



Hudl & Game Film

Game film represents the single most important learning tool for you to use throughout the season. Utilize this tool as much as possible to review your fundamentals, positioning, mechanics and judgment. Breaking down these four things each play will improve your performance throughout the season. Many associations provide game film through their individual Hudl accounts. Officials without access to Hudl can request a downloadable file from individual schools, or by providing a self-addressed, stamped envelope with blank DVD to their school host before each game.

Blindside Blocks

Work to nail these calls right out of the gate. A blindside block is a dangerous hit against a defenseless player who is very susceptible to injury. These blocks usually occur in the open field during interception returns, punt returns and long kickoffs. Additionally, be alert for reverse plays, and watch action on WR's who crack back into the field to target linebackers. If a forcible block is from a player's blindside, it must be executed with open hands. Otherwise, it is a personal foul. The key to officials seeing these blocks is maintaining proper off-ball coverage when the ball carrier is not in their primary zone. When officiating off-ball, keep a wide field of vision, and seek out a player who is running against the normal flow of play.

Philosophically, a 'spray' or 'brush' block should not be called. This action occurs when a player runs by and brushes his opponent to execute a non-forceful block from the blindside. Even though this block may be made without open hands, the contact should be ruled legal if it is not deemed to be forcible.

Dead Ball Officiating

Too often, officials move on to the next play too soon (*e.g. turning to the down box or chains, chasing the football, signaling to their partners, etc.*). This season, develop a habit to find the player "out of phase" after every play. These are the one or two players who stay in a "higher gear" for an extra step or two after a play when everyone else on the field has begun to slow down; or the player(s) who are running in a different direction than everyone else on the field. These "out of phase" players are typically the ones who will commit a dead ball personal foul for a blindside block or late hit. If you excel at finding the player who is 'out of phase,' you will become a great dead ball official!

Personal Fouls vs. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Since we are talking about dead ball personal fouls, remember that they are NOT unsportsmanlike conduct fouls. Even though they share the same yardage and enforcement, PFs do not count toward player DQ. A player can only get 2 UNS fouls, but can accumulate an indefinite number of PFs. Obviously, if a player is out of control, officials can deem any personal foul as flagrant and DQ a player for that reason.

40/25-Second Play Clock

BJs should only use a visible count mechanic if an electronic play clock display is not in use. If schools have an electronic play clock on display, do not execute the visible countdown of the last five seconds mechanic. The BJ may get the QB's attention by signaling at 10 seconds by extending his/her arm.

If one or both electronic play clocks fail, both displays should be disabled and the official time be kept on the field.

Rules Review: 4th & 5 from K's 40 yard line. K47's punt is caught by R15 at R's 10 yard line. During the return, R57 approaches K35 from his blind side as he is pursuing the ball carrier. At the R-25, R57 (a) executes a block with open hands, knocking K35 backwards to the ground, (b) with his arms raised, brushes K35's body with his chest with minimal contact, knocking K35 off balance, (c) leaves his feet, launches, and forcibly strikes K35 in the head or neck area. R15 then runs OOB at the R-35.

Ruling: Legal play in (a) and (b). In (a) because he is using open hands and In (b) because the contact is not forcible. In (c), R15 is guilty of a Personal Foul, Blindside Block with Targeting. The 15 yard penalty will be enforced half the distance from the spot of the foul (all but one). R 1st & 10 @ R12.5. Snap. 25. The nature of R15's act should also be considered flagrant, resulting in a disqualification.