

The TOA "Football Newsletter"  
Pre-Season, 2006

My Personal Thanks go out to President Steve and Webmaster Bart with the TOA. These fellows have invited me and encouraged me to provide the TOA website with continuing newsletters for football and basketball. Although I no longer am associated with assigning in any form, they have allowed me to contribute through these "words of wisdom" garnered through more than 30 years of experience officiating and nine years of being involved with football in the Big XII Conference

New Rules – and "Old" New Rules: 1994: Emphasis on stopping Baiting and Taunting; 1995: Grounding a pass is legal as long as it is thrown immediately from a hand-to-hand snap (Note: Under NCAA rules, grounding a pass from a Shot Gun formation is legal – not so under Federation rules); 1996: Protection is afforded the snapper in scrimmage kick situation; 1997: As pertains to the 1996 new rule re. Protection for the center, 1997 added an automatic first down in addition to the 15 yard penalty for roughing the center – also in 1997 – Penalties for fouls with succeeding spot enforcement prior to the ready for play shall be administered before establishing the line to gain for the new series; 1998: Eye shields must be clear and the coach's box shall extend from the 25 yard line to the other 25 yard line; 1999: Jurisdiction for the officials begins 30 minutes prior to game time – for Rod's crew, this edict is for all officials; 2000: Two face mask penalties – 5 yards for incidental grasping and 15 yards for grasping and pulling or twisting; 2001: Running into the kicker (5 yards) as well as roughing the kicker (15 yards); 2002: "Block in the back – above the waist" rule – 10 yards; 2003: Post Scrimmage Kick Penalty Enforcement - Fouls against the opponents of the scoring team carry a new option of having the foul administered from the succeeding spot; 2004: Head Coach may call TO & clarification of the PSK rule; 2005: The new 9 yard rule; and the momentum rule now covers fumbled balls as well. 2006: 7-5-13: The act of illegally touching the ball by an ineligible receiver carries the same penalty whether behind or in front of the LOS – a legal forward pass (past the line of scrimmage – touched by an ineligible downfield is no longer a 15-yard penalty for offensive pass interference. No "fumblerooskie" plays are legal. The line-to-gain equipment is to be run 6 feet (2 yards) off the sideline (no exceptions – make that happen!

TOA Football Clinic: The Annual TOA Football Clinic is a great way to kick off the new football season. The date this year is this Thursday, August 24th and it will once again be held at Perry-Lecompton High School beginning at 5:30 p.m. The on-field scrimmage will provide an opportunity to get live action looks and to work on your mechanics at different positions. Following the scrimmage, the TOA will be providing a meal for us and Dwight Nichols, our Area Supervisor, will be holding an Area I meeting. This clinic has gotten better and better every year. The information you will receive, the opportunity to be on the field, the Area Meeting and the camaraderie will combine for a very profitable experience. Do Not miss this opportunity!

Safety: The first responsibility of officials is to provide a fair and SAFE environment for co-curricular activities. Football, probably more than most any other sport, requires the officials to be actively involved in making sure the players remain safe.

Weather: Weather this time of year always presents some extremes with which we must deal. Lightning: The lightning associated with thunder storms can be among the most deadly of nature's phenomenons. Make Sure School Administrator's have a PLAN!! Most schools will have a lightning meter at their disposal – know what their plan is and work with the administration to implement that plan. Who makes what decisions? The Rules Book states that until the time of kickoff, the decision to start a contest is in the hands of the administration – but, it should be made in concert with the Referee. Once a game has started, the Referee is technically in charge – however, if an administrator lets it be known that lightning has been observed 8 miles away and he would like the game suspended, which is what should happen. The re-starting of a game should also be a joint decision.

Heat and Humidity: Again, the effects of heat and humidity can be a deadly issue. Most of us have the experience to know when a Heat and Humidity TO should be called by the Referee. Try to make it at a time when a team's momentum would not be disrupted. Use good common sense. Let the coaches know in your pre-game meeting that you are aware that heat and humidity could be a problem and let them know how you are going to handle it.

Pre-Game Meeting With the Coaches: Some crews like to visit with the coaches immediately upon their arrival at the stadium (remember, officials need to be on site 1½ hours before game time. That really means 1 3/4 hours – not 1¼ hours. Some like to wait until they are dressed and on the field ½ hour before kick off. Remember to always ask the most important questions and have a crew member write down the answers of the coaches: Are all your players legally equipped? Have you instructed all your players on how to properly wear their equipment? Have you instructed all your players to let you know if a piece of their equipment needs repair or replacement?

Each official has different duties during the pre-game – H should check the line-to-gain equipment and remind them about the new procedures off the sideline; L checks the balls and makes sure of proper inflation; U checks equipment, and R and B, at least on our crew, check the field.

Next Week: Start of the game procedures.

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