

2018 Pre-Season Bulletin 3

As we start the 2018 season, I want to share some comments from last year's playoff game evaluation reports and on-site observations. These issues need to be food for thought as you prepare for the 2018 season.

- Penalties for fouls in the side zones are enforced from the spot of the foul. Umpires, start from the flag in the side zone, go whatever distance, then square up and come in to the hash mark. Do not eyeball the flag from the hash mark and then mark off the yardage.
- Inconsistent time out signal after incomplete passes. Covering official signals incomplete pass; others signal time out. There are four signals that stop the clock...incomplete pass, touchdown, safety and time out. Three of these signals are given above the shoulders and are thus more visible to clock operators.
- Wing officials need to take a couple of steps in after every play. Don't anchor yourselves to the sideline. Looks good; shows you're in the game and may prevent dead ball activity.
- Back Judges need to anticipate long runs and long pass plays. Your first move needs to be backwards to stay ahead of the play and not get beat to the goal or end line.
- Linesman: Come into hash after 1st and 3rd quarters and meet with Referee and Umpire. Then go move your chains. Even when the next down is 1st. Avoids any potential problems!
- The initial direction, not the tipped direction of a pass is what counts. Rule 2-31-5.
- Linesman: Check your down box after every play. You can't assume the down box is always correct.
- Team (outside the 9-yard marks) timeouts need to be in front of the team box area, not at the 10 or 15-yard lines, even when the ball will be next snapped in the red zone. Rule 2-6-2a.
- Team (inside the 9-yard marks) timeout. Don't let 6-7 players come off the bench and follow the coach to the team huddle. 11 players and only 1 coach. Rule 2-6-2b.
- On free kicks, Back Judges should always come off opposite the press box after handing the ball to the kicker.
- Delay of game flag as the coach of the offending team calls a team time out. Let's think about picking up the flag, going with the time out, saving the team a 5-yard penalty.

- Shovel pass caught by ineligible receiver on a 4th down play. Defense given the ball with no yardage assessed to offending team. Correct foul is illegal touching, 5-yard penalty with a loss of down from the previous spot. Rule 7-5-13 and Table 7-5 (page 64.)
- One wing official signals false start; other wing comes in, has discussion, go with encroachment. Looks awkward when one official signals one penalty and you end up enforcing a different foul. Come in without any preliminary signals, confer and then decide what foul to penalize.
- Clock still counting down to 0:00 at the start of the game. Back Judge goes to sideline. Stay with kicker until clock reaches 0:00 and is reset to 12:00 to avoid any premature kicking of the ball.
- Anytime there is more than one flag on the ground for the same foul, make sure all the flags are together before reporting the foul to the Referee.
- Injury timeout following a running play that ends inbounds. Game clock starts on the ready, not the snap.
- Umpires...think about a pre-snap position of 7-8 yards off the LOS to avoid getting in the way of the linebackers. 5-7 yards may be too close depending on the defensive formation.
- Wing officials, turn and observe dead ball action in the end zone while signaling a TD. You'll miss possible unsportsmanlike conduct if you just look down the goal line.
- Referees...when signaling a team timeout...let's think about facing the press box and pointing to the requesting team...just like signaling/announcing a penalty. You don't have to turn and face the team and "chuck" your arms three times. Note: I like this mechanic and hope all Referees will use it in 2018. Works really well when the Referee is mic'ed.