

<b>CENTRAL VIRGINIA FOOTBALL OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION</b> <b>Study Manual</b>
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## **WHAT DOES IT TAKE- TO BE AN OFFICIAL?**

### **OFFICIATING REQUISITES\***

COURAGE, KNOWLEDGE OF THE RULES AND MECHANICS, HUSTLE, AND TACT are indispensable to a good official. But none of them is of any more importance than another prime requisite - GOOD JUDGMENT!

**RULES AND MECHANICS:** Unfailing familiarity with the rules and full understanding of mechanics are necessary for the proper conduct of a game but are no guarantee of optimum performance. The intent of each rule must be kept in mind. Every official should seek the happy medium between excessive strictness and undue laxity. Situations arise in a game which cannot be foreseen and which cannot be covered in a rule book or manual. Football sense must supersede technical application of the rules.

**COURAGE - BUT NOT BELLIGERENCE:** Football officiating requires a maximum of courage for which belligerence is not a substitute. A smooth running game can suddenly get out of hand as a result of an overly officious attitude toward players and coaches. Conversation with coach or player should always be courteous without sacrifice of dignity. If something is said or done which warrants a penalty, penalization should be done unobtrusively and without dramatization. A game is kept under control by proper administration of the rules, which can be best accomplished if no impression of militant supervision is created.

**HUSTLE - BUT DON'T HURRY:** Hurry should not be mistaken for hustle. There are times when it is proper to speed up the tempo of the game- in order to get the ball back in play after an incomplete pass, to take a position on a foul situation, to prepare for a measurement, etc. Never hurry an injured player off the field. Never rush the ball to the inbounds line without checking measurements or press for the captains decision on a difficult option. Precision and care should be exercised in all situations. Hustle is essential. HURRY is a hazard.

**TACT - BUT NOT SUBMISSION:** Tact is necessary but should never be a justification for retreat from a position properly taken or a decision correctly rendered.

**POISE - BUT NOT INDIFFERENCE:** Staying loose is an asset in officiating, as in any other phase of a sport where fast reflexes are required. A relaxed appearance is a great help if it gives the impression of confidence. However, care should be taken to avoid the appearance of indifference. The poised official is able to remain inconspicuous as he moves to the right place at the right time.

**HOSPITALITY:** Officials assigned to a contest have one responsibility, that of efficiently conducting the contest at hand. They should not fraternize at the game site or participate in game social affairs.

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**GENERAL PRINCIPLES\***

**ARTICLE 1. KNOWLEDGE OF THE RULES:** Rule mastery must be perfect and supplemented by ability to interpret correctly. Attempting to officiate without these attributes is unfair to everyone concerned. These abilities are acquired only through devotion of much time and study and anyone unable or unwilling to acquire them should leave officiating to those who are.

**ARTICLE 2. PHYSICAL CONDITIONING:** Football officiating is difficult and exhausting and requires 100 percent efficiency of the mind and the body. Men whose eyes, heart, or legs are not in excellent condition have no place in officiating.

**ARTICLE 3. MENTAL REACTIONS:** Decisions must be instantaneous and rulings announced without delay. To insure improved instinctive reaction to play situations, review all possible combinations of circumstances before each season and during pre-game conferences.

**ARTICLE 4. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** Each official must have thorough knowledge of the duties of his own position and must also be fully informed concerning the duties of each of the other officials. He should be prepared to assume any one of the other positions whenever circumstances require rearrangement of assignments.

**HE MUST:**

- A. Know the down and yardage prior to each snap.
- B. Be ready to assist any official who is temporarily out of position.
- C. Observe erroneous procedure or rulings of other officials and attempt prevention and correction whenever possible.
- D. Know the prescribed signals and when and how they should be used.
- E. Secure a new ball if appropriate, after all actions has ceased and be able to handle and pass the ball properly.
- F. Be alert to happenings away from the ball when play has left his immediate area.
- G. Call time out for any player who is obviously injured or disabled. Never hurry the treatment of an injured player. Recognition of injured players is the concern of all game officials.
- H. Call any foul or rule infraction observed regardless of specific assignment.

**ARTICLE 5. SIGNALS:** All signals should be given promptly, distinctly, and conspicuously.

**ARTICLE 6. ENFORCEMENT:** All rules should be strictly and fairly enforced. There should be no deviation from the Rules.

**ARTICLE 7. HUSTLE:** Keep the game moving smoothly from the start to finish. Do not permit haste to interfere with duties or correct determinations.

**ARTICLE 8. BOXING IN:** Smart officiating requires keeping the players "boxed in" and avoidance of officials being "boxed in". "Outside looking in" is

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essential for sideline and endline coverage. The ultimate is to have each play viewed from more than one direction.

**ARTICLE 9. COOPERATION:** Teamwork is essential among the officials. If a ruling is puzzling, relay explanation to press box. Never issue directly or indirectly any news interviews, statements or stories concerning games in which you are an official. Continuous verbal communications between all officials during the game is essential for effective game administration.

**ARTICLE 10. DON'T DISCUSS:** Do not discuss with a coach the play or players of his opponents in a game which you will officiate or are officiating.

**ARTICLE 11. OFFICIAL'S "A.B.C.'s":**

- A. *Knowledge to handle players in firm, fair and friendly fashion.*
- B. *Knowledge, understanding and application of all rules.*
- C. *Knowledge of and adherence to approved procedures.*

\* Officiating Requisites and General Principles, excerpted from CCA Football Officials Manual, 1994, pages 11-14.