**2015 Football Bulletin I**

**August 19, 2015**

To: Commissioners, Board Interpreters, Curriculum reps, CIAC and league reps, media.

From: Bill Riccio, Jr. State Interpreter

Re: Notes on 2015 clinic and season

1. **Interpreters’ Meeting**

The six state interpreters met on Thursday, Aug. 13 to discuss some issues that needed clarification for the new year. The decisions were as follows:

* + - 1. Drones – The use of drones was addressed at the July national conference call and a request was made to find out if individual states had drone policies. The CIAC has no such policy, but it was considered important enough for the interpreters to address.

Our policy is simple: Drones are allowed under the current applications of the rules. They will be allowed in regular season contests as long as they do not hover within the confines of the field delineated by the side and end lines extending vertically. In other words, the drones can hover outside the field extending upwards. They will not be allowed to hover directly within the field as it extends upwards.

* + - 1. **Blocking below the waist –** This year’s rule book has a Point of Emphasis on low blocks, but makes particular mention of blocks made by linemen in a two-point stance from a shotgun formation.

As we know, low blocks are allowed in the Low-Blocking Zone until that zone disintegrates. It disintegrates when the ball physically leaves the zone. When in a shotgun, the zone disintegrates in tenths of a second. The rules committee believes that a player in a two-point stance cannot make a block below the waist in one continuous move. It is called “nearly impossible.” Nearly impossible is impossible. It’s not a block we see often, but if seen it should be called as an illegal block. Players in a three-point stance will still be allowed to block below the waist in a shotgun provided they do so in one motion at the snap. Boards will further explain this at chapter meetings.

* + - 1. **Excessive Contact and Blindside Blocks –** The guideline developed to enforce the new “Defenseless Player” rule was discussed and is in the process of being distributed to the state’s officials. It has been sent to the media and coaches have reviewed it, or will review it, during coaches’ sessions with local officials. The video shown at the State Clinic has also been distributed, and others are being reviewed for distribution.
1. **State Clinic**

More than 200 officials attended the state clinic on Aug. 15 at West Haven High School and Ken Strong Stadium. A review of the new rules with emphasis on the new Defenseless Player rule took place.

For the first time, a separate breakout was held for new candidates after the rules review. This proved to be successful and helpful to the new officials.

During the day a proposal was made to have a New Candidates Session separate from the regular State Clinic and geared toward giving new candidates from the six boards a chance to ask questions, review issues directly affecting them, and teaching them the basics of football officiating in an enclosed session. A curriculum will be developed and proposal made to the State Board during the season.

A special thanks to all the presenters and all the guys who helped with the logistics of putting the clinic together. The station presentations were among the best we’ve ever had, and people were more than prepared.

Presenters are asked to email their electronic files for distribution to the various boards. Whatever hand-outs were given out should be emailed to me at wmvrjr@yahoo.com and I will forward them to the boards.

1. **New shirts**

Members are reminded the State Board has approved a proposal to change the shirts from a one-inch stripe to a 2- or 21/4-inch stripe. The final decision will be made at the September meeting and announced to the six boards.

1. **Reminders**
2. **Bands –** Bands have become a problem. Review what bands can and cannot do while the game is on-going. Leagues have their own regulations regarding band etiquette.
3. **Scoreboards –** Remind your schools to check their scoreboards, especially the clocks. We had several situations last year where clocks weren’t checked until they were needed and, of course, we had problems.
4. **Chain Crews –** Boards are reminded that chain crews are to be provided by home management. Officials should not solicit people for the chain/down marker at any level to prevent liability. They must however, go over chain mechanics prior to the game.
5. **Microphones –** Referees are reminded that the CIAC does not want us to announce the number of an offending player during the announcement of penalty enforcements. If you’re wired for sound, just announce the foul, team and enforcement. Use the mike to explain any unusual circumstances.

Next week we’ll review some problems that came up last season and should be addressed again should they arise.

Thanks,

Bill R.