



COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC

CFO COORDINATORS ANNUAL WINTER MEETING

Irving, TX, January 25-27, 2015

Summary Report

The annual winter meeting of the College Football Officiating (CFO) Coordinators was held in Irving, TX, at the headquarters of the National Football Foundation. Except for Doug Rhoads (ACC/Big South) who was unable to attend due to a conflicting conference meeting, the Division I coordinators attended and were joined by:

Tom Burnett, Commissioner, Southland Conference and Member, CFO Board of Managers

Ty Halpin, NCAA, CFO Administrator

Jeff Triplette, Arbiter Sports

Dave Yeast, Arbiter Sports

Dan Blum, Substituting for Gerald Austin (C-USA)

Ed Stewart, Big 12 Conference

Atsunora Hamada, Japanese American Football Association

Atsuo Tanaka, Japanese American Football Association

Welcoming Remarks

Rogers Redding, CFO national coordinator, welcomed the coordinators and visitors, and thanked the National Football Foundation for once again hosting the meeting. Greg Burks was introduced as the new coordinator of football officials for the Mountain West Conference, having retired from the field after being the Referee in the inaugural College Football Playoff National Championship Game. In addition, the group welcomed Dan Blum, substituting for Gerald Austin (C-USA), and Jim Blackwood, interim coordinator for the PAC-12 Conference.

Steve Hatchell, CEO of the National Football Foundation, welcomed the group and introduced several members of his staff. He thanked the coordinators for their work on behalf of college football and expressed the Foundation's pleasure with the developing

relationship between the NFF and CFO. Steve noted the NFF's initiative, "Football Matters," a concerted effort to counter some of the negative images of football in the public eye. He noted that there are 768 colleges and universities playing college football involving more than 70,000 student athletes. He encouraged the group to visit the new College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta. Later in the meeting Steve showed a video produced by the NFF which is posted to the CFO/Arbiter web site.

Comments from Commissioner Tom Burnett, Board of Managers Member

Commissioner Tom Burnett (Southland Conference) addressed the group on behalf of the Board of Managers. He reiterated the Board's support for the work of the coordinators and encouraged continuing to emphasize the safety of the student athletes.

NCAA Update

Ty Halpin briefed the group on several topics, including the recent meeting of the Board of Managers.

Rules Committee Survey Ty encouraged the coordinators to complete the survey in preparation for the NCAA football rules committee meetings, which will be in Indianapolis, February 9-11. This year's meetings will feature an open forum to allow interested parties the opportunity to present ideas to the committee.

Sideline Control This was much improved during the season and needs to continue as a point of emphasis. The rules committee believes we are moving in the right direction.

Background Checks Sutton Associates will provide additional details. The coordinators were reminded that background checks are required for FBS officials. They are required for FCS officials *only* if an FCS official will be working in any FBS games.

Competition Committee Plans continue apace for having a Competition Committee in place by 2016, to be positioned either within the NCAA structure or under the CFO. The committee would provide overall direction for the game by involving a broad range of stakeholders to provide input to the rules committee and other entities regarding popularity of the game, student-athlete safety, legislation, engagement with NFL and youth football, among a number of areas. Composition of the committee is still being discussed. The national coordinator/secretary-rules editor would be an *ex-officio* member.

Uniforms Discussion focused on the importance of clearly visible uniform numbers and contrasting teams jerseys. The issue of what wording is allowed on the jersey is an appropriate matter for the Competition Committee. The group also discussed the need for a centralized process for jersey approval.

Rules topics--Recommendations

- *Ineligible receiver downfield* Change the legal distance from three yards to one yard. Linemen who engage with an opponent within one yard would be legal if they remain engaged up to three yards.
- *Charged Team Timeouts* All timeouts are recommended to be one minute unless the head coach requests a 30-second timeout.
- *Sideline Management* Return the formal sideline warning to the rule.
- *Unsportsmanlike Conduct* Include players pushing/pulling opponent from the pile after the ball is dead. Emphasize to Referees to announce the number of the UNS foul for that player.
- *Auxiliary Down-and-Distance Indicators* Coordinators recommend that the auxiliary indicators on the press box sideline be required.

Instant Replay Committee

Committee chair Bill Carollo (Big Ten and MAC) led the discussion of issues with Instant Replay. There are still some differences around “indisputable evidence.” The bulk of the discussion was about how the FBS conferences can assist with training and resource issues for FCS conferences who are moving into using replay. The Southland and Big Sky conferences will be employing replay fully in 2015. In addition, replay will be used in some games in the Missouri Valley, Colonial, Patriot and Southwestern Athletic conferences.

There was general agreement that play-clock issues would be reviewable only under the “egregious error” proviso in Rule 12.

The 2015 National Instant Replay conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency O’Hare in Rosemont, IL, May 1-2, 2015. Coordinators are encouraged to attend. We will reach out to the television partners to invite talent and production people for their education.

Dave Parry Award

The selection committee chaired by Bill Carollo announced its recommendation of **Phil Laurie** as the 2015 David M. Parry awardee. The CFO Board of Managers has approved this choice. Phil and his wife Kay will be guests at the coordinators’ 2015 summer meeting in June for the formal presentation of the award.

Mechanics Committee

Committee chair Steve Shaw (SEC and Sun Belt) reported on the committee meeting the previous afternoon. There was extensive discussion of the move to crews of eight officials. The rules committee will vote on allowing eight officials in its upcoming meeting. It appears that all FBS conferences will use eight-person crews, pending formal approval by the American Athletic Conference, Conference-USA, and the Mid-American Conference. For 2015 the seven-person mechanics manual will include an addendum for crews of eight. The plan for 2016 is to publish separate books for these, with the seven-person manual including an appendix for crews of six to account for the possibility of a vacancy due to injury. Other key topics:

- The national mechanics remain in place for the Referee and Umpire to meet with the head coaches, beginning with the home team coach at 90 minutes before kickoff. This applies to all inter-conference games and all bowl and playoff games. Exceptions are allowed only for conference games.
- SWAC requested and received approval for positioning the Umpire in the offensive backfield as an experiment. This approval applies to conference games only.
- Officials need to enforce the rules requiring jerseys to be tucked into the pants, not tucked up under the pads, and back pads covered. Under the proposal, players not in compliance will be sent out of the game for one play, similar to the rule for helmets coming off.
- Remind officials that not every dead-ball personal foul is an unsportsmanlike-conduct foul. This is reserved for after-action fouls that are not part of the normal football play.
- Referees are admonished that they must announce the number of the UNS foul (first or second) since the second in the game carries an automatic disqualification.
- Substitution mechanics and pace-of-play processes are working well. In addition to the substitution mechanics, the Referee will signal the Center Judge (crew of 8) or Umpire (crew of 7) to move away from the ball, making it ready for play, when there are no offensive substitutes and when the officials are in position to officiate the play.
- Possibility of ball being tipped when the kicker is hit on a scrimmage kick: If the Referee would have had a foul for roughing or running into the kicker but did not drop his flag because he judged that the ball was tipped, he must make an announcement to that effect after the ball is dead in order for the play to be reviewed with regard to the kick being touched. Similar comments apply to the possibility of defensive pass interference which was not called, or the flag picked up, because the covering official judged that the ball was tipped. Again, the Referee must make the announcement when the ball becomes dead. The tipping is reviewable, and if the ball was not tipped in the vicinity of the receiver then the DPI penalty may be enforced.

The coordinators renewed their firm commitment to follow the national mechanics in all conferences. Deviations from the mechanics manual are allowed only with the explicit approval of the national coordinator.

Technology Committee

Committee chair Jim Jackson (OVC) led the discussion. It was agreed that the preseason training videos produced by the coordinators continue to be valuable and that having them posted before the season worked well. There was general agreement that we need a three-year summary of updated play interpretations so that the rule book and interpretations are available via link. Redding will work on the interpretations and send to Dave Yeast (Arbiter) when feasible.

Game Review videos will now be formatted so that they can be downloaded in their entirety rather than in several segments.

Arbiter Update

Dave Yeast briefed the group on various aspects of the CFO membership process. Officials with current membership will have access to the web site through May 31, and the new registration year begins June 1. Officials will be able to submit background-check information at the same time they register.

Recruiting Committee

Committee chair Byron Boston (Southland) commended the group for its efforts in recruiting minority officials. He noted an improvement in postseason games where crews were seen to include more minority officials, including some at the Referee position. He also cited the positive aspects of the coordinators operating within a culture of sharing officials across conferences.

Bowl Game Issues

- Redding is to meet with the Football Bowl Association (FBA) in early February to make the case for the bowls to plan and budget for eleven officials: eight on the field, Alternate Official, Instant Replay Official, IR Communicator.
- Also before the FBA is a recommended pay structure wherein fees paid to officials for bowl games will be calculated as a percentage increase over their regular season game fee.
- The consensus is that if the TV networks continue to have an official in the broadcast booth then the networks should share in the costs.
- Redding confirmed that bowl games matching two teams from the Power Five conferences will be officiated by Power Five conference officials. Similarly, games with Group of Five match-ups will have officials from Group of Five conferences. Games involving both would be officiated by either Power Five or Group of Five conference officials.

FCS Playoff Issues

- Coordinators expressed appreciation for the increase in the game fee for the FCS playoffs and for having the national coordinator involved in making the assignments.
- The *per diem* for the officials needs to be increased, as it has not been changed for many years.
- FCS coordinators asked that the crew submission date be advanced by at least one day so that the results of all regular season games would be available.

Conference Clinic Dates

AAC	July 24-25
ACC/C-USA	July 23-26
Big Sky	TBD
Big Ten/MAC/MVFC	July 10-12

Big 12/MWC/Southland	July 9-12
Colonial/Ivy/Patriot	July 17-19
MEAC	July 24-26
Northeast	July 31-August 2
OVC	July 17-19
PAC-12	TBD
SEC/Sun Belt	July 23-25
Southern	July 23-25
SWAC	July 9-12

Future Meetings

2015 National Instant Replay Conference

(For IROs and Referees)

Hyatt Regency O'Hare

9300 Bryn Mawr Avenue

Rosemont, IL

May 1-2, 2015

CFO Coordinators 2015 Summer Meeting

(Hosted by the Big Ten Conference)

The Inn at Bay Harbor

Boyne Falls, MI

May 31-June 2, 2015

Division II and III Coordinators 2015 Summer Meeting

NCAA Offices

Indianapolis, IN

July 8, 2015

CFO Coordinators 2016 Winter Meeting

National Football Foundation

Irving, TX

January 24-26, 2016

**--Rogers Redding
CFO National Coordinator**