

I apologize for the length of this version of the Weekly Bull, but I haven’t been able to communicate with you guys since September

Testing

All the tests are available on the Arbiter Central Hub. As I’ve stated previously, I think it would give you the most benefit (especially the newer guys) to take the tests on your own. Use the rule book as much as you can. Once you’ve submitted your test, you can review the test using a new feature in Arbiter. Once you’ve completed the test you will see this link that says “Review your test” on the testing page

Click on the link and it will show you what you answered for each question and if you missed the question, what the correct answer is.

In addition, I have made YouTube videos that discuss all 180 questions. I go over the question, the terminology, the reasoning behind the answer and the answer itself. What I’m going to ask of you, is that you all take the tests individually (not in study groups), do the best you can and then watch the videos for the interpretation of the questions you had trouble with. I think this will be a much more valuable learning experience. If you want to become a rules guru, it is not going to happen in a study group. Once you have completed a test, shoot me an email and I will send you the link to the YouTube video that covers that test. Please keep these links to yourself, I think it would benefit everyone to go through this process. I want these tests to be educational, not punitive. Do the best you can and then learn from your mistakes, that is how we get better!!!

I will be adding a mechanics test soon. Thanks so much to Mike Darakjian for his help on creating this test. Awesome job Mike!!

If it turns out that we don’t have a season this year, these tests will carry over to next season. If there are new rules for 2021 we will publish a short test that covers the new rules explicitly.

Second, it’s possible that we will not have a season at all. In that case, I will use the tests for next season.

Cross Field Mechanics

After watching a lot of film, I can safely say that we generally do not use Crossfield mechanics. Crossfield mechanics are most valuable when a pass is caught near the sideline and the receiver is driven back. Repeatedly I have watched flank officials mark the forward progress spot without even glancing across the field. Flanks need to incorporate looking at their Crossfield partner for their spot. Most of the time that Crossfield official will have the more accurate spot. The flank closest to the play has a lot to deal and may very well be driven back by the action. With all of that going on it’s very easy to lose the progress spot. The other place where Crossfield mechanics come into play is forward progress spots closer to the center of the field when the ball carrier is driven back. Often the ball is not visible when the defense starts to push the ball carrier back. The closest flank official needs to look across the field to make sure his partner has the spot and then immediately turn his attention to the mound of bodies in front of him. I have absolutely not problem with the 2 flanks getting together after the smoke has cleared and deciding where the ball should be placed.

As I evaluate film, I’m going to be looking for flank officials to be looking to their partner prior to spotting the ball

Religious Headwear

From Brian Seymour:  CIF ALLOWS the use of religious headwear. Please remind the associations that we do not require a letter from the State or Section and that we do not request the athlete to remove the headwear.

Plays of the Week

As some of you know, I had a knee replacement in late September. It was impossible for me to sit in a chair for the first 4 weeks. I’ve been working hard to complete the Rules videos. Now that I’ve completed those, I will start producing the plays of the week again

New uniform standard

I may have already touched on this. The default standard uniform for ALL games next season will be the varsity uniform (long pants). Honigs, Cliff Keene and Smittys all sell extremely light weight pants. I wore them several times last year and they are really comfortable and cool and I didn’t have to worry about sunburn. If you want to wear shorts for a weight game, you can, all 3 officials must agree to wear shorts, make sure you coordinate. If you do wear shorts, you should wear quarter length black socks (not no shows). No more white calf socks.

If you are wondering why I’m doing this, it basically comes down to perception. When we walk on the field we should look as professional as possible. Shorts do not look professional. Most other associations abandoned shorts for high school games long ago. Shorts will still be the standard for youth football.

New sportsmanship guidelines

CIF has issued new sportsmanship guidelines, they are on our website <https://ocfoa.org/2020/08/16/cif-sportsmanship-and-ejection-policy/>

These changes were passed overwhelmingly by the representatives of the schools.

You should definitely review the bylaw change. One of the major changes is that anyone coming on the field during a fight is immediately ejected. They do not have to participate in the fight; entering the field will result in ejection. If they happen to be coming on due to a change of possession or as a substitute, they must stop and return immediately to the team box. The CIF recommends that teams practice this.

The other big change is the sanction for fighting or coming off the bench. For the “First Ejection: Player (Fighting/Assaultive Behavior/Gross Unsportsmanlike Conduct) is ineligible to participate in the team’s next three (3) to six (6) contests as determined by the CIF Section Commissioner with jurisdiction in the matter.” This is quoted directly from the new bylaw. Referees should cover this in their pregame conference with the coaches.

The CIF has been meeting with all the athletic directors and hopefully they will pass the new guidelines on to their coaches. These new standards apply to all CIF sports not just football. That’s why you see a range of game suspensions for fighting. A 5-game suspension for a football player represents half of his season whereas for a basketball player it would only be about 20% so CIF is trying to keep the percentages equitable.

New website

Speaking of the website, I hope you’ve had a chance to check out our completely redesigned website. The website will be the repository for all announcements and events. There is a particularly good search tool and the layout has been completely redesigned. Big props to Troy Leonard for his input and assistance in getting this new site up.