**SAN DIEGO COUNTY FOOTBALL OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION - THE WEEKLY BULL – October 2, 2024**

**Meeting This Week** – We will all be meeting at Mira Mesa High School at 7:00 pm.  Crew chiefs and instructors will meet at 6:00 pm.  Agenda will be: The Bull; Sharing of Interesting Plays; Calibration; and Instructional video.

**Please Check Your Attendance and Tests** – I think we’re doing very well overall.  If you do not have a test score on the attendance sheet, you will be provided a test to complete at this week’s meeting.  Make sure your score gets recorded on the attendance sheet.  You need to make nine (9) meeting which includes the Banquet, Position Clinics and In-Class Meetings.

**Board Elections** –The final election will be done electronically and conducted by our Secretary, Ed Zapolski.  You can expect the voting to be conducted after our meeting on 10/16 where all certified members will hear from all the candidates in a brief meeting in the Theater.  The voting will be offered to all certified members, not 1st and 2nd year probationary members.

**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).

**Cancer Awareness Month** – Remember, pink whistles are the only allowable changes to our uniform in recognition of this important event.

**Foul Reports Analysis** – Robert Bezverkov continues to collect weekly foul reports and we will do some “deep dives” into the data at the end of the season.  **Meanwhile crews are being reminded via “nastygrams” to get their reports current**.  One thing we can point out is that the average number of fouls per team is 7 fouls per game.  The average number of fouls per game for all crews is between 13/14 per game.  This matches the average number of fouls per game at the NCAA level last year.

**Communication with Coaches** – This continues to be the biggest complaint from coaches…” The crew wouldn’t communicate with us!”  Each week you must re-commit to communicating with your head coach.  Can you give him some helpful information like the remaining number of timeouts, that the other team is “milking the clock” and going to take a time out, adjustments that need to be made to formations, etc.  Be helpful so that when you bring “bad news” you have a bit of a history with the coach, and it just might help!

**Game Check Weekend is Coming!** -  **October 17th – 19th**.  Game Check Weekend allows us the opportunity to contribute to our Youth Fund by taking one or two of your game checks from Thursday-Saturday and contribute to our Fund which is our nonprofit to assist the officiating community.  You can donate as a crew, crew chiefs can collect and make one online contribution at SDYFF.org, or crew chiefs can collect payments from crew and deliver to Mike Downing or Mike Gunzelman at our meeting October 30th.  Crew that raises the most gets free dinner, up to $30/man, that following Friday.  Not on a crew, new, etc. you can donate at SDYFF.org, any amount is accepted.  Thanks to all!

**The 21st annual SDCFOA Golf Tournament**– This golf “adventure” benefits the SD Youth Football Fund and will take place on November 6th at the beautiful Admiral Baker Golf Course.  Tee time is 11:30am and the event is open to all football officials/guests and all skill levels.  Entry fee is $150 for all of the benefits or $125 for just golf.  Space is limited, so please go to [www.sdyouthfootballfund.org](https://click.pstmrk.it/3/www.sdyouthfootballfund.org//5f_U/cF64AQ/AQ/050dbc38-eed2-45ff-bebb-f1906778b4f3/1/q1Q__sIB30) and click on “Fundraisers” ASAP to sign up.  Singles are welcome…we’ll make sure you get paired-up.  We can also use donations for the 19th hole raffle.  Please contact Mike Downing, Mike Gunzelman, or Ed Blick if you have questions.

**Judging Forward Progress** - It has been said by officials far beyond my pay grade that one of the first things many head coaches assess is an official’s ability to judge progress.   The head coach knows a few times each game it will be critically important.  It is a skill we must strive to be exceptional at, and our movements on the field should show it.  In a similar way, an Umpire’s care and custody of spotting the ball should be equally important.  Our mannerisms and positioning in spotting the ball on the field will portray and show how serious we take this responsibility.  Have pride in your accuracy as a crew!

**Forward Progress and the Whistle** – Don’t guess!  But if you see the ball in possession and progress has been stopped, or the runner is down by rule, you should blow your whistle to help notify players that the play has ended.  BUT DON’T GUESS!

**Umpire Spotting the Ball** – Life is a circle and some of what we used to do is coming back!  There was a time when we marked the exact spot where progress was stopped, or the runner was down by rule.  Then we went away from that and started always marking the ball dead on a yardline stripe.  Now the NFL is going back to that old standard, that football is a game of inches, and every inch counts!  The NCAA is also emphasizing this standard and we too, are returning to marking the ball at the exact spot that the ball was judged to be dead.  So our umpires must be alert to placing/spotting the ball at the exact spot presented by the LOS officials.

**4th Down Incomplete Pass** – When this happens, the ball should be placed back at the original dead ball spot and the chains should be reset to the other side of the ball, properly marking, the now, front of the ball for the new series going the other way.  I know, it’s a little thing, but little things add up to big things.

**Back Judges – Stay Involved and Active** – Are you helping get the old ball out on all free kicks and punts?  This allows the umpire to focus on getting the new ball via the ball boys, flanks, or sideline (hopefully not the center or QB!).  BJ’s should also be involved in every major penalty by either holding a spot or covering a flag.  Every major penalty!

**Refreshments** – If you are thirsty at halftime of any game, be prepared to pay for your halftime refreshments.  They are not part of the game fee or our contract with the CIF or youth football.  So, PLEASE, don’t assume that you get refreshments.  Comments like, “Make sure it’s one of the cold Gatorades” can easily be interpreted as arrogant and demanding.  Remember, these funds are used to pay for school athletics and we are being offered something that is taking money from their profits.  Thank you!

**Clock Awareness** – We are doing much better as an association.  The quality of the timers provided to us does make a huge difference to the game, but we must continue to be vigilant in immediately checking the status of the clock right after signaling.  The covering official(s) may need to complete their dead ball officiating until the colors separate before also checking the status of the clock.  Keep up the great work!