FOOTBALL INTERPRETATIONS

- **Enforcement of Rule 9-5-1**: All officials must strictly enforce rule 9-5-1 as it pertains to racially motivated comments made on the football field. Any racial comments heard by an official must be swiftly and firmly penalized.

- **Breast Cancer Month**: October is cancer awareness month. Teams must conform to rule 1-5-3-a-5-a, every player wearing a solid color towel must be of the same color. So players who choose to wear a towel must all have the same solid color. The size of the towel must also conform to the rule. Players may wear pink color socks, sweat bands on wrists, sleeves, tape on shoes etc. these items are not covered by rule as to what color may be worn. Officials can only use a pink whistle for cancer awareness games. No other pink uniform items or equipment (i.e. hats, flags, wrist bands) are allowed.

- **Visors**: Oakley is marketing this visor under the name of Oakley Prizm Clear Shield, however it is not completely clear, there is a slight pinkish tint. The visor below is NOT legal under NFHS rules.

- **Bandanas**: Bandanas, skull caps, dew rags are allowed to be worn under the helmet, however no part can be exposed. Either cut the bandana "tail" off or remove completely.

- **Linesman**: Know the yard line of the line to gain before the snap, do not look back at the sticks behind you during the play. You will miss something.
• **Reminders to discuss with crews in pre-game:**
  1. **Team Officiating** - If you see something say something if it will help make the game better and right a wrong.
  2. **Short Wings** - Let's be great this weekend at sideline signals and mirroring spots.
  3. **Clock Awareness** - Own the Clock - everyone.
  4. **Point of Impact** - Big ones need to be called; little ones don't.
  5. **Count - Count - Count** - every play.
  6. **Fouls against scoring team** always get administered (try or succ spot).
  7. **Fouls** by K, when R is in possession at end of play, can be tacked on or administered at previous spot.
  8. **R's**, be great with your signals and stay back off of the LOS.
  9. **U's** - be active, get the ball down and be precise with penalty administration.
  10. **Deep wings**, not all contact is PI. Just get the stuff that has a material impact.

• **Medical Bands and tape:** the knee and elbow medical bands (i.e. Mueller band) used to relieve pressure and strain are legal to be worn, these are not considered adornments. If they are medical bands, they are legal to be worn. The small rubber bands (i.e. Livestrong band) are considered adornments and are not legal. The skinny sweat bands worn on biceps, calves, forearms are considered adornments and are not legal. Athletic tape can be worn on the wrist, not more than 3 thicknesses. Review rules 1-5-2 and 3 and Casebook play 1.5.

• **Kicker protection:** A kicker is afforded protection, he/she does not have to be in scrimmage kick formation. If the kicker is only 5 yards behind the snapper and "quick-kicks", the kicker is afforded protection, even though this is not a scrimmage kick formation. He/she is considered a defenseless player at the time of the kick and should be protected. If the contact is avoidable, and the defensive player still roughs the kicker, then that is always a foul. If contact is not avoidable, and it is not certain a kick is going to be made (i.e. rugby style kicker running then quickly kicks the ball), some leeway should be given to the defense in this scenario if they are making a bona fide attempt to block the kick. But it is always the defense's responsibility to avoid contact with a kicker whenever possible. We should always err on the side of safety. A passer is also always afforded protection if contact is avoidable.

• **Equipment reminders:** Knee pads must be worn over the knee and under the pants, the pants must cover the knee. Compression sleeves are legal to be worn as long as they do not have any sticky, slippery substance on them and do not enhance contact with the ball. There is not a ball approved for just kicking. An approved ball should be used in the series of downs the same as for kicking. If a team scores on a change of possession, they are allowed to bring in their own football for the try.

• **Holders:** The holder on a field goal or PAT attempt must rise from his knee if he wishes to pass or hand the ball out of this formation; if he stays on his knee and passes or hands the ball, the play is dead.

• **Injured player or helmet off:** When an officials' timeout is taken for an injured player or helmet coming off or required equipment is missing or improperly worn, the player shall be replaced for at least one down, unless halftime or an overtime intermission occurs. So if a play is run and there is an accepted foul and the down is replayed, the player must still remain out of the game until the next down.
• **Deep Wings:** in 6 and 7 man games, you must come up field and cleanup out of bounds plays. When players go into the bench area your primary responsibility is to go in after them and separate and walk them back to the field. Help your short wings on this. Officiate the entire play from off the field, do not come onto the field too early, stay wide. When the goal line is your responsibility, be aware of where the pylon is, do not back pedal past the pylon and then try to make a call at the goal line. Stay at the pylon, just back out into dead ball area on the goal line extended if the play is coming to the corner. Make eye contact with your partner to be sure he does not have a player out of bounds before ruling touchdown.

• **Interval after scores, timeouts, etc:** We have to do a better job of getting teams off the sideline after timeouts, scores and starting each half. Just because the ball isn’t live doesn’t mean it’s break time for us. We are giving the teams too much time here. At every sideline huddle either the H/L or F/S/B MUST be standing next to the huddle. The teams have 1 minute during this interval. At the 45 second mark, blow your whistle and if they don’t respond, you go into the huddle, tell the coach we’re going. If they don’t respond in a timely fashion, simply tell the R to go. He will then make the ball ready for play.

• **Dead ball:** We are to quick getting balls off the sideline. We need to watch players and stretch plays out until they are clear of any threat of fouls. Walk opposing players out of team areas. Become better dead ball officials. Never turn your back to players.

• **Communication:** All of our officials need to get comfortable to go to their crew mate with additional information when they have something to contribute, we need team officiating. We should strive, as a crew, to have the coaches, commend us on communication with the sideline. They may not agree with our judgment, but should be happy with the way we communicate with them.

• **Mirror Spots:** This gives the U a chance to put the ball down and get out. Therefore, giving them a comfortable pre-snap period to locate keys and get in position. We also can “accommodate” any sudden hurry up or no huddle offenses.

• **Sideline Control:** …get them back. Show them the paint is your area when ball is live and that you work in the paint.

• **Penalty Enforcement:** If there’s a question or conference on a rules enforcement by the crew, assume the coaches will be equally in doubt. Talk them through tricky enforcement. Provide good customer service. Take your time and get it right.

• **Line Judges:** are the TRUE clock operators. The LJ who is facing the chains really runs the game clock. The LJ facing the chains should do one of three things on every play: 1) Go up with the dead ball signal (#7) if the play is clearly short of the LTG. 2) Kill the clock when the play ends beyond the LTG, or, 3) Start the “pinch” when the dead ball spot threatens the LTG and a measurement may be necessary.

• **HL & LJ:** Pinch in after a kicked PAT. Help the U with cleaning up players.

• **Dead Ball Officiating:** Be aware of opponents who end up in the bench area. Walk them out. Make a presence of yourself. Be great dead ball officials. Strive to keep the game safe by calling safety fouls.

• **Inelgibles Downfield:** Umpires be aware when bad numbers cross your face. HL and LJ help the U with this. When there is a broken play or a scrambling QB, it is more likely ineligible will be illegally downfield.
• **Blocks Below the Waist:** Be aware Team B/R cannot block below the waist at any time outside the FBZ. We are seeing many blocks below the waist by defensive players trying to take on offensive player's blocks. These are all safety fouls and we need to get them.

• **Situation:** We had some discussion at our Chapter meeting last week concerning knee or elbow bands. Some guys are making the players remove them similar to sweat bands worn improperly or bicep bands worn for decoration. I felt that these type bands worn for a medical purpose were allowed and officials should not make players remove them. There is also a separate issue with players wearing tape or under wrap for the same purpose.
  - **RULING:** If they are medical bands, they are legal to be worn. The small rubber bands (i.e. Livestrong band) are considered adornments and are not legal. The skinny sweat bands worn on biceps, calves, forearms are considered adornments and not legal. Tape can be worn on the wrist, not more than 3 thicknesses. Review rule 1-5-2 and 3 and Casebook plays 1.5.

• **Situation:** Player A1 is lined up 5 yards behind the snapper. He “quick kicks” and is then hit. Some argued that because he was not in scrimmage kick formation he’s not protected. I said if he attempts to kick regardless of where is he lined up he is afforded protection as a kicker. Let’s assume the contact was avoidable in situation A and not avoidable in situation B. Is he protected or not? Some confusion here. Might be different in each situation. Also, let’s assume A1 began to run and then decided to throw a pass. He also gets contacted after the throw. Is he afforded protection as a passer?
  - **RULING:** Yes, he is a kicker and is afforded protection. He does not have to be in scrimmage kick formation. He is considered a defenseless player at the time of the kick and should be protected. If the contact is avoidable, and the player still rouges the kicker, then that is always a foul. If contact is not avoidable, and it was uncertain that a kick was going to be made (i.e. rugby style kicker running then quickly kicks the ball), some leeway should be given to the defense in this scenario if he is making a bona fide attempt to block the kick. But is it always the defenses responsibility to avoid contact with a kicker whenever possible? We should always err on the side of safety. You are also correct where a passer is always afforded protection if contact is avoidable.

• **Situation:** On Friday night Team A didn't show up for the game until 6:53 for a 7:00 kickoff. They got off the bus and went straight to sideline. We did coin toss at 6:57 and had the coaches come out so we could read sportsmanship message and they could verify that players were properly equipped. Is there anything that says they need to be there for the 6:30 coin toss?
  - **RULING:** If the team is delayed through no fault of their own, (i.e. traffic, bus break down, etc), this was handled correctly. If the team is on site, then the toss must be done at 6:30.

• **Situation:** Pads that go on top of a helmet - do they need the stamp on them the same as a pair of gloves or any other accessory equipment?
  - **RULING:** The helmet coverings do not need the NOCSAE approval. Helmet coverings worn on the outside of the helmet (i.e. pro caps, guardian covers, etc) are legal to be worn. If they are not similar in color, allow them to be worn, but report them to your District Interpreter.
• **Situation:** If the officiating crew loses track of the yard line, can officials use a team's sideline video equipment to determine the exact location of the chains at the change of the quarter?

• **RULING:** The use of any replay or television monitoring equipment by the game officials in making any decision relating to the game is prohibited (Rule 1-1-9). The official can use information from statisticians or reporters to make an accurate decision.