**SAN DIEGO COUNTY FOOTBALL OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION - THE WEEKLY BULL – Sept. 20, 2023**

**No Meeting This Wednesday September 20th** – Another chance to open the rule book and study a rule or two!

**Mid-Season Form** – We now should be hitting mid-season form.  Crew organization, communication and mechanics should all be coming together.  We are now A CREW!  Let’s keep ourselves sharp with weekly rules study, game preparation, and crew goals.

**Payment in Arbiter** – This system was meant to eliminate the constant paperwork we would fill out at every game site.  It was not created to pay officials faster.  Please be patient with the schools as the payment still needs to be approved through various channels.  Your Arbiter Schedule will show when payment has been made so you can track which schools haven’t paid you.

**Mid-Season Evaluations** – Crew Chiefs are to evaluate their crew twice each season.  It is now the time for the mid-season (first) evaluation of your crew.  And don’t forget your regular evaluations for tackle football if you are a referee.  Remember, no evaluations for Girl’s Flag Football.

**Uniform for Girl’s Flag Football** – We have not changed our uniform for Girls Flag Football.  The Board considers it a varsity sport and so we are wearing pants for all Girl’s Flag games.  The Board will discuss in the off-season, but for now the uniform is pants.  Thank you.

**Girl’s Flag JV Games are 20-Minute Halves** – We recommended that the CIF formally adopt the same timing as the varsity flag games so that our officials would not be paid a reduced fee.  So now it is official.  The Green Book states that Junior Varsity Girl’s Flag Games will be two, 20-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime.

**What is Your Weekly Routine?** –Some things you can have in your weekly routine are:
Study of a particular rule including case book examples
Read the Weekly Bull and view the Instructional Video
Make a phone call to a crew member or crew chief
Review your dead ball and pre-snap routine
Help evaluate last week’s game video
Scout the next week’s teams
Review our philosophies and axioms
Work on your fitness and flexibility

**Set the standard on Sidelines** – Use your pre-game to ask the coach how they call their plays.  This can be the start of a productive conversation as you both establish that no coaches will be on the field during the game (there are a few exceptions like: time outs, injuries, some official’s time outs, etc.)  but we can’t have coaches walking out to call plays, or to yell at players or officials.

**The “N” Word** – If this is clearly heard directed at an opponent, there should be an immediate UNS and disqualification.  There is no tolerance.  No warning.  That player is disqualified from the game.

**National Anthem and Color Guard** – Work with the schools in the pre-game to make sure there is enough time for the anthem and player/team introductions.  Ask if they have a “count-down” or time for each event so that we can ensure the kickoff is on time.

**Forward Progress at the Sideline** – We’re seeing a few instances where a player is held up and forced backwards out of bounds, and the officials stops the clock.  Remember, if progress is stopped inbounds, then the clock will continue to run so you will give the winding signal as you move up to where the forward progress was stopped.  If the runner is pushed laterally out of bounds, that too is considered progress stopped inbounds.

**12 In the Huddle** – A replaced player has up to 3 seconds to begin to leave the field after being notified that he’s being replaced.  That slight delay may allow the team to legally have 12 players on the field, even in the huddle area for a few seconds.  Crews are responsible for counting on every player and to accurately monitor the substitution process.  Coaches sometimes need a bit more of an explanation as they confuse high school rules with college rules sometimes.

**Ball Relays** – Remember on long incomplete passes, when there is no ball person, the flanks need to get involved in the relay from the BJ to the umpire.  Another trick is to request that the players help retrieve the ball for you.

**Support from BJ in Side Zones** – As a crew of only 5, we need the BJ to move up and into the side zones on plays that end up out there.  Watch your video this week and see how you’re doing!

**Penalty Enforcement** – Everyone has something to do.  Get penalty information, communicate penalty information, cover flag, cover ball, get new ball, communicate with coach, hold re-enforcement spot, march off the penalty yardage, set the box and/or chains, confirm proper enforcement information, signal the foul, communicate the status of the clock.  All of this takes 5 officials.  Most likely you won’t have time to record your foul information, so remember the info and enter it during the next dead ball period.

**Cross-Field Mechanics** – Because we’re rounding into mid-season form, our cross-field mechanics should now be quite sophisticated and accurate.  Take pride in this important mechanic!

**Drones** – No drones in the stadium. So far I haven’t had any reports of drones.  Great job!

**Silence Can’t Be Quoted** – Please continue to be careful not to make comments to innocent spectators who might turn out to be the coach’s wife or a school administrator.  These innocent spectators are quick to report your comments to administration, the CIF or to the media.  Keep all comments to yourself and save them for the locker room.

**Keeping the Restricted Area Clear** – We seem to be doing a reasonably good job with this thankless task.  Our focus is on the field, but for safety reasons, the restricted area needs to be clear at the start of the play.  So far so good!  One thing to keep in mind is that it is the same for both sides.  We are on the same crew, so do your crewmates a favor and do the same work for both teams.

**Chain Crew & Timer** **–**It is a bonus to officials and teams to have a mobile, well trained chain crew, especially if the tempo of the game is fast.  It is important that schools have their clock operator and chain crews available for when the officials arrive on the field 30 minutes prior to kickoff.  Having a chain crew, no matter how experienced, arrive at the coin flip is unacceptable. Tracking down a chain crew distracts from the official’s and coaches pregame preparation.

**Breast Cancer Awareness Month**– I want to remind everyone that the SDCFOA supports Cancer Awareness Month, and we allow teams and individuals to wear pink during the month of October.  Our officials use pink whistle in an effort to be uniform in their observance of this important calendar event.

**Injury Time Out** – Team personnel will be allowed to attend to any injured players and team support staff will be allowed to bring out water to the team.  Coaches must either be attending to the injured player or at the sideline (outside numbers) to address team or provide substitutes.  No coaches will be allowed to confer with the team inside the numbers.

**Nathan Thernes, Dave Melton and Frank Mannen Hall of Fame Induction** – These three will deservedly be inducted along several other officials at this year’s Hall of Fame Induction Dinner next Tuesday 9/26 at 6:00 at the Admiral Baker Golf Course.  Nathan will be inducted for his work in Baseball as well has his great work in Football.  Dave and Frank have passed on, but they were legends in our Association and Dave Melton also officiated baseball and basketball.
Tickets and additional info at [https://www.sandiegosportsofficialshof.com/2023-induction-dinner](https://click.pstmrk.it/3s/www.sandiegosportsofficialshof.com/2023-induction-dinner/5f_U/LhCwAQ/AQ/ba37812f-3a45-4c97-ab17-49bd26888234/1/VfqyImPmjX)

**Thank You NCAA and NFL Officials** – You never know when one of these fine gentlemen will show up at a high school game and say hi before the game or halftime.  They are also known to even visit with a few suggestions at halftime!  It exciting to be a member of one huge officiating community that stretches from flag football to the NFL!  We are blessed!