

The Yellow Flag: Standards for Judgement Calls

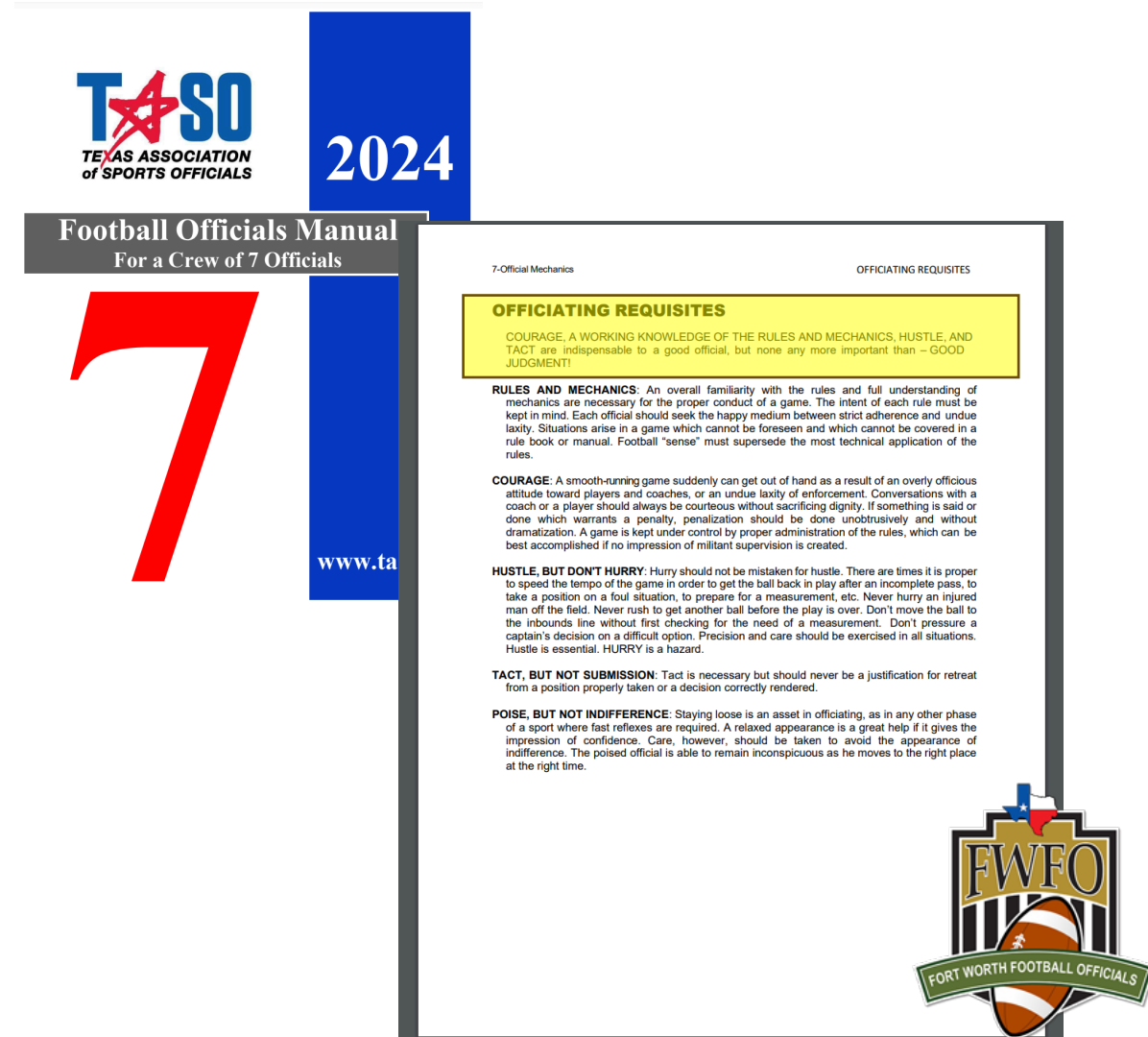
Fort Worth Football Officials
Training Program



Mechanics Manual... Top of Page 1 !

OFFICIATING REQUISITES:

”Courage, a working knowledge of rules and mechanics, hustle, and tact are indispensable to a good official, but none any more important than **GOOD JUDGMENT!**”



Using our Judgement

- Assessing a play and determining if a player's actions are enough to warrant a foul
- Putting ourselves in the best position to see the action
- Readyng oneself for a probable upcoming play, based on down, distance, and game situation
- For most of us, it's even in our job title!

H

L

B

F

S



Rulebook even tells us HOW to use our judgement in certain situations:

- ARTICLE 13. WHEN IN QUESTION RULES:
 - A. Block below the waist (2-3-2).
 - B. Block in the back is below the waist (2-3-4-a).
 - C. Catch or recovery not completed (2-4-3-h).
 - D. Ball not touched on kick or forward pass (2-11-4-d).
 - E. Ball is accidentally kicked (touched) (2-16-1-d).
 - F. Forward rather than backward pass if thrown from in or behind the neutral zone (2-19-2-a).
 - G. Forward pass and not fumble (2-19-2-c).
 - H. It is a catchable forward pass (2-19-4 and 7-3-8-c).
 - I. Stop clock for injured player (3-3-6-a-1).
 - J. Forward progress stopped (4-1-3-a).
 - K. Kick catch interference (6-4-1-b and e).
 - L. Touchback rather than safety (8-5-1-a).
 - M. Is targeting with the crown of the helmet (9-1-3).
 - N. Is initiating contact to the head or neck area of a defenseless player (9-1-4).
 - O. Twisting, turning, pulling facemask or helmet opening (9-1-8-b)
 - P. Roughing kicker rather than running into (9-1-16-a-8)



“See what you call, and call what you see”

- Never let a coach or a player talk you out of a call. Yes, they will try.
- It is okay to wave off a flag if a fellow official gives you input that may change your thought process.
- If you think it's a foul, it is not. If you know it's a foul, it is.
- If you don't see the entire play, don't throw your flag.



Throwing the Flag

- There is no such thing as a “late flag.” Sometimes it is necessary to wait until all of the action has stopped to make a ruling.
- Go slow. See the play, read the play, then make the call.
- There is no such thing as “that’s not your call.”
 - All officials are responsible for their primary area and secondarily responsible for ruling on action legal or illegal anywhere on the field.
- Do not throw flags at players. Throw your flag up in the air unless it is a spot foul



TASO's Officiating Philosophies

Or... How to use your judgement on a judgement call



TASO's Officiating Philosophies

- Officiating Philosophies do not take the place of common sense and good judgment by officials.
- They are not intended to replace the continued study of the Rule Book and Mechanics Manual.
- Philosophies are an aid to officials in an attempt to provide consistency in officiating certain types of plays



GOAL

As much as possible, eliminate the differences from crew to crew, game to game, week to week, and chapter to chapter.



Automatic Calls

- Some fouls should be called every time, regardless of where and when it happens on the field
- Fighting
 - includes a player coming off the bench during a fight, even if that player doesn't throw a punch
- Unsportsmanlike behavior: racist comments, threats, profanity aimed at another player
- Safety fouls
 - Blindside block
 - Targeting
 - Late hit after the play
 - Unnecessary Roughness
 - Grab and twist of a facemask or helmet opening



“Consideration” Calls

- Some calls require good judgement
- Was there an advantage gained by one team because of the act?
- Did the act have an significant impact on the play?
- “Let them play” does not mean “let them foul”
- Aggressive player vs. player aggression



Was the forward pass catchable?

- For a pass to be ruled uncatchable, it must be BLATANTLY uncatchable.
- If there is any question, the pass shall be ruled catchable.
- Give the uncatchable signal only if you would have thrown a flag for OPI or DPI if the pass had been catchable.



Was it a Catch?

- The receiver must maintain possession of the ball if he contacts the ground to be awarded a catch. The ground can cause an incompleteness.
- If the receiver is contacted simultaneously with or immediately after he controls the ball with one foot down and loses possession, rule the pass incomplete.
- A play that would be ruled a catch/fumble in the field of play would be ruled a catch/TD in the end zone.



Running clock? Victory Formation?

- If an offensive team goes into a victory formation, officials should use common sense officiating and make every attempt to not call fouls that have no bearing on the outcome of the game.
- Personal Fouls and Player Safety Fouls should always be called regardless of time and score.
- If the Referee stops play for any reason, the game is suspended and not over.
- The official's jurisdiction ends when the game is over



Should you call a Face Mask foul?

- Touching the Face Mask or a grab and release is not a foul. There must be a pull or twist and turn to be a foul.
- The grab, pull, twist, and turn of any helmet opening is a foul.
- Face Mask restrictions apply to the offense and defense.



Was it a False Start?

- A flinch is a FST. This applies to both Lineman and Backs.
- If an ineligible offensive player is going from a 2-point stance to a 3-point stance when the ball is snapped, this is a FST. If an eligible offensive player is going from a 2-point stance to a 3-point stance when the ball is snapped is ILM.
- QB head bobs or jerks are FST. QB hard counts are not fouls.
- Ineligible offensive linemen can turn and look at the QB to hear the signals if they are slow and do not lift their hand. Pointing at the defender as part of the offensive signals is not a FST.
- Be alert for the defense calling disconcerting signals.



Was it a fumble?

- Only throw your beanbag if you see the ball come out. You are marking a potential enforcement spot.
- When in question, the runner fumbled the ball and was not down.
- When in question, the ball is passed and not fumbled during an attempted forward pass.
- The ground cannot cause a fumble.
 - If the runner contacts the ground with something other than his hand or foot and the ball comes out simultaneous with the contact, the ball becomes dead (and you cannot fumble a dead ball).



Are those ineligible linemen downfield?

- For a restricted offensive player to be illegally downfield on a forward pass:
 - Pass must cross the Neutral Zone
 - Player's ENTIRE body must have been more than 3 yards past the LOS before pass is released.
- If the QB is throwing the ball away do not call IDP.



What about Sideline issues?

- Use common sense in working with the team on your sideline to stay back.
- Let them coach but don't let them interfere with you doing your job.
- Sideline control is a safety issue.
- Be respectful and reply to questions. Do not reply to comments.
- Conduct sideline conferences with the Coach on the sideline. Not on the field.

** If working a Crew of 7, maintain consistency after halftime switch



“HE’S HOLDING!!”

-- Quote citation: Every coach, every game.

- To have OH there must be a clear and visible material restriction and it needs to be at the point of attack or in the attack zone. If the action occurs clearly away from the POA and has no (or could have no) effect on the play, OH should not be called.
- Make the defense “show you something”, like trying to get away.
- Categories of OH:
 - Tackle
 - Pullover
 - Grab & Restrict
 - Hook & Restrict
 - Take Down
 - Jerk & Restrict



Was it an Illegal Block?

- It is not blocking below the waist if the initial contact is above the waist, and the blocker then slides down below the waist.
- To be a foul for IBB, the initial contact of the block must be from behind and above the waist. It is not a foul for IBB if the initial contact is from the side.
- A block from behind below the waist is a CLP. Clipping is legal if within the Tackle Box and above the knee if the ball has not left the Tackle Box.
- If a defender has beaten the blocker, be alert for OH. If he is beat, the blocker is going to cheat. Watch the feet.



What about a Chop Block?

- High: If a blocker is engaged with the defender above the waist, a teammate may not block the engaged player below the waist. A high/high block is legal.
- Low: if a blocker is engaged with the defender below the waist, a teammate may not block the engaged player above the waist. A low/low block is legal.
- It is a foul for a CHB even if the high blocker has just disengaged with the defender when the low blocker contacts the defender.



Pass Interference: Defense

- There must be contact to have DPI and the legal pass must be untouched and catchable by rule.
- There can be no DPI on a pass that does not cross the LOS. There can be DH but not DPI.
- No DPI on an eligible receiver who went OB on his own.
- Learn to recognize the DPI categories:
 - Not playing the ball
 - Playing through the back of the receiver.
 - Grabbing the receiver's arm.
 - Arm Bar to slow receiver down.
 - Cutoff the receiver's route.
 - Hook & Turn. Must turn before ball gets there.



Pass Interference: Offense

- Blocking downfield on a pass that crosses the LOS.
- Push off creating separation
- Pick plays
- Must be more than 1 yard beyond the LOS to be a foul.
- Do not call OPI or IDP if an attempted screen pass is overthrown and lands beyond the LOS.



Is it Unsportsmanlike Conduct?

- Allow for brief, spontaneous, emotional reactions at the end of plays.
- Do not allow prolonged actions or taunting actions made toward an opponent.
- Actions such as throat slash, gun references, sexual motions, spiking the ball, or actions that are aimed to draw attention are UNS fouls.
- Kicking or throwing an official's flag is a DQ.
- A player disqualifies himself. We only enforce the rule.



Video Clips from Hudl

File: July22YellowFlagJudgement



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