

Overview

The meeting, led primarily by Mark Bradley with contributions from Randy Hodges and other officials, focused on preparing football officials for the upcoming season with an emphasis on rule consistency, sideline management, and professional conduct. Key topics included clarifying rules on ineligible receivers to address statewide inconsistencies, introducing new officials to the community, and recognizing those who officiated state championship games. The association outlined mandatory meeting and testing requirements to ensure officials are knowledgeable and eligible for varsity and playoff games, encouraging officials to use testing as a learning tool rather than a mere formality.

Sideline management emerged as a critical point of emphasis, with detailed guidance on controlling coach and sideline behavior, including limits on coach movement, handling misconduct, and maintaining professionalism without retaliation. The group discussed strategies for de-escalation and consistent enforcement to reduce coach complaints. Additionally, officials were reminded of their responsibilities regarding non-official personnel and spectator interactions to maintain game integrity.

Throughout the meeting, the importance of consistency and communication was underscored as essential to improving game management and reducing abuse toward officials, particularly new members. Randy Hodges encouraged officials to support one another, maintain composure, and uphold standards to foster a positive officiating environment. The meeting concluded with a call to action for officials to embrace these principles to enhance the quality and fairness of football officiating statewide.

Detailed Summary

Ineligible Receiver Alignment

The meeting opened with a discussion on the rules regarding ineligible receivers downfield during a pass play. Randy Hodges highlighted a specific scenario where a player lined up incorrectly could lead to penalties such as ineligible downfield, illegal formation, or illegal touching. See image below. In the clip associated with this image, the inside receiver, who is covered and on the line, caught a touchdown pass and no call was made.



This topic is critical as inconsistent enforcement across different levels (varsity vs. subvarsity) causes confusion and complaints from coaches. The group acknowledged the need for statewide consistency in applying these rules to maintain fairness and clarity.

- Randy Hodges emphasized the importance of calling ineligible downfield penalties consistently in varsity games.
- There is disagreement among officials statewide on how to interpret certain alignment rules, but we need to enforce the rules.
- Randy Hodges noted that there is no way to defend a no call for a player lined up illegally as per the official interpretation.
- The group recognized that inconsistency in rule enforcement is a major complaint from coaches.

Officials Association Structure

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Mark Bradley presented the organizational structure of the officials' board, including roles such as president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, member at large, and crew chiefs. He encouraged officials to use their crew chiefs as primary points of contact for issues and to escalate concerns to the member at large if necessary. This structure supports communication and problem resolution within the officiating community.

- Mark Bradley urged officials to treat their crew chief as their first point of contact.
- The member at large serves as an advocate for officials with unresolved issues.
- The board includes eight crew chiefs responsible for managing crews.

Introduction of New Officials

New officials attending the meeting were introduced to the group, sharing brief backgrounds and their officiating experience. This segment aimed to welcome newcomers, foster camaraderie, and encourage veteran officials to support and mentor them. The association values inclusivity and peer support to help new officials integrate and succeed.

- Mark Bradley asked new officials to give brief introductions about themselves.
- Veteran officials were encouraged to welcome and assist new members.
- Three new officials shared their prior experience and enthusiasm for learning.
 - Devin Beale – Army at Ft Carson, first year officiating tackle football
 - Eric Leggette – Army at Ft Carson, first year officiating
 - Tim Hazen – Transfer official - officiated a couple years in other states

Recognition of State Championship Officials

Officials who worked last year's state championship games were recognized and presented with plaques. They shared brief reflections on their games, including team matchups and

game conditions. This recognition honors their contributions and motivates others to aspire to similar achievements.

- Mark Bradley presented plaques to officials from various classification championship games.
- Officials shared details about their games, including scores and weather conditions.
- The recognized officials will officiate the upcoming Colorado Kickoff Classic on August 28 at Weidner Field.

Meeting and Training Requirements

The meeting schedule and training requirements for officials were reviewed, emphasizing the necessity of attending or viewing meetings and passing quizzes to maintain eligibility. Officials must complete a minimum of six meetings (which does not include the master clinic) to qualify for playoff assignments. They must also have attended the master clinic in person, watched the simulcast, or watched the recording to qualify for playoff assignments. The association is implementing quizzes to ensure engagement and prevent last-minute binge learning.

- Mark Bradley detailed the schedule of in-person and online meetings.
- Officials must pass quizzes within two weeks of viewing online meetings to receive credit.

Eligibility and Testing Procedures

Eligibility criteria for working varsity and playoff games were outlined, including passing mechanics and rules tests by specified deadlines. Officials have two attempts to pass tests, with the second attempt focusing only on missed questions. The testing system aims to improve knowledge and ensure readiness, though passing tests alone does not guarantee comprehensive rule understanding.

- Officials must pass mechanics and rules tests to work varsity games.
- Playoff eligibility requires passing tests by August 19th.
- The second test attempt only includes previously missed questions to aid passing.
- Randy Hodges encouraged officials to use testing as a learning tool, not just a formality for playoff eligibility.

Sideline Management and Control

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Sideline management was identified as a point of emphasis for the season. Mark Bradley reviewed rules and mechanics manual guidance on managing coaches, players, and others on the sideline. Officials were reminded that wings are responsible for their sideline and must actively enforce boundaries and behavior standards. Consistency and communication are key to effective sideline control.

- Wings are responsible for controlling their sideline and should not defer to referees unnecessarily.
- Coaches must be kept within a two-step limit from the sideline, with some flexibility for non-abusive behavior.
- Officials should set clear expectations with coaches during pregame conferences.
- Inconsistent enforcement of sideline rules leads to coach complaints.

Handling Coach and Sideline Behavior

The group discussed appropriate responses to coach misconduct, including persistent complaining, profanity, demonstrative behavior, and entering the field. Officials were advised to use warnings and flags judiciously, focusing on de-escalation and professionalism. The importance of not retaliating verbally and maintaining control was emphasized. Clear communication and consistent application of rules help manage sideline tensions.

- Officials cannot yell back at coaches and must maintain professionalism.
- Flags should be used only when supported by rules, not to make a point.
- Coaches entering the field to dispute calls can be flagged immediately if pregame expectations were set.
- De-escalation techniques include asking coaches to repeat statements and labeling behavior as unsportsmanlike.

Game Day Conduct and Support Roles

Guidance was provided on managing non-official personnel such as statisticians, ball persons, photographers, and fans. Officials should ensure these individuals do not interfere with play or coaching. Band and field ceremonies should not be penalized but noted in reports. Spectator interactions should be avoided, with game management or coaches handling issues. The goal is to maintain focus on the game and minimize distractions.

- Statisticians and ball persons must stay within designated areas and not coach players.
- Photographers should be kept well back from the field, especially near goal lines.
- Officials should not engage with spectators and should seek assistance from game management or coaches.
- Band and field ceremonies are not penalized but should be documented if they cause delays.

Consistency and Communication Challenges

The meeting concluded with a focus on addressing the biggest complaints from coaches: inconsistency and lack of communication among officials. Randy Hodges stressed the importance of working together to manage games effectively, supporting new officials, and maintaining professionalism despite challenges. The association aims to improve retention by reducing abuse and fostering a supportive environment.

- Inconsistency in officiating is the top complaint from coaches.
- Effective communication among crew members is essential for game management.
- New officials often face more abuse and need support from veterans.
- Officials should be mindful of their mood and seek help if needed to maintain focus and fairness.