

FIRST AND TEN

June 2016 Volume 10 Issue 6

CFOA executive to hit the Refresh Icon



2016 CFOA Conference Photo story



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Working for the development of officiating and football in Canada in cooperation with



First and Ten Mandate

The intention of First and Ten is to keep the CFOA membership informed of the activities of the CFOA and its member associations. It is hoped that the First and Ten will be published on a quarterly basis.

The CFOA is hoping to encourage communication between its member associations through this communication by presenting information in the following areas:

Recruitment and Retention

Training and Development

-Positioning and Mechanics

Rulebook

-Changes/requests for rule

changes

-Rule Study—You Make the Call

-Rule interpretations

Canadian Leagues

-Up dates and information on the: CFL, CIS, CJFL

L'objectif du "First and Ten" est garder les membres du ACAF (Association Canadienne des Arbitres de Football) et les associations d'arbitres, des différentes activités au sein de l'ACAF. Notre objectif est de publier le "First and Ten" à tous les trois mois.

L'ACAF, a pour objectif d'encourager les communications entre les membres des différentes associations d'arbitres en leurs présentant des mises à jour sur les sujets suivants.

Recrutement et Rétention d'arbitres de football

Développement et Formation

- Positionnement et Mécaniques

Règles

- Études des règles— "You Make the Call"

- Interprétation des règles

- Changements et demandes de changements

Ligues Canadiennes

- Mises à jour des informations de la LCF— CIS - LCFJ

Reconnaissance d'accomplissements par des arbitres de football

La version française du "First and Ten" va suivre chaque version anglaise. Ron Paluzzi, Vice président responsable de la traduction, sera responsable de s'assurer que chaque communiqué soit disponible en français dans les plus brefs délais. D'ici là, je demande à tous



Editor's comments



Editor Ron Hallock

Co- editor Rob Christian



It was a great conference Congratulations and thanks to

Todd Joyes, his committee and the SFOA for planning an excellent conference and the great hospitality extended to the conference participants.

After reviewing the activities of the CFOA over the past two years with the FOA members in attendance the new CFOA executive decided the the CFOA activites need a “refresh” . Nigel Busche was given the task of surveying the member FOAs over the next to confirm the top 5 areas where the CFOA could improve its services.

Some areas identified by conference attendees include revamping the web site with easier access, communication of rule changes and clarifications, video access. The new executive are reviwing the communication to the membership via First and Ten with an alternative 3 to 4 page news letter.

Specified duties for the Provincial representatives to distribute inforamtion, gather FOA news, monitor master Facilitator progam were some areas to be considered

Review of the online FCOCP program re costs and online national exam were suggested areas for review

A review of the French component of the CFOA especially communciations.

Notice

CFOA exam has been distributed to all FOA presidents

Football Canada Tackle football Rule book

Electronic copy available online use access number for your FOA

Rule Book hard copy is now available



Message from the President

"If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself." -- Henry Ford

It's both an interesting and challenging time for our officiating community.

Most associations are faced with recruitment and retention issue as every level is looking for more qualified officials. In many instances, the level of experience lies in opposite ends of the spectrum.

In recent years, silos caused by geography and other factors continue to break down which calls for greater need for consistency across the country.

Facing what seemingly a large number of issues that need to be addressed, our executive is taking a pragmatic approach by: 1. Consult with members through provincial reps and local presidents to identify key strategic initiatives; 2. Engage members to help develop and implement a plan of attack.

While every member on the CFOA executive is ready to roll up his sleeve, the key to seeing positive results is your ongoing feedback and support. To ensure your voice is heard, we've already begun evaluating all our existing communication tools and improvements will be made accordingly.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge my fellow executive – Ron Hallock (MB), Ron Paluzzi (QC), Nigel Bushe (BC) and Chad Doran (NS) – for their positive spirit and commitment. A special thank you to Barry Debaie (NS) who will continue to support the executive and provide continuity despite finishing his term.

All of us are looking forward to working with you for the betterment of football officiating in this country. Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. Chiu' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Henry Chiu
President

A Pictorial Review of the



Opening Presentation CFOA Report Ron Hallock

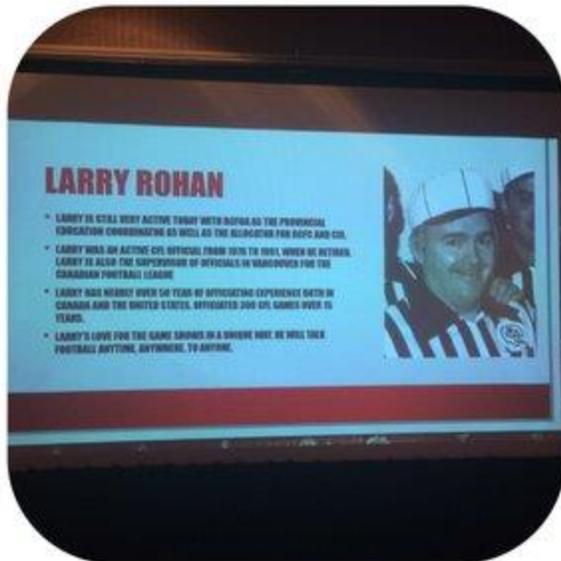


Officials past and present discussing advancement

Dave Hutton, Tim Kroeker, Darryl Barron



The nominees for the Tom Cheney award are up:



Left to right Top

Bill Butcher and Ken Picot

Bottom

Larry Rohan and Ron Paluzzi

2016 Tom Cheney Award Recipient



Presentation of Tom Cheney Award to Ken's wife

Ontario Representatives at the Conference



Manitoba Representatives at the Conference



David Kendall resting up for next

session

Organizers Todd Joyes and Mike Ciona explaining what is happening at the Gala Reception Ron Paluzzi looking on





Rod Pederson voice of the riders quest speaker on Rider History the Insider story

Fitness and Nutrition session with Donya Ciona

Dining following the nutrition directions from Donya





Coaches' Panel discussion looking at Officials for?



Guest Speaker CIS University of Saskatchewan Huskies coach Brain Towriss addressed the participants



ROB'S CORNER

Rob looks at how to sell that tough call, how correct officials' calls are and how can game observers make the most out of a critique by keeping a few important things in mind.

Sell the Tough Call

It was a 50-50 call and you know you got it right. How do you convince half the people you did?



By Doug Russell instructor of marketing at Northwest Missouri State University, he is a high school football official and lives in Maryville, Mo.

What do a ninth-inning call at home plate, a crucial roughing penalty late in the fourth quarter or a block/charge call all have in common? Conflict, controversy and a coach who is going to be very upset.



All officials have experienced conflict with a coach. Confrontations can have positive outcomes if the official follows the basic principles of conflict resolution management.

Being in the proper position to make the call and knowing the applicable rule are prerequisites to successfully selling the tough call. What if the head coach doesn't notice or care? Fight or flight may seem like good options, but neither works. A better alternative is to apply conflict resolution management.

By practicing three easy steps, the outcomes of those confrontations can be quickly and successfully resolved.

Step one.

Listen to the nature of the complaint. Let the coach disclose his or her feelings or vent frustration with your call. Do not interrupt while the coach is voicing an opinion about your call.

Nonverbal communication skills, including body language, can dramatically help sell the call. Make eye contact with the coach while he or she is talking. Keep your arms behind your back or at your sides, never crossed in front of your chest since that suggests you are guarded. Do not roll your eyes. Nodding, with one hand up to your chin, shows you value and acknowledge the coach's opinion with a willingness to listen to his or her point of view.

Step two.

Acknowledge that you understand and empathize with his or her position. Let the coach know you understand the nature of the complaint while responding to concerns. Answer questions and identify or analyze unclear issues. Speak in a tone that is conversational. Enunciate and articulate so the coach will understand that you are in control of the situation.

Hand gestures may be used, but never point your finger at or physically touch the coach. Use some of the coach's words when responding to show that you have been listening.

Step three.

Resolve the conflict by initiating a course of action that is both timely and fair. You cannot allow the coach's complaint to impede the progress of the game or undermine your control of the situation.

You may thank the coach for voicing a concern, then emphasize that it is time to get back to playing the game. Use a positive, upbeat tone of voice with proper voice inflection and voice quality. Your voice energy should demonstrate enthusiasm, your rate of speech should be fast enough so the coach knows you are ready to move on, and your pitch should be direct, smooth and pleasant. As long as there are athletic contests between competitive teams, coached by competitive people and officiated by human beings, there will be opportunities for conflict.

By following the three-step approach, your tough calls will still be tough, but you will have the tools to successfully overcome your next coach's challenge. Selling the tough call becomes almost as important as making the tough call. Using both verbal and nonverbal skills will dramatically improve your success rate.

THESE OFFICIALS ARE REALLY GOOD

<http://operations.nfl.com/the-officials/these-officials-are-really-good/>

Every week, officials take the field ready to put months of preparation, training and hard work on display, knowing that the whole world — and the Officiating Department — is watching.

In 2014, NFL teams ran more than 40,000 plays from scrimmage. The NFL Officiating Department meticulously reviewed and graded its officials' performance on every one of them. Every play. Every game. And not just from one angle: Evaluators reviewed each play seven times — once for each of the seven officiating positions.

Each game averages about 156 plays, so a typical official who works 14 regular-season games is evaluated on nearly 2,200 plays in a single season. The Officiating Department reviews game footage looking for the calls that were made correctly — and also the ones that were missed.

There is nowhere to hide on the football field. Whether working a closely contested Super Bowl or the final minutes of an early season blowout, officials are expected to exhibit the same high level of excellence on every play.

They're human, of course, so on-field miscues will occur. And while the 122 officials in the NFL aren't always perfect, the evaluation process shows that they come *very* close.

“I happen to believe that the players don't play perfect games, I really don't think coaches coach perfect games, and I don't think officials work perfect games. It's not a game that is perfect.”

25-YEAR NFL OFFICIATING VETERAN MASON “RED” CASHION

They got it right 95.9 percent of the time throughout the 2014 season, according to the league's evaluators. In almost any other career, that level of proficiency would be praised. Yet more is expected from NFL officials — not just from the players, the fans and the media, but from the officials themselves.

They are carefully selected, extensively prepared and rigorously evaluated to ensure that they call games correctly and consistently — so that the players, not the officials, determine the outcome. This process results in the outstanding officiating that players, coaches and fans expect and deserve.

Officiating an NFL game — making split-second decisions at full speed and at field level — takes decades of work and dedication. While fans may not always agree with every call, one thing is certain: These officials are good.

PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

For NFL officials, on-field success depends on preparation.

While fans see officials only on game days, much more happens away from the field — even before the officials ever don the stripes in the NFL. Each season, the quest for officiating excellence begins before players report to training camps.

July, the league kicks off the officiating season with a [mandatory training clinic in Dallas](#). Officials take written exams, testing their knowledge of the rules and mechanics for their positions. New rules and points of emphasis are thoroughly covered as officials prepare for any situation they may encounter on gameday.

“The clinic is so important to how the season’s going to go,” said Dean Blandino, the NFL’s senior vice president of officiating. “Our goal every year is that everybody leaves on the same page. And that will basically kick-start the season.”

An added emphasis on fitness keeps officials in shape for the growing physical demands of a game that gets faster every year: NFL offenses ran 150 percent more no-huddle plays in 2013 than in 2008, according to The Wall Street Journal. The league tests officials’ conditioning and agility to ensure that they can keep pace with the game’s best athletes.

Back Judge Tony Steratore signals a successful field goal during the NFL AFC Championship playoff football game between the New England Patriots against the Denver Broncos, Sunday, Jan. 24, 2016, in Denver. (Scott Boehm via AP)



“With up-tempo offenses, our officials have to be more efficient in spotting the ball and getting in position,” Blandino said. “Because if they’re not in position, they can’t effectively officiate the play. We have to continue to evolve.”

Officials also go to training camp, where they officiate practices and work preseason



games to get into regular-season form. They prepare for these games as they would for the regular season, and they are evaluated the same way. During the season, the final whistle of a game marks the beginning of preparation for the next week. Before leaving the stadium, each crew member gets a flash drive with the TV broadcast of the game that he or she just worked. Many review the video on the flight home. While most of the league's 122 current officials have full-time jobs outside of football, their heads are always in the game: From one week to the next,

they spend hours breaking down tape, getting ready for the next contest, and reviewing with crew members and supervisors what went right, what went wrong and what could be improved. On game days, officials emerge from the tunnel ready to put months of preparation, training and hard work on display, knowing that the whole world — and the Officiating Department — is watching. Dean Blandino, NFL Senior Vice President of Officiating. (AP Photo/John Raoux)

MAKING THE GRADE

The Officiating Department's weekly evaluation process is thorough. Blandino, Senior Director of Officiating Al Riveron and the Art McNally Game Day Central crew work with eight officiating supervisors to review every play from each of the seven officiating positions: referee, umpire, head linesman, line judge, field judge, side judge and back judge. The eight supervisors — former officials with decades of experience — identify successes, areas for improvement and points to emphasize.

"Supervisors are not just evaluators — they're teachers," Blandino said.

“We focus on teaching, training, positioning and mechanics. Our evaluation system is the best way to achieve consistency across the league.”

DEAN BLANDINO, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF NFL OFFICIATING

Officiating supervisors grade one game in person each week. From a booth above the field, they observe the officials, keying on positioning, mechanics, accuracy, professionalism and more. Grading begins at the stadium, and supervisors will leave with a flash drive of the game so they can get a closer look. Depending on how many teams are in action in a given week, supervisors also may evaluate a second game. They'll receive a hard drive with the additional footage from Art McNally Game Day Central and grade that game using the same strict criteria.

“In order to apply the rules correctly on Sundays, you have to be in the right place at the right time. That takes practice. That takes snaps. That takes a lot of film evaluation.”

AL RIVERON, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF OFFICIATING

Officials receive their grades early in the week and discuss them with the supervisors and their fellow crew members. Weekly training videos, narrated by Blandino, are distributed to every official to clarify the handling of specific calls. In the middle of the week, Blandino and Riveron hold calls with crews to go over specific plays.

The Officiating Department also distributes weekly media videos every Friday for the public and those who cover the sport. These videos, also narrated by Blandino, clarify controversial calls from the previous week.

All of this is done in pursuit of consistency across every officiating crew — from game to game and week to week. Pass interference in Buffalo must be the same as pass interference in San Diego.D” CASHION

THE RESULTS

A typical 2014 NFL game averaged more than 156 plays — a number that has remained high in recent years as more teams run up-tempo offenses.

More plays create more chances for an official to be graded — and also increases the possibility of error. Still, officiating proficiency actually has increased over that same period.

According to the league's exhaustive grading system, the 2014 season saw a per-crew average of fewer than one incorrect call and only 1.7 no-calls — a penalty that should have been called but was missed — in each game.

Even on the toughest, most controversial calls that were elevated to instant replay review, an official's initial ruling on the field is confirmed nearly two-thirds of the time. Only 36 percent of on-field calls have been overturned since 1999.

A JOB WELL-DONE

The evaluation process culminates when officiating crews are evaluated for the past season's work, with rewards and consequences.



Members of the Super Bowl 50 officiating crew pose for a photo prior to kickoff between the Denver Broncos and the Carolina Panthers on Sunday, Feb. 7, 2016 at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, Calif. (Ben Liebenberg/NFL)

The top officials and crews each year receive the ultimate recognition in officiating: the privilege and responsibility of working an NFL playoff game. For some, decades of hard work and preparation pay off in a potentially once-in-a-lifetime Super Bowl or conference championship assignment.

For others, a subpar season-long performance could mean remediation, or even a demotion. All NFL officials serve on a year-to-year contract, and they have to prove their mettle every year. There is no guarantee that they will return the next season.

The vast majority do succeed. Fortunately for the NFL, its players and its fans, these officials are good.

Unwind Then Rewind

By Tom Schreck

When the final whistle or buzzer sounds or the last out is recorded, you're not done yet. Here are five postgame discussion strategies to follow.

It's been a long day. There was the travel to the event, the pregame meeting, a long grueling contest, some testy coaches, an opinionated crowd and some challenging rulebook interpretations. Now the game is over and you're sweaty and hungry and all you can think of is the condensation running down the side of a cold refreshment.



Not so fast.

If your focus is on slipping out of the locker room door before a postgame debriefing critique, you're robbing yourself and interfering with a chance to improve your career.

"I spend a lot of my time mentoring new referees," Eric Proctor said. Proctor is an NCAA Division I soccer official and MLS official.

"The postgame critique is a great learning tool. The best referees are the ones who are open to what you have to say and those that are willing to learn new things," he said.

Organizing and participating in an effective postgame critique doesn't just happen. Like all things in officiating, they take knowledge, preparation, sensitivity and, perhaps most importantly, good social skills. Fall short on any of those components and you can count on a meeting that not only is unproductive but may even leave the officials involved less prepared and more confused the next time they head out on an assignment.

Whether you're the head official, an evaluator or a referee or umpire who worked the game, you can make the most out of a critique by keeping a few important things in mind.



Know What to Cover

It may seem like stating the obvious, but knowing what you're going to talk about after the game when you address the team is crucial. It isn't the time to work off the cuff. Make sure you have something relevant to say and that you can convey it in a way that the team will understand.

"As a crew chief you have to know what you want to say and have a strategy for drawing each official out. You always have to have a plan for what you're going to talk about," said Barb Smith, an NCAA Division I women's basketball official.

For many officials who conduct postgame critiques having a routine assures them that they cover the things that are important to each game. Having a structure with some flexibility built in is one of the keys to making it work. It's a mistake to count on total recall after working, particularly a stressful game and in a situation where everyone involved is exhausted. Instead, rely on your structure to make sure that you cover everything that needs to be addressed.

"When it's time for our postgame we look at the things that were most important," Proctor said. "We examine any major decisions the team made that affected the game. We talk about how we communicated and ways we could've done it better. We talk about all red cards or anything that involves a misconduct and why the red cards were issued. We evaluate any critical match incidents and we take a good look at any game-winning goal controversies."

By covering the same points at the end of the game with room to be flexible you can make sure that each member of the team can learn and improve their game. Taking the time to plan your meeting in advance will pay dividends and make it more productive for everyone involved.



Prepare Your Message

You may have more knowledge than any other official on the planet but if you can't express it in a way that others can hear it, understand it and receive it, all your knowledge may be for naught. First of all, it is important to realize that this isn't the time to go over every tick of the clock and every play of the game. There's simply no way you can do it and even if you did, it wouldn't be digested. If your drive is to be comprehensive, you may need to check your own motivation and neediness and question what you're trying to fulfill by keeping everyone for an hour after the game.

The best crew chiefs and supervisors focus on a few pointed and important items to cover at the end of the game.

“I don’t think they have to be long but they do have to be focused,” Smith said. “I like to start out by saying something like, ‘Give me three to five minutes of your time. Let’s look at two or three things we did well and two or three things we didn’t do so well.’”

Don’t mistake Smith’s approach for giving the topic short shrift. She knows where she wants to go after the game and structures her meetings in such a way that the important messages are conveyed and, even more importantly, received.

“I always prepare how I’m going to address the crew and I have a strategy for how to draw them out so we can talk about the game. They aren’t allowed to get by on yes or no answers.”

Some situations call for more detail and more formal review. In those cases the meetings go on longer, not so everyone can hear themselves talk, but because there’s important material to cover. When you’re in the role of evaluating others you may feel the pressure to go deeper in detail than an average crew chief, but remember to be focused on what needs to be said and not just taking up time so that you can feel good about going on for the longest.

“When I evaluate a basketball game from the stands I take copious notes of what I see and I use a Dictaphone to make sure I get everything recorded that I want to address,” said George Drouches. He’s a Division III baseball national coordinator and a supervisor of men’s and women’s basketball for the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and the Upper Midwest Athletic Association.

“I don’t rely on my memory nor do I want to improvise,” he added. “I want to be able to present my material clearly and be able to structure my points in an organized fashion.”

Drouches’ preparation means that when he enters a locker room, his words carry not only the weight of his title but they also instantly have credence because they are factually dead on. When an official knows an evaluator has prepared and studied the game, they pay attention to the feedback they receive.

Crew chiefs and officials can’t prepare quite as much as evaluators, but they can still have a sense for what should be covered and a strategy going in.



Take a Positive Approach

If you're leading the postgame meeting, your goal is to help everyone improve from analyzing the team's performance. Undoubtedly, there were mistakes and those mistakes provide everyone with teachable moments. That is where your greatest opportunities lie, but the message has to be received for it to be worth anything. The messages must be delivered in a way that the team members can process them.

"I start out by asking the group what we did well," Smith said. "I want them to tell me two or three positive things to get the meeting off on the right foot. It might be something as simple as dealing with an angry coach or that we rotated well."

The practice of starting off with the positive sets a tone and lets the officials relax their defenses. It lets the participants know they aren't getting ready for an inquisition where everything they did for the last three hours will be called into question. It also gives them a chance to feel good about themselves.

"All of it needs to be presented in a positive manner," Drouches said. "You should not be negative and should never be demeaning. I try to employ some of the same strategies I used as a coach and present everything as a challenge to get better."

That balance of presenting the positive along with the challenge to improve is the crucial focus point. There are always errors, even from the most experienced and skilled officials, and avoiding the discussion of those errors is a huge mistake. Even though some officials can be extremely sensitive, don't make the mistake of not talking about what needs to be covered.

"I let them know during a critique that we're here to get better not to feel better. I ask them about what calls they'd like to have back and we review the plays in

WHAT TO DO WHEN AN ONSITE POSTGAME ISN'T POSSIBLE

Sometimes the venue or other circumstances prevent an onsite postgame discussion. That doesn't mean you have to scrap your review session completely, however.

In today's world, many games are available on video. If you aren't supplied an official game tape, request it or check YouTube to find amateur recordings of some high-profile contents. Circulate the video or the link to the video to the crew.

To make the most of feedback, either edit the video or let them know what time on the clip to watch.

Use the same communications techniques via email or teleconference that you would in an in-person postgame critique. Be cautious in your approach. Ask, "What did we do well and what could we have done better?"

If video isn't available, write a detailed description of a situation and send it via email. Ask for feedback about where improvements could be made in the situation. Do your best to be as objective as possible in your descriptions.

Follow up with phone calls and don't rely on emails to carry the complete message you are trying to get across. Many times people misconstrue the intention of an email. Don't take for granted that everyone receiving the communication will take it as intended.

Follow up with positive feedback and not just areas that require improvement. Let crewmembers or partners know what they did right and, just like in person, start with the positive before moving into constructive criticism.

question. It is kept positive but the mistakes need to be covered,” Drouches said.

It is not enough just to have postgame critiques so you can check it off your list as another completed task. Though they may need to be tactful, they still need to be meaningful, even if that means making some officials a little uncomfortable.

“I think the most useless meetings are the ones where everyone gets together and congratulates each other for being wonderful. Some officials don’t like to give anything up, but there’s always something, and not discussing things doesn’t help anyone,” Smith said.



Exercise Sensitivity

Those meetings can be particularly anxiety-provoking for the young officials who are so eagerly trying to improve. They may not be overtly defensive but their drive to excel can actually get in their way and they may get crushed with criticism, constructive or otherwise. You may not be in there to make everyone feel good, but breaking down a sensitive official focused on self-improvement isn’t your goal, either. It takes some thought in how to approach officials with that mind-set.

“I think you start out by being open,” Proctor said. “I try to draw a young official out and ask them how they thought they did. Then I move on to what they think they could improve on. I use what they bring up as a lead-in to a discussion.”

For Proctor it’s about getting to the important points so someone can improve and not about showing who is boss and establishing a power structure. The goal isn’t about ego; it is about helping someone become the best official he or she can be.

“I try to stay away from a lot of ‘shoulds’ because it doesn’t help. Instead I think the critiques need to be an exchange of ideas,” he said.



Know Your Audience

Officiating is one part knowing and executing rules and another part understanding people. Our people skills help us handle the irate coach, the frustrated players and the angry crowd, but they are equally or more important when it comes to working within the officiating team. When you’re leading a team, just like in any other leadership position, you need to be part boss, counselor and friend to those who you are charged with leading.

Perhaps the most challenging officials encountered are the ones who believe they haven't made any mistakes during a game and who resist any criticism at all. They may be good officials, but with that attitude they will never meet their full potential.

"The most difficult personal attitude without question is the one held by the officials who think they know it all, that they are already great and the only thing they're really interested in hearing is that they are great," Proctor said. "It's a real problem because I know I improved by listening to senior mentors in difficult situations. You have to realize you're never going to experience everything."

You may want to blast an arrogant official across the room, but resist the urge to serve up some humble pie. Their arrogance is often a cover for insecurity. Using a little psychology may be the best move and a way into someone who seems a bit closed off to feedback.

"I use open-ended questions to get people discussing things even if they don't want to. It doesn't have to be harsh, and by using open-ended questions you can draw someone out who may be resistant," Smith said.

Open-ended questions are inquiries that require a full answer and are impossible to answer with one word.

Try structuring a question like, "Could you tell me what we could've done better in that situation?" Rather than, "Did we do anything wrong in this situation?" or even "Is there anything we could've done better in that situation?"

The open-ended questions begin a dialogue in a non-threatening manner. Starting a sentence off with "Could" will elicit the least defensive responses. Be careful when using questions that start with "Why" because they are the questions most likely to be perceived as accusations.

Even with your best communication skills in place you may have to address some officials directly on their attitude and response to criticism. It's not about showing who is the boss or looking for a fight, but it is about doing your job as a leader. Confrontation can be a tough but necessary part of the job.

"I have to let them know this is not a debate. When you start getting into debating it stops being about getting better and becomes more about feeling better and as I said that's not why we're here," Drouches said. "The officials who are going to be the best are the good listeners. Let's face it, this isn't easy ... so it is all about improving."

“All of it needs to be presented in a positive manner, you should not be negative and should never be demeaning. I try to employ some of the same strategies I used as a coach and present everything as a challenge to get better.”

— *George Drouches,*
NCAA Baseball Division III supervisor

If you're a part of a postgame critique, it is important to not only soak up the feedback from more experienced officials, it's also important to demonstrate that you bring an open attitude and that you want to improve. Even if you've had an awful game, the postgame meeting is a chance to impress.

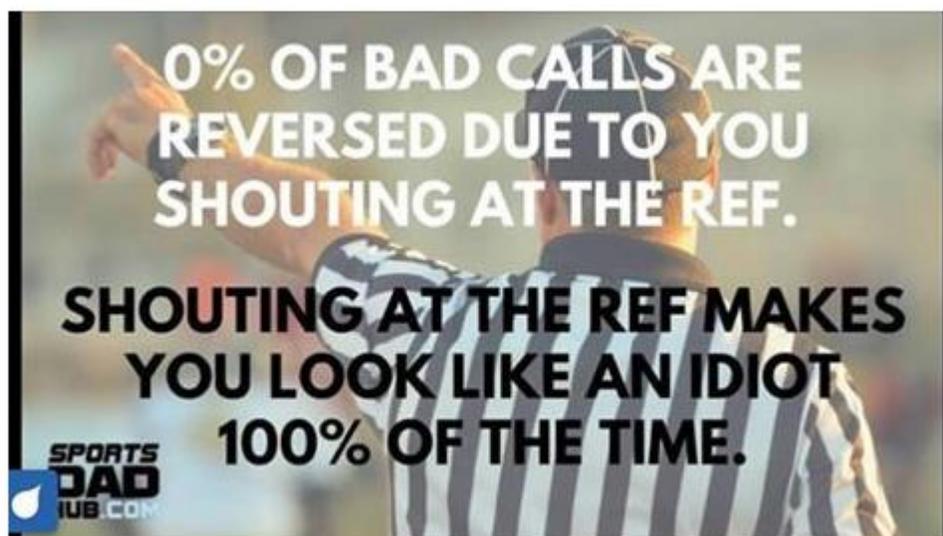
“Situations reveal character,” Drouches said. “The officials who really take advice to heart are the ones who will get better. I make sure the next time I see an official I point out their improvements they've made since the critique and it means a lot to them.”

Don't forget how you are perceived when you're a leader. The group will take its cue from not only what you say, but how you say it and how you behave. Treat a postgame meeting like a presentation and be aware of the messages you are conveying with your words, your intonation and your body language.

“I'm very aware of my body language,” Smith said. “It depends on the locker room but if there's a chair, I'll sit down and lean forward and talk directly to the officials with good eye contact. I don't like to do it standing or while I'm getting dressed. I make sure I'm not slouching. I look folks in the eye and I use a strong voice. I give it my full attention and keep it short.”

Smith's postgame meeting may only run three to five minutes but she makes the most of the time and gets respect because she gives it by being serious, prepared and sensitive to her audience.

Tom Schreck is a writer and a professional boxing judge with the World Boxing Association and the New York State Athletic Commission from Albany, N.Y.





FROM THE OFFICE OF THE RULES EDITOR

Well the 2016 changes are out and a few questions have been circulating regarding same. Hopefully the below text will answer your questions.

- A) Blocking at or below the Knee has been added to the book and is illegal on scrimmage plays except in the close line area. Blocking below the waist is still illegal on all kick plays and change of possessions.
- B) Signal #30 is for both blocking below the waist and blocking at or below the knee.
- C) Crack back has not been removed from the rules or changed in any way and is still illegal if all four of the criteria are met.
- D) Blind side block has been added and is illegal unless the block is made with the hands which are extended in front of the blocker. It is illegal anywhere on the field and it is where the blocker comes from not where the contact occurs.
- E) The 5 yard no yard penalty can be applied at PDB.

Note if Team B runs the ball back and scores the penalty is NOT carried over to the next play. Team B would need to decline to accept the score.

If the 5 yard no yards' penalty becomes part of a dual foul, then we would balance the penalties at the point ball held when the Team B penalty occurs, or point ball touched, option to team B.

I believe the biggest change this year will be the blind side block lets make sure we see the whole play as I am understanding what coaches will try to teach here is for the blocker to run in front of the patch of the opponent as opposed to block him. ("rip by")

If you still have questions on new or old rules do not be afraid to ask as this is how we all improve and get on the same page.

Send questions to tacklerules@footballcanada.com

Walter



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All committees are under review and appointment will be announced





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