

## TOA Football Newsletter

Week 8 - October 19 - 24, 2009

**The Season is Winding Down:** Just because the season is winding down does not mean that we should be winding down as officials. Rather, it is important that we “pick up the pace” and continue to get better, both in terms of our rules knowledge and the correct application of 5-person mechanics. These last two games of the regular season are just as important to the teams entering this week at 0 - 7 as the teams that are undefeated at 7 - 0! We have to set the standard for the the kids - we are going to be the best team on the field! That is both our challenge and our duty.

- I. **Our Challenge - Know the Rules:** This is a perfect time to delve into the Rules Book. Don't just scan the rules - don't just read the rules: Maybe a good place to start would be to delve into the old Rules Books and see what the new rules were in 1997 - or, pick your own year. Do not just read the rules - try to create plays where the rule you are studying comes into play.
- II. **Know and Perform the Proper Mechanics:** Do not rely on the old, “but we have always done it this way,” mantra. That is nor good enough. It is our responsibility to do things the right way.
- III. **Communicate Effectively with your Crew Mates:** Here is a real challenge for everyone on your crew - whether it is verbal or by signals, or just understanding what the nod of the head means. Being on the “same page” is critical to effective officiating.
- IV. **Communicate Effectively with Coaches:** This does not mean trying to buddy up to coaches - just when you think they are your “friend,” something will turn them against you in a heart-beat. Get them the information they need as clearly and concisely as possible and get on with your duties - football officials have plenty on their plates without inviting verbal trouble from the coaches - “Silence cannot be quoted!”
- V. **When the ball goes away from you, be excellent off ball officials!!**
- VI. **Communicate with players, as appropriate.** Do not substitute “talking with players” for taking care of business. When players need to be admonished, do so - as professionally as possible. **Make Sure a Foul is a Foul!!** “Don't Look for Fly Shit in the Pepper!” Terry Porter, Replay Assistant - Former Big 8 and Big 12 official

**Football is: Football is an imperfect game, played by imperfect players, coached by imperfect coaches, and officiated by imperfect officials. The only thing that really matters is that the men officiating are men of integrity!**

**Three Week Tournament:** Finally, we are in the middle of a three-week tournament. After Friday night, a lot of teams will be “out of the running” for post-season play. We have to be ready for the frustration many kids and coaches (and, parents) will be experiencing. However, remember that co-curricular activities are designed to prepare young people for adulthood. Not everyone can be on the winning team, in terms of the scoreboard, all the time. They can be winners in the attitude they display towards their opponents, the officials, and their own team mates!