



## **COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC**

### **CFO COORDINATORS ANNUAL WINTER MEETING**

**Irving, TX, January 26-28, 2014**

#### **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 in attendance were joined by:

Ty Halpin, NCAA, CFO Administrator  
Jeff Triplette, Arbiter Sports  
Dave Yeast, Arbiter Sports  
Raynoid Dedeaux, Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference  
Ed Stewart, Big 12 Conference  
Atsu Hamada, Japanese American Football Association  
Aki Takakura, Japanese American Football Association

#### **Welcoming Remarks**

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.

Rogers Redding, CFO national coordinator, welcomed the coordinators and visitors, and thanked the National Football Foundation for once again hosting the meeting.

#### **Comments from Board Chair Jon Steinbrecher**

Dr. Jon Steinbrecher, Commissioner of the Mid-American Conference and chair of the CFO Board of Managers, addressed the group on behalf of the board. He announced that the contract of Rogers Redding as national coordinator has been renewed for three more years. Dr. Steinbrecher observed that the targeting foul was

managed generally quite well, albeit with some situations where there were some unwarranted reversals. The rule drew considerable media commentary at the beginning of the season but this diminished with time. He expressed the board's continued strong support for the rule.

The coordinators were encouraged to think strategically with regard to player safety, and cited low hits on quarterbacks as an area that the commissioners are becoming concerned about. Dr. Steinbrecher noted that unsportsmanlike behavior is one again emerging as a concern. He also expressed the view that coaches are being allowed too much latitude in their sideline behavior and that officials need to do a better job of keeping them on the sidelines and off the field.

Dr. Steinbrecher thanked the coordinators for their work and assured everyone of the board's continuing support of the progress of the CFO.

### **Rules Discussion**

Ty Halpin (NCAA) led the discussion of several rules topics in preparation for the February meeting of the NCAA football rules committee. It was noted that this is the off year for rules changes, so that the only changes to the rules will be directly related to safety of the student-athlete. Among the topics discussed:

- **Low hits on the quarterback** The commissioners and the coordinators support a rule to prohibit hits to the knees of the passer. The caution is to recognize the distinction between a forcible hit to the knee and a legitimate wrap-up tackle.
- **Targeting** Removing the 15-yard penalty when Instant Replay overturns targeting will be a rules committee discussion. It was observed that often there is also another foul involved, such as roughing the passer, kick-catch interference, unnecessary roughness, etc. Referees will need to announce both fouls in these cases, in which the yardage penalty should stand even if the player is not disqualified. The group also advocates replacing "initial contact" with "forcible contact" in the language of the targeting rules. There are differing opinions on Instant Replay "creating" a targeting foul when none is called on the field.
- **Jersey/Numeral Contrasting Colors** The coordinators encourage the rules committee to be more proactive with equipment manufacturers, as the difficulty of reading jersey numbers is an issue of increasing concern.
- **Sensor equipment** The rules committee will need to address the growing interest in equipping players in games with equipment that measures acceleration, force of impact, etc.
- **Sideline Control** There is general concern about coaches coming on to the field and officials' inability to control the sidelines. The group expressed differences of opinion about restoring the "sideline warning" or staying with the current rule but being more diligent about enforcement.

### **Instant Replay Committee**

Committee chair Bill Carollo (Big Ten and MAC) announced a day-long clinic on Wednesday, March 19 at the Big Ten offices. This will be for prospects who are

interested in becoming instant replay officials and those in their first two years in the booth, but it is not intended for current veteran replay officials. He reiterated the need for continued training for all replay officials. The discussion centered on the need for improved understanding of “indisputable video evidence” as well as better clarity of “egregious error.” The group expressed support for allowing the recovery of a loose ball to be a reviewable play. Other topics included:

- The need for Instant Replay training for FCS referees in advance of playoff games
- The development of an assessment tool to allow coordinators to evaluate the performance of Instant Replay officials.
- A reminder that Instant Replay is not intended to fix everything.

### **Dave Parry Award**

The selection committee chaired by Bill Carollo (Big Ten and MAC) announced its recommendation of **Milt Halstead** as the 2014 David M. Parry awardee. The CFO Board of Managers has approved this choice. Milt and his wife will be honored at the coordinators’ 2014 summer meeting in June.

### **Arbiter Update**

Jeff Triplette and Dave Yeast briefed the group on a number of changes that Arbiter is making that impact CFO. These include:

- Membership fees are increasing at all levels due to rising costs. It was noted that the fees have remained at \$100 at all levels since 2009 while services and costs have increased. Fees in 2014 for D-I, D-II and D-III will be \$150, \$125 and \$110, respectively. Coordinators expressed concern about the sizeable increase and the burden it places on officials.
- Mechanics manual will be online and available by an app for smartphones, etc.
- Coordinators will be able to see the percentage of any video that officials watch, rather than knowing only if they watch the entire video.

### **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.

### **Mechanics Committee**

Committee chair Steve Shaw (SEC and Sun Belt) reported on the committee meeting the previous evening. A February 15 deadline is set for coordinators to send him changes to the current mechanics manual. The group’s discussion centered on several issues; note the changes which appear in **bold typeface**.

- **The pregame meeting of the Referee and Umpire will now take place 90 minutes before kickoff.** The group confirmed that the Referee and Umpire will

participate in this meeting unless a conference wishes to have other officials at the meeting for games *within its conference only*. It is mandatory for the Referee and Umpire to be in this meeting at all games between teams in different conferences.

- **Head Linesman/Side Judge and Line Judge/Field Judge will switch sidelines at half time.** The chain and down box will remain opposite the press box. HL/SJ will work the first half on the press box side.
- **Scrimmage Play mechanics: When the ball is snapped inside the B-25, the initial position of the Back Judge is on the end line.**
- **Signal for more than 11 players/recount: index finger elevated and twirling.**
- **Media Timeout: Use the “punch out” signal (both fists extended to the side with arms parallel to the ground) instead of the “T” in Signal 4.**
- **Full media timeout: Red Hat to the top of the numbers. For floater or 30-second timeout, Red Hat to the bottom of the numbers.**
- **Instant Replay: On scoring plays and changes of possession, the Sideline Assistant will give thumbs up to indicate that the game will *not* be stopped for a review. Otherwise the game will be stopped.**
- Initial position of the Referee: the group discussed moving the Referee to the QB blind side rather than the throwing-arm side. Conferences are encouraged to experiment with this in spring scrimmages and spring games.

#### **Presentation by Bill Hancock, Executive Director, College Football Playoff**

Bill Hancock briefed the coordinators on the new College Football Playoff, the successor to the Bowl Championship Series.

#### **Presentation by Steve Hatchell**

Steve Hatchell made a presentation about efforts the National Football Foundation is undertaking to counter negative images of the game at all levels. He reiterated the important role that officials play in advancing and protecting the integrity of the game.

#### **Technology Committee**

Committee chair Jim Jackson (OVC) discussed the future focus of the technology committee. Initial emphasis will be on pylon plays and the pace of play involving substitutions. He will email the group with specific instructions.

#### **Big 12: Experiment using Eight Officials**

Walt Anderson (Big 12) discussed the conference’s one-year experiment approved by the rules committee in conference games to use an eighth official, located in the offensive backfield opposite the Referee. He used video to illustrate several observations about the positive results of this change. The conference will report its experience to the rules committee and request a rule change to allow the use of eight officials.

### **CFO Issues**

- **Bowl assignments:** Rogers Redding briefed the group on a possible plan for assigning officials to the 39 bowl games including the national championship game (there will be four new bowl games for the 2014 season). Under this proposed scenario, the five contract conferences (ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, SEC, and PAC-12) would have a total of 24 games and the remaining five conferences (AAC, C-USA, MAC, MWC, and Sun Belt) a total of 15.
- **FCS playoff assignments:** Redding expressed interest in the CFO being more involved in how officials are assigned for the FCS playoff games.
- **Strategic vision for the CFO:** The Board of Managers has asked for the development of a strategic plan for the CFO, to reflect how football officiating should adjust to the evolving nature of the game. Redding will appoint a small task force of coordinators to work with him on developing this strategic vision.

### **2014 Summer Coordinators Meeting**

Terry McAulay (American Athletic Conference) announced that the AAC would host the 2014 summer meeting at the Viking Hotel in Newport, RI.

### **Future Meetings**

#### **2014 National Instant Replay Conference**

(For IROs and Referees)

InterContinental Hotel

Rosemont, IL

May 16-17, 2014

#### **CFO Coordinators 2014 Summer Meeting**

Hosted by the American Athletic Conference

Newport, RI

June 1-4, 2014

#### **CFO Coordinators 2015 Winter Meeting**

National Football Foundation

Irving, TX

January 25-27, 2015

**--Rogers Redding  
CFO National Coordinator**