illegal contact).  Illegal Contact includes this holding action as well as any excessive or unnecessary contact with the ball carrier.  While “incidental contact” during a de-flagging my occur, this is the exception, not the rule.  The defender must make a concerted effort to grab at the hips of the ball carrier and must avoid contacting any other part of the ball carrier’s body.  Illegal Contact is 10-yards, live ball, end of the related run.

**8-Player Football** – This is another important variation of tackle football for which we are required to know the rules.  Always review the rules exceptions for 8-player football which can be found on page 91 of the rule book.  Please pay special attention to Rule 7.  At least 3 offensive players shall be on their line at the snap and may have any legal jersey number.  Each offensive player (regardless of jersey number) who at the snap was on an end of the scrimmage line (total of 2) and each offensive player who at the snap was legally behind the scrimmage line (maximum of 3) is eligible.  Know Rule 7!

**The Game Clock and Forward Progress Stopped, or Out of Bounds** -
Runners are often contacted near the sideline, resulting in them being out of bounds.  Assuming the line to gain has not been reached, or a 4th down play, do we then signal to stop the clock or does the clock continue to run?  It is important to understand that contact near the sideline is NOT the criteria.  The clock is stopped if, as he goes out of bounds, the runner is advancing towards his opponent’s goal line. Whether there is contact or not, you must signal to stop the clock.  If the runner is contacted, and the runner’s progress is stopped inbounds and driven backwards and out of bounds, then the game clock continues to run, and a big wind signal is appropriate because the runner’s progress (end of the down) was inbounds at that spot inbounds.
**Situational Awareness** - Be ready for a coach to call time out if time is critical at end of half, or game.  If a runner were to be contacted and he is driven out of bounds parallel with the line of scrimmage, in other words neither advancing or be driven back, the clock continues to run, and we give everyone the big wind.  But in the case of a tight game, and seconds are precious to the offense, do not split hairs on this.  We are rarely in a perfect position to make this judgement, give it to the runner if he is making an effort to get out of bounds and stop the clock.  Situational Awareness!!!  If a runner is contacted near the sideline and he goes to the ground, if he were to land very close or even on top of sideline, in almost every case he will be down inbounds.  Any body part other than a hand or foot will make him down and almost always, inbounds.  Therefore, the clock continues to run.

**Tempo** – We’ve done very well with this as a whole.  We’ve completed our dead ball responsibilities, hustled to get the ball and chains ready for play and kept the game moving with accurately timed periods leading up to kick offs and the completion of time outs.  Get the teams out! Keep the pace moving and the kids will benefit in the quality of their play.  Slowing the tempo will cause many unexpected negative consequences including poorer play and fewer opportunities for the kids.  A brisk, consistent tempo will keep the teams focused and playing their best. Always hoping for fewer fouls!

**More on Tempo** - Referees are no longer waiting for the box to be set, rather winding quickly as the box arrives and the ball is being placed for the first down snap.  I caution referees to not get competitive with how fast you can wind the clock.  Bad things can happen!  The first is that you can’t work the final minutes of the 2nd and 4th quarters like that without harming the game, so you end up running two separate tempos.  The second is that you never know when the offense may decide to increase their tempo, and you can get caught with the team at the ball and there is no ball in place, and the clock is running.  Awkward.  Please monitor your pace of play and be consistent.  A game tempo that is moderate can be adjusted easily to fit the situation.  It might be a good time to re-read the section of the mechanics manual titled: Dead-Ball Officiating, Game Tempo, Game Management, and Situational Awareness on pages 124-128.

**The Lifting of the Jersey** – This is a new fad that is trickling down from the NCAA where a player makes a big play and then lifts his jersey as if he were showing off a weapon/gun in a threatening manner.  This is an automatic UNS.

**Pre-Game Conference** – Let’s do everything possible to conduct these two conferences near the start of the 30-minute warm up period.  In the playoffs we ask crews to be out 45 minutes before kickoff and that gives us even more opportunity to conference with the coaches before they get involved in running team offense and defense.  Start these as soon as you can.

**Pregame Warm-ups** - We’ve previously had instances of team’s enthusiasm being directed to the opponent during the warm-up period.  Regarding the Haka – Working with the CIFSDS we ruled that if the act is done on the field before the game, it must be done between the 45 yard line and the end line, and it may not be directed toward the opposing team or their fans. Teams violating this policy should be given a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.  Similarly, teams may not direct their enthusiasm at the opposing team by standing at mid-field shouting, pointing, jumping on the home school’s logo, etc.  That also goes for individuals.  All carry a 15-yard unsportsmanlike penalty which will be enforced on the kickoff.  **To insure that the pre-game goes well I am directing all crews to be on the field 45-minutes before kickoff during the playoffs – 6:15 – adjust your pregame accordingly.  Please have at least one crew member on the 50-yard line at all times.**

**“Work Every Game to the Very Best of Your Ability (regardless of the level**)” – George Shutte
Here are some suggestions from George:
Develop the ability to think quickly and make correct decisions in a given situation.
Never sacrifice accuracy for speed in making decisions.
Know when to hustle and when to be deliberate.
Convey the idea of certainty and confidence in your movements.
Stay loose without giving the appearance of indifference; staying loose allows the fast reflexes essential to sharp officiating.
Know when to concentrate and when to relax, but keep your head in the game at all times.
Be pleasant but firm and fearless.
Call them as you see them; be consistent, don’t guess, don’t hesitate, done be apologetic.
Learn when to listen; don’t have rabbit ears, be thick-skinned, let it bounce off.
Don’t worry about your fellow official not doing his job, you do yours.

**7-Person Mechanics Meeting** – If you are one of those selected to work a championship or semifinal game, you will be working 7-Person Mechanics.  All officials working a championship or semifinal shall attend a special 7-Person Mechanics Meeting on Wednesday November 20th at 7:00 pm at the Mira Mesa High School Library.  Chain crews and timers are not to attend this meeting.  You will receive credentials, game information, and then break out into position meetings.  The Position Coaches are:
Referee – Chris Wiggins
Umpire – Marlow Fitzgerald & Mike Weseloh
LOS – Justin Joseph & David Middleton
Deeps and BJ – Jace Carlson and Michael Sparling