



COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC

CFO COORDINATORS ANNUAL WINTER MEETING

**National Football Foundation
Irving, TX, January 22-24, 2017**

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. The Division I coordinators were joined by:

Jon Steinbrecher, Commissioner, Mid-American Conference and Chair, CFO Board of Managers

Tom Burnett, Commissioner, Southland Conference

Raynoid Dedeaux, Assistant Commissioner, Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference

Ed Stewart, Big 12 Conference and NCAA Football Rules Committee

Keith Martin, NCAA Managing Director, Championships and Alliances

Ty Halpin, NCAA, CFO Administrator

Jim Blackwood, National Director of Instant Replay

Jeff Triplette, Arbiter Sports

Dave Yeast, Arbiter Sports

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, for the fifth consecutive year.

Steve Hatchell, CEO of the National Football Foundation, welcomed the group and introduced several members of his staff: Matthew Sign, Will Rudd, Hillary Jeffries and Ron Dilatush. He thanked the coordinators for their work on behalf of college football and expressed the Foundation's pleasure with the flourishing 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 also announced that the NFF is moving its offices to the Dallas Cowboys new facility, The Star, in Frisco, just northeast of Dallas. He assured the coordinators that the Foundation will be very happy to host our meeting at this new location.

Comments from Commissioner Jon Steinbrecher, Chair, CFO Board of Managers

Commissioner Jon Steinbrecher (Mid-American Conference) addressed the group on behalf of the Board of Managers. In his remarks he cited the need for continuing diligence regarding player safety. He commended the coordinators on their work and encouraged them to continue to improve in officiating consistency.

Commissioner Steinbrecher cited several areas of challenge:

Targeting. This continues to be an issue for the game, and we need to make sure we consistently get this right.

Changes at the NCAA. Two new bodies, the Football Oversight Committee and the Competition Committee, will have an impact on the CFO. He noted that Ty Halpin is working on a white paper regarding the CFO's history and future structure in light of these NCAA changes.

Length of game. Concerns have been expressed that the game is too long, some games lasting up to four hours. Are there changes that need to be made in managing and timing of the game?

Student-athlete safety. This needs to be a continuing focus for officials. The image of the game is suffering, and we all need to be forward-thinking about areas of the game that impact this area of concern.

Jim Jackson Announces Retirement

Jim Jackson, Ohio Valley Conference, shared with the group that he has just announced his retirement as coordinator. He made positive comments about the development and success of the CFO. Jim also thanked Commissioner Steinbrecher for hiring him when Steinbrecher was the commissioner of the OVC.

NCAA Update

Ty Halpin briefed the group on several topics. This year the rules committee will overlap meetings with the competition committee in Indianapolis on February 28-March 3. This is the "off year" for committee action, in that the only changes allowed are those that directly impact health and safety. The rules committee will discuss possible future changes in other areas of the game. To inform that discussion, the annual survey will go out soon after signing date. He also asked the coordinators to nominate officials to be the active official at the rules committee meetings.

Halpin reported on his attendance at the rules committee meeting of the American Football Coaches Association, where safety was a key discussion item. The coaches feel that the targeting rule is still good for the game and urged consistency in calling these fouls. Halpin also briefed the group on meetings of the CFO Board of

Managers and the competition committee. He engaged the coordinators in other topics such as game cards, background checks, and updating the information in the directory.

Rules Discussion

The coordinators discussed a number of items for consideration by the rules committee. Among these were:

- *Targeting.* Concern was expressed about the replay review yielding a decision of “Stands” vs. “Confirmed.” The committee will be asked to consider that a decision of “Stands” would mean that the player is not disqualified and the 15-yard penalty remains.
- *Ineligibles downfield.* The consensus is that our mechanics changes have improved the officiating of this rule but it might need some further adjustment.
- *Horse Collar Tackle.* The coordinators agreed with the proposal by Walt Anderson to include the player’s nameplate area with the shoulder-pad and jersey collar.
- *Field and Replay Officials assignments.* It was suggested that these be from the same conference, rather than the replay official assigned by the conference of the home team. Pros and cons were discussed and no consensus was reached.
- *Blocking Below the Waist.* Most feel that the rule has been improved but that it is still too complicated and hard to coach. The suggestion was presented to make the low block illegal once the ball has left the tackle box and/or if the blocker is outside the tackle box. There was general support but it was not unanimous.
- *Unsportsmanlike Conduct.* The coordinators support flagging coaches who come on the field to vigorously protest a call. The perception is that officials called more such fouls on coaches in 2016, but there is concern that we need to be more diligent. There is consensus that the exception to Rule 10-1-5 (dead-ball UNS fouls and personal fouls offsetting) is not an effective tool. The coordinators recommend that these penalties be enforced in the order of their occurrence.
- *Game Clock.* The group responded positively to the suggestion that the game clock be treated the same on incomplete passes as it is when the ball carrier or the ball goes out of bounds. The clock would stop when the ball becomes dead and start when the ball is ready for play, except that in the last two minutes of each half it would start on the snap.
- *Balance.* There was general consensus that the rules are currently out of balance between offense and defense, favoring the offensive team.

Dave Parry Award

The selection committee chaired by Bill Carollo (Big Ten and MAC) announced its recommendation that the 2017 David M. Parry award be made posthumously to **Doug Rhoads**, who was the ACC coordinator until his death in May of 2016. The CFO Board of

Managers has approved this choice. Denise Rhoads, Doug's widow, will be the guest of the CFO at the coordinators' 2017 summer meeting in June for the formal presentation of the award.

Recruiting Committee

Committee chair Byron Boston (Southland) reported for the committee and commended the group for its efforts in recruiting minority officials. He observes that the addition of the eighth official has created additional opportunities. 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.

There will be a clinic at Ohio State this spring that will focus on opportunities for new officials. David Coleman reported on his clinic in California that highlighted recruiting minority officials.

Arbiter Sports Update

Dave Yeast reported that enrollment is slightly down for football membership in CFO. Background checking is now a part of the registration process. Dave also reported the development of a new mobile app for CFO members.

A new fee structure is in place for 2017:

Division I	\$175
Division II	\$140
Division III	\$120

National Referee Conference

Walt Anderson (Big 12) led the discussion and provided handouts to the group for a tentative program for this year's conference. Highlighting the 2016 meeting were the interactions of referees from different conferences. The 2017 meeting will feature more breakouts and repeated breakouts in duplicate sessions. This year's meeting will be open to referees from D-II and D-III as well as D-I. The D-II and D-III coordinators will be asked to get an estimate of numbers of attendees to Redding by February 15.

The clinic will be April 28-29 (F and S) at the Marriott DFW North. Room cost will be \$99 single or double. Arbiter Sports will manage the registration process.

Instant Replay Committee

Jim Blackwood (National Director of Instant Replay) and committee chair Bill Carollo (Big Ten and MAC) led the discussion of issues with instant replay. They emphasized the need for consistency in the management of replay reviews. Discussion was introduced for developing a national manual for instant replay.

The coordinators viewed several targeting videos and achieved consensus regarding the ultimate outcome of the ruling. Here are the play reviewed and the agreed results:

1. Rose Bowl (USC-Penn St.) TGT call is correct. If not called on the field, replay should interrupt for review.
2. FCS Playoff (St. Francis-Villanova) TGT call is correct. If not called on the field, replay should interrupt for review.
3. FCS Playoff (Wofford-Charleston Southern) Agree with no call of TGT. Replay should not interrupt for review.
4. FCS Playoff (Jacksonville St.-Youngstown) TGT call is correct. If not called on the field, replay should interrupt for review.
5. New Mexico Bowl (New Mexico-Tulsa) Agree on the reversal by replay.
6. Miami Beach Bowl (Central Michigan-Tulsa) Not TGT. IR ruled "Stands" but should have overturned.
7. Armed Forces Bowl (La. Tech-Navy) Created by IR. Agree that this was correct.
8. St. Petersburg Bowl (Miss. St.-Miami OH) Created by IR. Agree that this was correct.
9. Russell Athletic Bowl (West VA.-Miami) TGT call is correct. If not called on the field, replay should interrupt for review.
10. Alamo Bowl (Ohio State-Colorado) TGT call is incorrect and IR properly reversed the call. This does not imply criticism of the call on the field.
11. Orange Bowl (Michigan-Florida St.) Good TGT call and correctly confirmed by IR.

Collaboration. The group heard from some of the conferences that used collaborative instant replay, both via a conference video center and tablets on the sideline. These conferences reported a very positive experience and believe that collaboration helps the IRO to achieve more correct outcomes.

Other discussion topics included more training at the national level, more extensive use of video in training of replay officials, and a possible national "pool" of replay officials.

The 2017 National Instant Replay Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Rosemont, IL, May 5-6, 2017. The conference will be held at the site again in 2018, and then will be moved to Dallas beginning in 2019. The focus this year will be on the role of instant replay with the targeting foul. Attendance is expected for instant replay officials and communicators. Coordinators are encouraged to attend also.

Mechanics Committee

Committee chair Steve Shaw (SEC and Sun Belt) reported for the committee. Points of emphasis that the committee recommends and agreed to by the coordinators include:

- *Ineligible Receiver Downfield.* The offside wing (LJ or HL) will have primary responsibility, with the Umpire assigned secondary.
- *Kickoff.* Responsibility for four Team A players on each side of the kicker: CJ in crew of 8, R crew of 7.
- *Line of Scrimmage.* No change from last year. Crew of 8: R and CJ have on-side tackle, U has guard-snapper-guard. Crew of 7: R has off-side tackle.
- *Substitution Process.* We need to re-commit to all using the same substitution mechanics. CJ has primary responsibility for spotting the ball in a crew of 8.

There was some deviation from this in 2016, and we all need to be on the same page.

- *Rugby-Style Punts.* When in question, the punter is deemed to be outside the tackle box, meaning that the rugby-style kicker loses his protection from roughing and running into. The rules committee will discuss the rule as it relates to when the rugby-style kicker becomes a runner.
- *Scrimmage kick formation.* The discussion was about whether a kick is “obvious” if a player is 10 yards deep with no personal protector. An Approved Ruling will be written to address this.
- *Use of the official-to-official (O2O) communication system.* The group discussed the role of the instant replay official and what he may communicate to the field. This is allowed for administrative matters where the speed and efficiency of the process can be improved.
- *O2O during a review.* The O2O system may be used as the primary communication tool. This would not eliminate the sideline replay assistant.

General CFO Issues

- *Uniforms and Equipment.* Considerable discussion focused on a variety of concerns. It is recommended that the competition committee and rules committee take ownership of several issues: jerseys with non-contrasting numbers, knee pads, short “pants,” uncovered pads, eye black, face paint, messaging on the uniform and on players’ bodies, etc.
- *“Leaping” Rule.* The coordinators recommend amending Rule 9-1-10-b to remove “from beyond the neutral zone.” They also recommend creating language that makes leaping and hurdling illegal on scrimmage place kick attempts.
- *Formations.* The rules committee should address the issue of players on the line of scrimmage with eligible numbers being covered, because of the confusion this places on the defense. Also the suggestion was made that a player numbered 50-79 should not be allowed to be on the end of the line. Coordinators are also encouraged to have their officials clean up the formations by flagging illegal alignments.
- *Peelback and Blindsided Blocks.* The suggestion was made that the rules committee discuss making these illegal, whether or not targeting or blocking below the waist is involved.
- *Sideline Management.* The document that the coordinators drafted near the end of the 2016 season will be revised and distributed in time for spring clinics. Coordinators need to make sure that our mechanics support the document.

Bowl Game Issues

Coordinators expressed concern over the length and complexity of the independent-contractor form that the Football Bowl Association requires for all officials. The earlier suggestion about modifying the conferences’ contract to include postseason

games did not gain the support of all the conferences. David Coleman (PAC-12) will take this up with the conference attorneys, as apparently California labor laws may be part of the problem.

There was discussion around the issue of the level of bowl games being assigned to the Group of Five conferences, namely, that G5 officials are not being assigned to bowl games between two Power Five universities. Redding reported that the Board of Managers had discussed this at the request of one of the G5 conferences, but that he had received no directive to change the bowl assignment process.

FCS Issues

The coordinators discussed several issues specific to FCS officials.

- *Crews of Eight.* The MEAC and SWAC will use 8-person crews starting in 2017. This will be true also for the D-II Lone Star and the MIAA conferences.
- *Player Safety: Crews of Eight.* The question was posed as to whether the use of eight officials positively impacts player safety. These items were cited as improvements: protection of the quarterback with respect to targeting and low hits; better coverage of linemen executing chop blocks; better general coverage to protect players. Redding will draft a memo to the affected coordinators to help them make the case for crews of eight to their conferences.
- *Instant Replay.* These conferences will use Instant Replay in 2017: Big Sky, Colonial, MEAC, Missouri Valley, Northeast, Ohio Valley, Patriot, Southern, Southland, SWAC.
- *Instant Replay in the FCS Playoffs:* Questions were raised about DV Sport assigning the Communicator for the playoff games. Redding agreed to take this up with the FCS committee.

Summer Meeting

The coordinators' 2017 summer meeting will be hosted by the SEC, at the Sandestin Hilton Hotel in Destin, FL. Dates are June 4-6. Halpin will send a link for registration at the hotel.

Hosts for Future Meetings

We will continue to hold the annual winter meeting at the National Football Foundation, and we are very grateful to the NFF for being such wonderful hosts.

Here is the rotation for hosting the annual summer meetings:

- 2018--PAC-12
- 2019--Big 12
- 2020--Arbiter Sports
- 2021--Big Ten
- 2022—ACC

Secretary-Rules Editor Change

Redding announced that his term as Secretary-Rules Editor to the NCAA Football Rules Committee ends August 31, 2017. Steve Shaw has been named the new SRE and

his four-year term will begin September 1, 2017. Redding will continue as the National Coordinator of Football Officials.

Future Meetings

2017 CFO National Referees Conference

*DFW Airport Marriott
Irving, TX
April 28-29, 2017*

2017 CFO National Instant Replay Conference

*Hyatt Regency O'Hare
Rosemont, IL
May 5-6, 2017*

2017 CFO Coordinators Summer Meeting

(Hosted by Southeastern Conference)

*Sandestin Hilton Hotel
Destin, FL
June 4-6, 2017*

Division II and III Coordinators 2017 Summer Meeting

NCAA Offices
Indianapolis, IN
July 12-13, 2017

2018 CFO Coordinators Winter Meeting

*National Football Foundation
January 22-24, 2018*

**--Rogers Redding
CFO National Coordinator**