

September 2nd, 2026

Football Officials,

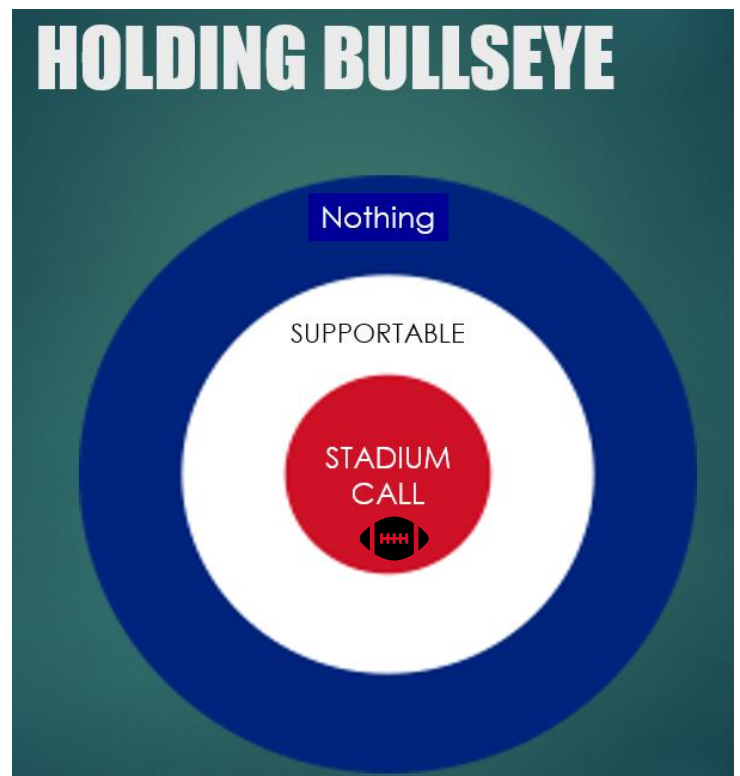
There's a touch of "fall" in the air these days! Hopefully you've been able to knock off some of the rust from the offseason and are working towards your goals for this year! I certainly saw a lot on film that I need to improve upon... it was brutal. Below are a few thoughts for all of us this week. Be sure to reach out if there's anything that comes up during your prep, or after your games. *Smart Whistles* out there!

Week One Training Email

1. 1. Rules Knowledge -- Own Your Learning!
 - a. Week One Rules Quiz: <https://forms.gle/xn7x8RAXwHU3j6VRA>
 - b. I invite your feedback on these quizzes. Please enjoy as you hit the road this week!
2. Field Mechanics:
 - a. "Trickeration"
 - i. When the offense decides to:
 1. Run a trick play,
 2. Come out in a funky formation, or
 3. Utilize a fancy rules exception... Their formation and execution of that play must be perfect.
 - ii. Things to make sure of when there is a chance for some tricky business:
 1. Are all players within the 9-yard marks (inside the top of the numbers) after the Ready for Play has been blown?
 2. Do we still have five mouth-breathers numbered 50-79?
 - a. If we are in a situation where the numbering exception applies, remember that players still need to be eligible by both position and number
 3. Who are our covered up or otherwise ineligible receivers?
 4. Double Pass -- Remember that we can only have one forward pass. So... was that first pitch forward or backward?
 5. Visual deception -- The quarterback leaves their position behind the center, appearing confused and looking for a call from their coach or trying to call a timeout. With the defense uncertain of what's going on, another offensive player can take the snap and capitalize on confusion. -- NOT legal.
 6. Make sure all "laterals" beyond the line of scrimmage are backward.
 - b. How do we cover the tricky stuff?
 - i. Cling to our pre-snap routine -- Count, Clock, Down and distance. Communicate with your crew mates. Move with a purpose.
 - ii. Use the radios -- a great tool to share the key information. That includes: if we know the play is coming, who the "dead" receivers are, etc.
 - iii. Take your time -- process what you saw. Come together as a crew. A late flag is better than no flag at all.
 - iv. Be the Crew Saver! -- as we've all heard. Have an opinion and know when to share it!
3. Officiating Philosophy:
 - a. A little fun with Offensive Holding...
 - b. Throw it at the Bullseye!
 - i. When we think about whether to throw a foul, or not... location on the field should be part of the consideration... rather... it had better be.

- ii. Barring the block being a “take down,” we shouldn’t be throwing Holding on players clearly away from the action. That is...the ball and the action is to the other side of the field.
 - 1. Even then... some take downs are *not* thrown when clearly away from the action.
- iii. The closer we get to the “bullseye” (the point of attack), the higher our level of scrutiny.
 - 1. And the further away we are, the more we can (*and should*) pass on the foul.
- iv. Now... if a defender is literally blocked into the runner and makes the tackle, at or near the original line, why on earth would we also throw for Offensive Holding (OH) on that?
 - 1. The athlete still made the play. Don’t throw!
- c. Okay... that’s enough rambling. All this to say... focus your fouls on the point of attack and on athletes still being able to make plays.

Just remember the Holding Bullseye!



- 4. Film Room
 - a. Link: <https://youtu.be/3xKLBBvZsD0>
 - b. Many thanks to the crews featured in this week’s film!

Remember to set the tone well. Whomever throws that first OH, PI, SW, etc. sets the standard for your whole crew for the whole game for that foul! Don’t be the cat who forces your whole crew to eat crow all game long!

Tyler Spear
 Coordinator of Football Officials, WHSAA
 970-554-1600 (cell)
tyler.s.spear@gmail.com