

2023 OHSAA Preseason Bulletin # 1 – A New Season!!

Welcome to the 2023 Football Season (Include my picture as last year)

Greetings!! It is just around the corner – one of the best times of the entire year – the start of the OHSAA FB Season!! As I drive around the state and visit with Crews, it is a similar message – “I wish the Football Season was starting tomorrow – I can’t wait!!” It never ceases to amaze me the level of dedication, enthusiasm, and hard work that our 2,990 Ohio HS Football Officials do yearly. On behalf of the 75,000 Student Athletes who play Interscholastic Football in Ohio, THANK YOU!!

Ohio Officials are Contenders Because They Want to Get Better. With great support by Local Associations OHSAA hosted eight FB Clinics last year. Over 1,225 officials attended. Congrats!!

Our new format for OHSAA State Rules Interpretation (SRI) Meetings began a few years ago and was a rousing success again last year. Officials had the opportunity to attend face-to-face meetings and receive credit for two meetings. Approximately half the meetings were devoted to NFHS New Rules/OHSAA Gold Book Mechanics and the other half of the meeting were game video clips with OHSAA Points of Emphasis placed on player safety, mechanics, and rulings. Over 1,100 officials took advantage of these highly informative “mini clinics” in Athens, Cleveland, Columbus, Findlay, Hamilton, New Philadelphia, Orrville, Toledo, & Wapakoneta. We would like to give a BIG thank you to those Local Associations who “stepped up to the plate” and helped us with the SRI Meetings last year.

One of our “key” statements again this year will be **EVERYONE OWNS THE RULES**. When a **Crew** steps onto the field all officials must have the mindset that we will “step up to the plate” and help our fellow **Crew** members with our knowledge and application of the NFHS FB Playing Rules & the OHSAA Regulations. Remember, we have no excuse for not knowing either a Rule or a Regulation. If you have any doubt about one of these, jog in, stop the GC, and discuss it with your fellow **Crew** members in an open & honest manner to “get it right.” The players & coaches will appreciate the extra time you take to discuss it.

This Guide is part of our continuing effort to standardize our mechanics throughout the State of Ohio. We are asking and expecting all officials to support our efforts to see that the Gold Book Mechanics are followed by every **Crew**. We have made great strides over the past years to standardize them.

Your wonderful ideas and suggestions for future improvements will be incorporated as we move forward as a TEAM to improve officiating in Ohio with one goal: Ohio High School Football Officiating will be the BEST in the nation.

Congratulations to Carl Davidson, North Canton, who was selected as the 2023 NFHS Ohio Active Football Official of the Year. He has officiated FB for 38 years and BSKB for 36 years. He has served as President of the EOFOA as well as their Mechanics Interpreter for 7 years. He has officiated 2 OHSAA State FB Championships, 4 OHSAA State FB Semifinals, & worked State Playoff Games for over 30 years. Carl has served as a State Certified Observer for the past 13 years. He has also served as an OHSAA BSKB Instructor for the past 25 years, instructing over 400 students. He was inducted into the OHSAA HOF in 2022. He has served as a mentor to hundreds of officials, inviting many of them to his varsity games and working sub varsity with them. This award is presented to Carl for his outstanding Service to football officials throughout the State of Ohio.

Hope you have a Great FB Season this year!! Bruce Maurer, DOD

A Letter from the Director of Officiating & Sport Management

It has been a challenging and rewarding year in the officiating community. We have a tremendous number of people taking our online classes. We need to focus on training these new officials on the field. It has been a very stressful summer for all of us with the transition to DragonFly. I am grateful to Angie Lawler and our staff and to the DragonFly staff for their hard work. **I am most grateful to all the football officials that remain certified and serve our student athletes.** We continue to work very hard from our office to help our schools understand how important the officiating community is and how much they share in the service to our athletes. Safety remains the number one concern both for athletes and officials. I call on all of you to assist us in making interscholastic sports the best place to participate.

The biggest area of emphasis again in 2023 will once again be Rules Knowledge! This is a challenging year with a couple of HUGE rule changes. I want to challenge each and every one of you to dedicate yourselves to improving your knowledge of the NFHS FB Rules. Take your Crew's and your roles seriously as to what Rules you are designated as the "expert" in the Gold Book Primary Responsibilities and expand your knowledge for all Rules.

Under the leadership of our Director of Development, Dr. Bruce Maurer, we have refined our football mechanics manual, The Gold Book. The GB helps us to become mechanically consistent across the state. We have refined these mechanics with your input and experience for this year. I appreciate the effort of all our football officials to continually improve in this area.

We can't make great calls unless we are looking in the right places. Challenge your Crew members and yourself to see the critical parts of each play. Ask each other, "Where are the important blocks on this play? Did we see them?" Talk in your pregame conferences and post-

game conferences about plays, where you were looking, what you saw, and where you should be looking. I say this all the time, the more you understand the game, the better official you will become. We will be putting plays into video presentations that show the types of plays and fouls we are emphasizing. **We must do a better job of seeing illegal low blocks by both the DEFENSE and the OFFENSE!**

I very much enjoy travelling around this great state and watching high school football. I saw over 200 different officials last season. I continue to be grateful that you listen and want to continually improve. I look forward to seeing many of you at your games this season. Enjoy your season and please let me know how I can help you improve.

Beau Rugg, Director of Officiating and Sport Management

2023 OHSAA Points of Emphasis

1. Rules Knowledge
 2. Personal Fouls & DQ's
 3. Sportsmanship by Coaches & Players
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2023 New & An Emphasis on OHSAA GB FB Regulations & Point Differential Rule

OHSAA Point Differential Rule Change: The Game Clock will continue to “run” after the touchdown until the ball become dead on the Try down. So, as the player scores a touchdown the Game Clock Operator will leave the GC running during the interval between the TD and Try Down & the GC will continue to “run” until the ball becomes dead by Rule after the Try Down has ended. Then he/she will stop the GC until the R marks the ball ready for play for the ensuing KO or 1st down play (for a game with no KO's).

Sub Varsity Modified Rules: We are “back” to strict NFHS FB Rules as it relates to scrimmage kicks (punts). Teams will have to decide whether they will punt the ball or “go for it”.

Officials Required State Rules Interpretation Meetings and Education Credits: There will be face-to-face SRI meetings this year. All FB officials will need to meet this requirement either online or at a face-to-face meeting. For those officials who attend a face-to-face meeting they will receive BOTH a SRI Meeting Credit (1 needed) along with one Education Credit (of 4 needed). Please remember & use the term “Education Credit”. This term was developed as an official can attend a Local Meeting, attend a clinic, or view an online presentation (2 will be available this year) other than the SRI Presentation. As in previous years 4 Education Credits are needed yearly to renew your officiating license.

2023 New OHSAA GB State FB Requirements

HS Varsity Crew Size: A minimum **Crew** of at least 6, including the **CJ** (if available); 5, if 6 is not available.

Tournament Officials: Exception: Class 2 FB Officials may be used in the first 2 rounds of the playoffs as approved by the Director of Officiating.

2023 New OHSAA GB Mechanics

Coach/Referee Conference (R): The **R** will signal Official's time-out to the PB before meeting with the HC & appropriate **Wing**.

Field Goal & Try-Kick (6 Person): The **CJ's** IP for a FGA or Try-Kick will be 10 YDS deeper than the holder. This will give the **CJ** a much better angle to see any contact on the Center once he/she snaps the FB.

KO (HL & LJ IP): If the KO is short of the – 20 YL, the **Wings** can move to the – 10 YL for the next KO for that team. Be ready to move to the GL. We observe too many officials who move to the – 10 YL, then the FB is kicked deep, & they do not move back to the goal line as needed for the challenging call at the pylon. If the FB is kicked between the – 20 YL & GL, then stay on the GL.

Measurements (R): The **R** will face the Press Box when looking to see whether it is a first down or not. This will allow for both the PB & TV to see the status & resultant decision by the **R**.

Pass Mechanics (R/CJ/HL/LJ): Be VERY patient when ruling on whether a pass is forward or backward. We can be late & be right!! We are doing a better job of slowing down on these tough judgment calls, but we need to continue to prevent inadvertent whistles. Remember, after the down has ended we can always get together as a **Crew** and make a decision regarding the direction of the pass.

Punt Mechanics (HL/LJ): On a OOB Punt, when the **Wings** get to the spot where they think the ball went OOB's in the air WALK VERY SLOWLY. This indicates to the **R or CJ** that this is where you think it went OOB's in the air. Sometimes, when the **R or CJ** is tied up with the punter with contact he/she gets a late look at the punt.

Reverse (R): The **R** is positioned on the GL, 12 YDS wide when the snap is between the - 10 YL & - 15 YL. Due to the speed & agility of today's QB's this additional distance allows for the **R** to stay on the GL as the QB scrambles or rolls toward the **R**. Again, this gives us excellent coverage on the GL for these tough & critical calls.

Reverse (HL/LJ – R & R 2): If it is 3rd or 4th down & the Line to Gain is 5 YDS or less, pause to see if the goal line is threatened before moving to the LTG. Remember, the goal line is the most important line on a FB Field. This is when the ball is snapped between the – 5 YL & - 10 YL.

Run (BJ Keys): Do not move past the hash mark until the ball becomes dead by Rule when the Runner is in the side zone. Stay between the hash marks until the ball is dead. Then move into the side zone as needed to support the **Wing**. Move toward the sideline under control when the runner is tackled near the sideline or OOB's. Remember, securing a new FB can wait --- officiating the dead ball action is much more important. Move sideline to sideline to support the **Wings**.

Your Rule Book & Case Book Are Your Friends – Please Use Them: Now with our excellent Rules Index in the Gold Book it is much easier to find a Rule. While discussing a video clip recently two very good and experienced officials cited the ruling. The **R** questioned their ruling. They were adamant of their ruling. Did they look it up after the game to be sure – No they did not. Upon arriving home the **R** checked both books. He was correct. Rather than being over confident, take a few minutes and review the books. It can be a “game changer” down the road in a tough and challenging game.

What Science Shows

Claim: You need 10,000 steps a day to boost your longevity. What Science Shows: The latest research show that as few as 6,000 steps a day can do it. One 2022 study found that adults 60 & older who clocked 6,000 to 8,000 steps daily had a 50 to 60 percent lower chance of early death.

AARP Bulletin March 2023

OHSAA Sideline

During a live ball all players, coaches, and non-players must be out of the restricted area (6' off the sideline). It is imperative that all officials enforce this Rule. When meeting with each Head Coach 35 minutes prior to the game secure the name of the “Get Back Coach.” Request the

Coach's cooperation with keeping the team personnel out of the restricted area. Issue/assess sideline warnings early in the game when it is necessary. We have learned from experience that early warnings usually prevent having to issue warnings or yardage penalties later in the game. Be mindful of this Quote: "Be Respected rather Than Liked by Coaches."

Lower Dementia Risk by Walking More & Faster

Lower Dementia Risk by Walking More & Faster says Borja del Pozo Cruz, Phd. In an 8 year study, adults who walked 3,800 steps daily for almost 3 years had a 25% lower risk for dementia...those who walked 9,800 steps per day had 50% lower risk. Walking faster is even better—people who walked 9,800 steps per day, including 30 minutes at 112 steps per minute (about 3 miles per hour), were 62% less likely to be diagnosed with dementia.

Bottom Line on the News 3/1/23

Take my Advice and Drink More

I want you to imagine that you're working a game early in the season. It's been a very hot week, and while kickoff is at 7:00pm, the temperature is still near 85 degrees. The relative humidity is also very high, but the good news is, there's a steady breeze blowing, so it doesn't feel that bad. It seems manageable. You feel like you're hardy sweating.

Suddenly, and without warning, you just don't feel good. You're not nauseated and lightheaded. It's hard to describe how you feel, but you know something isn't right. Suddenly you become dizzy and feel like you're going to faint. What's happening?

Every year the OHSAA includes in their preseason flier the dangers of working a football game on a hot day, for not only the players, but the officials too. So you ask, what was happening in the above scenario. In a word, it is **dehydration**.

In September of 2022, I was racing a sailboat regatta on Sandusky Bay. It was a day just like I described above. Sunny, hot and humid. There was a 10-12 knot breeze, which made it feel cooler. After being on the water racing for 4 hours, we came to shore and were folding sails and coiling lines, when suddenly, and out of know where, it hit me. I just didn't feel right. A little dizzy, hot, with blurred vision. A doctor in one of the other sailboat fleets racing that day came over to look at me, and told my crewmate to get me to the emergency room ASAP.

When I arrived at the hospital, I was into the ER. My blood pressure was 71 over 51. It was dangerously low. The ER doctor then told my wife I either had a heart attack, or was suffering from dehydration. After two hours in the ER, I was admitted to the hospital for an unplanned evening.

After many bags of fluid and so many EKG's I lost count, I was released the following day, but now had to schedule a nuclear stress test. When the heart is stressed or has been damaged, a protein called troponin is released into the blood stream. The more troponin the greater the damage to the heart. The good news is I did great in the stress test, but learned the hard way about dehydration.

So what exactly causes dehydration? It occurs when you use more fluid that you take in, and your body doesn't have enough water and other fluids to carry out its normal functions. If you don't replace the fluids, you will get dehydrated. This isn't just the players, it's the officials too.

So what are the symptoms of dehydration you ask? Believe it or not, thirst isn't always a reliable early indicator of the body's need for water. Many people don't feel thirsty until they are already dehydrated. This is why hydrating days before the game, or any outdoor activity is so very important.

The effects of dehydration can also be very serious. With your body struggling to maintain blood pressure, it slows the blood flow to the nonvital organs, like your kidneys and liver. It can lead to seizures, brain damage and even death.

Studies have shown that a 170-pound person can lose two percent of their body weight exercising for an hour in a hot room. For a 3 hour football game on a hot day, that's six percent, or just over 10 pounds. This is all the result of the loss of water.

As you prepare for this season and many seasons beyond, please take my advice. Take dehydration serious. It could save you, a Crew member, or one of the players in the game.

This article was written by Brad Huntley, a Retired FB Official

Referee Signals to the Press Box

The hand signals used by football referees to signify penalties can be traced to the late 1920s. In a game between Syracuse and Cornell, radio announcer Ted Husing asked referee Ellwood Geiges if Geiges could do something to keep the press booth informed of the action. Some of the signals Geiges created on the spot (such as offside and holding) are still used in their original form. Albie Booth, a well-known official of that era, is also credited with originating many of the signals.

This article was written by Larry Clemmons

NOTE 1: Case Book 9.2.1 J Correction – Answer -- should be enforced at the Previous Spot.

NOTE 2: FB SRI Online Presentation – Slide 63 – The title should have read “run ends behind the LOS” rather than “run ends beyond the LOS”. The Rule is: “The basic spot is the Previous Spot (PS) for a foul by B when the run or related run ends behind the LOS & no COP. Rule 10-4-2d.”