"One Hundred Helpful Hints"

- 1. The only part of officiating to emphasize is your signaling.
- 2. Signals should be distinct and deliberate at all times.
- 3. All officials should pick up time out signals. Only the man (or men) who see a touchdown should signal.
- 4. All officials should check down and distance on every play. Don't miss a down.
- 5. Always be sure of a foul. Never guess. There are no phantom fouls.
- 6. Call fouls immediately. Do not delay or be too late. However, it is better to be right than rapid.
- 7. Be prepared to work with less than a full crew in emergencies.
- 8. Special care should be given to ball spotting on "previous spot plays." Do not give yardage or take it away. Spot the ball properly.
- 9. Be consistent in declaring the ball dead.
- 10. Be aware of the first down measurement. Don't move the ball too quickly.
- 11. Be sure there are no more than 22 players on the playing field when the play starts. Never more than 11 players on either team.
- 12. Be especially alert during a "hurry-up" offense.
- 13. A time out signal should be given if there is doubt about recovery of a fumble. Team direction can follow when officials are positive which team has the ball.
- 14. Watch for holding after the initial block.
- 15. Personal fouls do not include holding, illegal use of the hands, or pass interference.
- 16. Be alert to a "pick-off" on forward pass plays.
- 17. Watch for hooking and holding by the defense against potential pass receivers.
- 18. Officials are never to grasp or hold on the facemask of any player when they attempt to prevent or break up a fight.
- 19. No disqualification unless necessary. Be sure to see the entire action. Check with other officials to verify what was seen.
- 20. Questions of judgment on the part of any official are not open to argument, either on the field or after the game.
- 21. Do not become too familiar with coaches, players or athletic directors.
- 22. Coaches are not permitted on the playing field during the game without permission. Coaches are not to visit with the officials in their dressing room.
- 23. Do not blow your whistle in anticipation of a foul.
- 24. Pick up your flag if you realize the foul wasn't there.
- 25. Don't try to "run" or "bulldoze" a phantom foul if you know you were wrong or mistaken.
- 26. Remember the four "W's" in reporting fouls: Who, what, where, when.
- 27. Be discreet in speaking to the referee if you believe he measured off the wrong yardage. (But speak to him).
- 28. Officials not involved specifically on a play that is ruled dead should be aware of continuing action fouls. Clean up the play.
- 29. If number of down is in doubt, call a time out, draw aside and consult. Get it right. That's the only thing that matters in such a situation. Discuss it on the field, not after the game or at half time.
- 30. Be certain to stop the clock following a 4th down play.
- 31. Help each other on possible 1st down measurements.
- 32. All officials should always be aware of the down, the distance, and the spot of the ball.
- 33. Be watchful for piling on, crackbacks, chop blocks and tripping.
- 34. All officials should review, in their own minds, basic spots of enforcement as a check on the referee's enforcement of penalty. If he is wrong, speak to him immediately and not later as discussion talk.
- 35. Review legal and illegal blocks. Be alert for illegal blocking during kick plays.

- 36. Be sure to call pass interference, if there is a foul, on a completed pass. It might be a question of a 1st down.
- 37. All officials should be in their designated area at snap.
- 38. Officials should be alert for pass or run on all plays.
- 39. On loose balls near a sideline, be aware of who had last possession in case the ball rolls out of bounds.
- 40. Be especially careful of who touched a ball that goes out of bounds.
- 41. Be aware of crew mechanics on "hurry-up" offense.
- 42. Review crowd noise procedures that might delay the game.
- 43. Know the state of the ball during all fouls- dead, loose or in possession.
- 44. Be alert to clock status and players actions that involve timing.
- 45. Keep officiating after you call a foul.
- 46. Be alert for possible half the distance penalties on fouls.
- 47. On reporting foul to referee: official should know the location of the foul, whether it was defensive or offensive team, number of player, and status of the ball.
- 48. Each official shares an equal responsibility for rules interpretation.
- 49. A quick good review is the Summary of Penalties in the back of the Rule Book.
- 50. Avoid, if possible, warming up on the field prior to the game. Use the dressing room.
- 51. Try to have a good mental attitude in all games. All games are important.
- 52. Hand carry your uniform bag if you're traveling by airplane.
- 53. Do not discuss controversial calls with anyone after a game unless it is with the referee and a designated press representative. (Not on judgment calls).
- 54. A majority opinion prevails in a crew conference. Referee's vote counts as one vote only.
- 55. Try to keep area near ball free of players on a measurement for a first down. This is necessary for spectators and the press visibility.
- 56. Try to discourage comments and talk between tacklers and ball carriers.
- 57. Observe players for late action after the ball is declared dead.
- 58. Officials with the responsibility to count players before snap should do it on every play. (Especially field goals and punts).
- 59. Pick up time out signals when a runner goes out of bounds.
- 60. Any official who calls a foul should double check with referee as to proper distance and down.
- 61. Listen to the referee's option to captains if possible (unobtrusively, of course).
- 62. Do not move too fast. Most times it is better to let the play come to you.
- 63. Be sure to see entire situation before disqualifying a player. Check with other officials if necessary.
- 64. Try to get player's number when you throw your flag, but that is not as important as continuing to officiate.
- 65. Do not allow yourself to become irritated or annoyed at coaches or players.
- 66. Give fumbles a good look. Don't be in a hurry to call it.
- 67. Know the team captains by number.
- 68. Be decisive in your signaling when you call a foul. Indecisiveness gives the impression of uncertainty.
- 69. "Out of bounds" spot must be marked by official covering the play.
- 70. Officials should be aware of their responsibilities on measurements. Let the official on the ball know if it is close to a measurement. Yell "close" or any other signal that you use.
- 71. Be certain of your responsibility at the end of each period.
- 72. Know tie-breaker procedures of regular season games and play-off games.
- 73. Know your position on a free kick in a short kick situation.
- 74. Watch for deliberately stopping clock to either conserve or consume time.
- 75. Wear glasses or contacts if you need them. There is no stigma attached.
- 76. Be aware of the mandatory equipment and uniform code as listed in the Rule Book.
- 77. On a penalty option, only one captain is permitted to indicate team's penalty option.
- 78. Time out is not charged to a team when the injured player leaves the game during an injury time out.
- 79. Record each time out. Check with other officials after each time out as to the number remaining.

- 80. Notify the Supervisor of Officials (or Commissioner) if you are injured. Don't try to work if you are injured or ill.
- 81. Be sure to check with crew members regarding the crew's next assignment.
- 82. Remember that the players are younger and get excited and emotional. An official should not become excited or emotional. Be poised and calm.
- 83. Never ask for game tickets.
- 84. Stay in the ball game, no matter how easy the game moves, and be especially alert near the end of the half.
- 85. Try not to be, or give the appearance of being antagonistic, militaristic, or over-bearing to players or coaches.
- 86. Allow plenty of time for your game. Don't ever hurry a game to make your next appointment or to catch a plane. It shows in your work.
- 87. The dressing room is closed to everyone, including friends.
- 88. Be careful of association with strangers in strange places. Stay aloof.
- 89. Remember that the fans pay to see players and teams. (Not the officials).
- 90. Chain men and clock men are local personnel. Don't talk in front of them concerning plays or players or coaches. Talk might be repeated.
- 91. Cooperate with the coach when penalties are called.
- 92. Don't become a twelfth man on the field. Don't get too close to the play.
- 93. Comments of the coaches and players on the sidelines should not influence your decisions and calls.
- 94. Stay in shape and watch your weight.
- 95. Don't ever guess on a foul. See it and call it. Don't look for it.
- 96. Keep remembering to know distance and spot of the ball. Yell it to each other.
- 97. Be courteous to coaches and players, even if their questions seem to be ridiculous.
- 98. Don't blow your whistle unless you see the ball.
- 99. Officials are not rated or ranked on the number of fouls they call. There is no quota, only if the calls are there and called, or not called.
- 100. Remember with all these things to keep in mind—Have Fun! If you can't have fun officiating maybe you need to look for another avocation.