

AOS Presentation – 09/14/26

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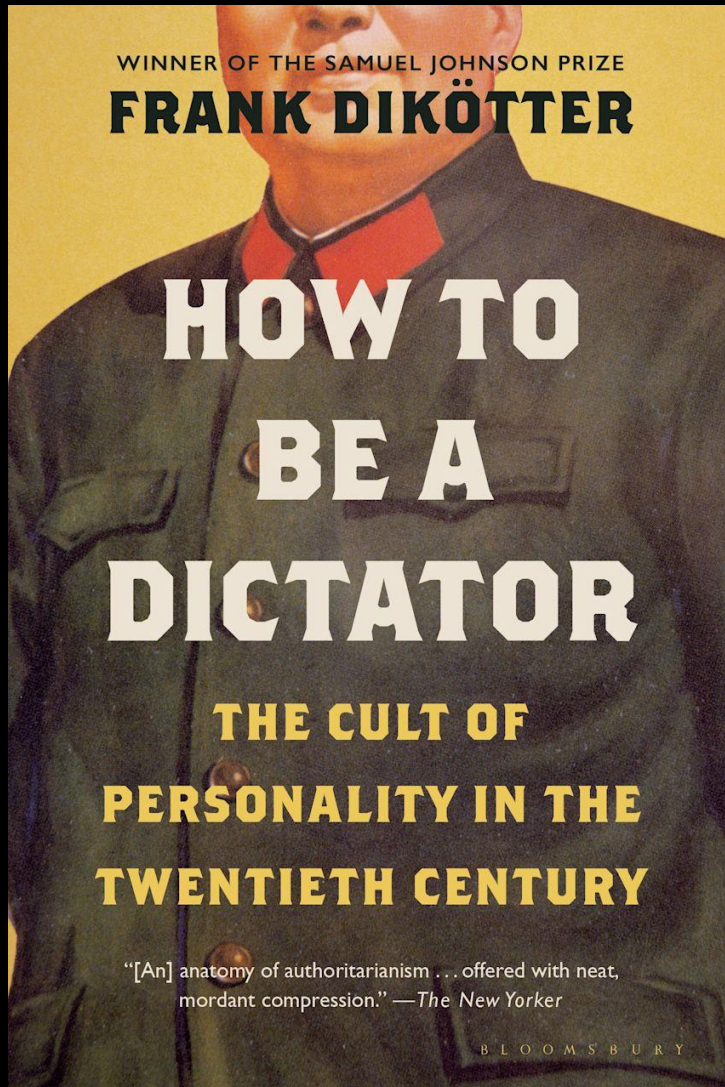
My Disclaimer, please agree!

- You will not find the following in the rule or casebook
- Shared best practices and observations
- I own these opinions and philosophy
- I trust there are no hidden audio recordings, data transmissions or background surveillance
- We can agree to disagree

Back to our solemn oath for officiating philosophy

- I trust there are no hidden audio recordings, data transmissions or background surveillance
- You will not find the following in the rule book, case book mechanics, or officials manual
- Shared best practices and observations
- I own these opinions and philosophy
- My best practices and opinions can change without notice
- We can agree to disagree

What Type of Official are You?



Dictatorial-type officials

- Want to control the tempo of the game
- Most things are Black and White
- Refuse to treat athletes and coaches with respect
- Act like police officers gone overboard with a sense of authority
- Refuse to listen
- Refuse to respond to coaches that ask respectfully
- Believe they “always” make perfect calls. Even when they make a mistake, they refuse to admit it

The Facilitator

The most effective “style” for an official to employ is a facilitator-type personality. That’s embodied by the notion that officials are there to manage the game

The best words to summarize a facilitator

Game Management

Effective Communication

Manage the Game

There are still times when the iron fist may be needed. Depending on the game situation and circumstances, it can benefit an official to take a hard line.

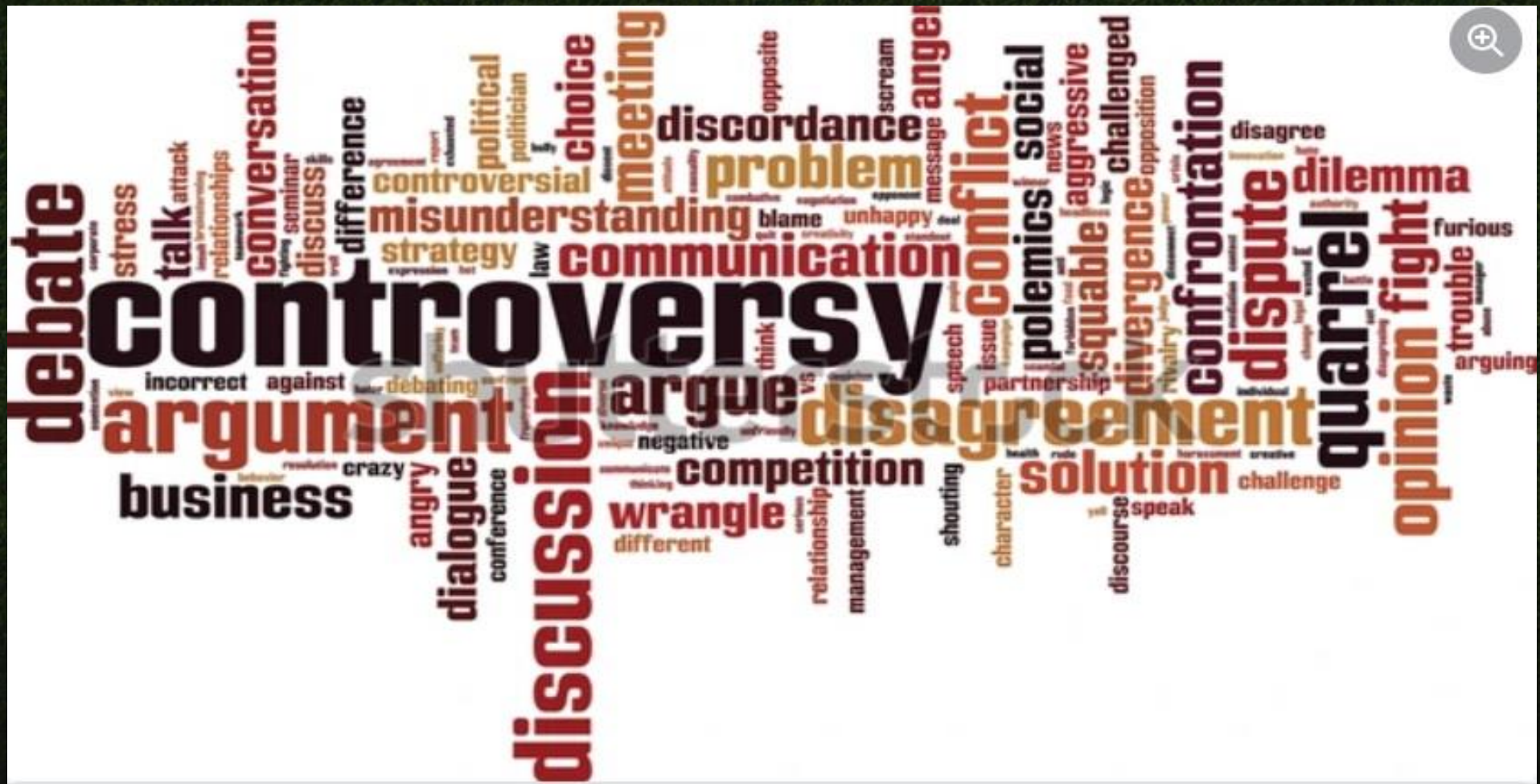
More often, though, the best officials are less dictators and more facilitators.

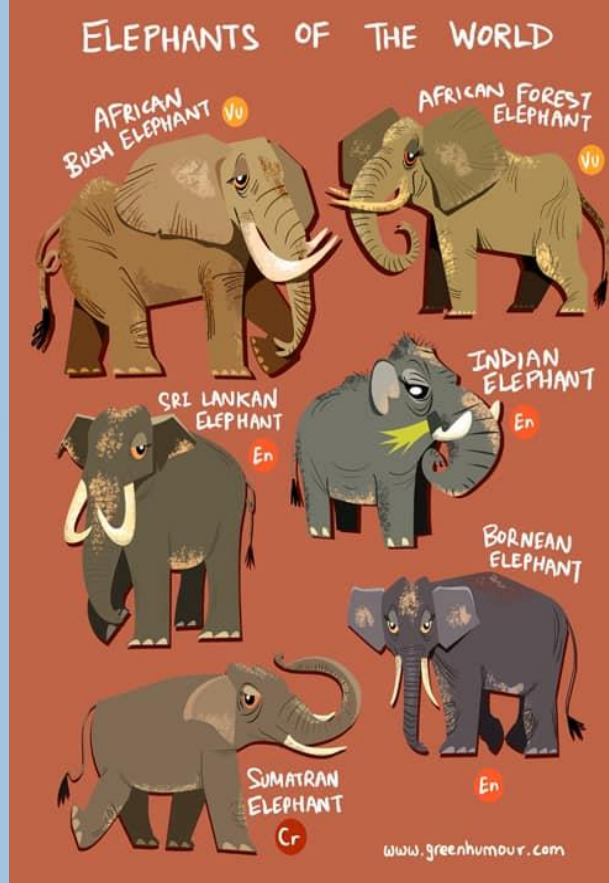
“We want to manage the game”

The best game managers are:

- Active listeners
- Ask questions, seek clarification
- Intervene when necessary
- Treat everyone involved in the game with respect
- Allow the game to flow – Get the obvious, Safety
- Prefer remaining in the background
- Get enjoyment from the game, enjoy refereeing

The Many Aspects of Officiating ! !





Ants

Elephants and Greyhounds

Ants, Elephants and Greyhounds

Don't flag Ants

. . . . Always flag Elephants

. Never make Ants into Elephants

NEVER CALL ANTS

Fun Insect Facts



Carpenter Ants
are about 1cm
long. That's
less than one
Football Field!

NEVER CALL ANTS

- Ants are insignificant
- Technical infractions, but not so technical that create an advantage and put either team at a disadvantage
- Ants are not big! Don't make them big like an Elephant
- Big-Time officials make Big-Time Calls

ELEPHANTS ARE BIG



ELEPHANTS ARE BIG

- Elephants make a difference
- GET the OBVIOUS, GET the SAFETY
- These calls make a difference in the game
- Most often occur at the point of attack
- They give a team an advantage or put the opponent at a disadvantage
- Can happen when the ball is live or dead
- Involve taunting or other unsporting acts

ELEPHANTS AFFECT THE GAME



ELEPHANTS AFFECT THE GAME

- Elephants are SOOOOO Obvious, God and everyone in the stadium can see them
- THESE CANNOT BE IGNORED!!
- Always call Elephants, and NEVER try and pass off an Elephant as an Ant. Fans will notice

WHERE WE REALLY MAKE OUR \$\$



Where our challenge really lies . . .

. . . is with Greyhounds

- Greyhounds are not as big as Elephants
- But are much bigger than Ants



Greyhounds are “Gray”

- They require you to use your best judgement
- They might be dangerous
- They might be close to the point of attack but not right at it. There may or may not have been an advantage gained
- Greyhounds are often the calls to be disputed or be interpreted as controversial

One team will never love your decision



Video Play Review

- Please Note – The videos on the following slides open In YouTube.
- Read the description to see the narrative about the play
- After viewing video, use your browser Back Button to return to this deck



Ant, Elephant or Greyhound?

Click here to Play Video
(Opens in YouTube, play details are in the description)



CELTICS	14	QTR	2	0	GUESTS
HALF ON	41	DOWN	1	YDS TO GO	10

Ant, Elephant or Greyhound?

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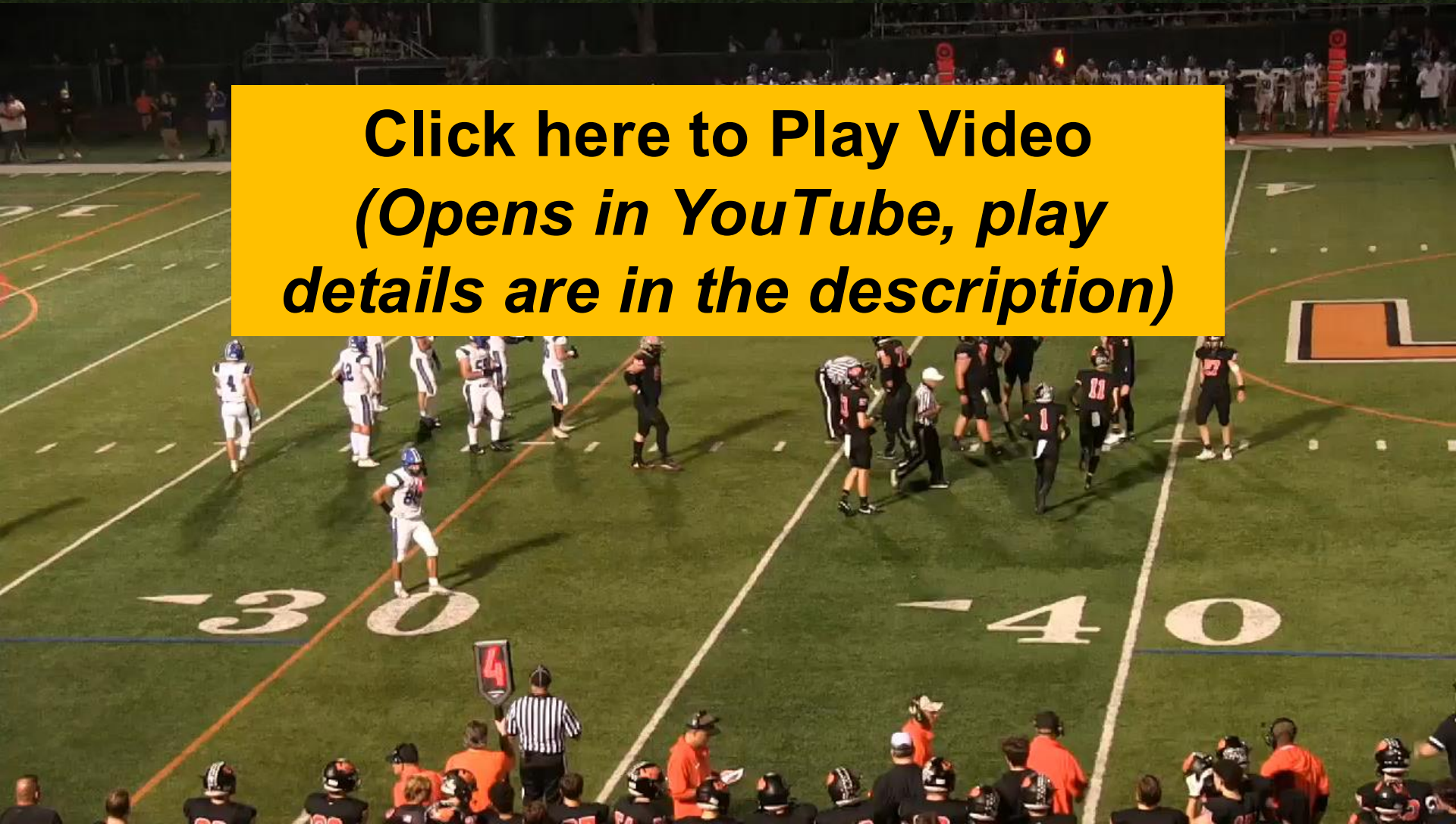
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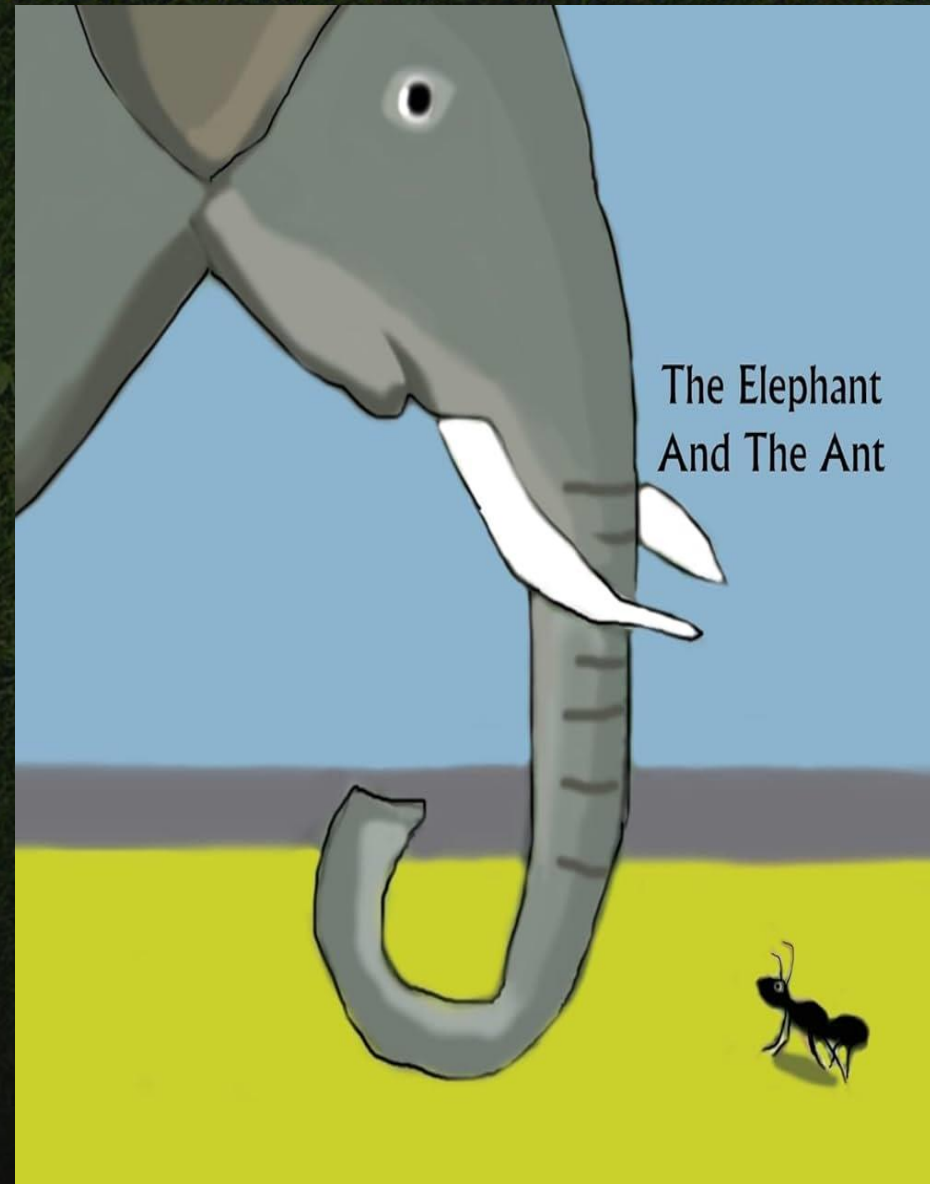
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But ruling on Greyhounds . . .

Separates the
“Elephant”
officials and the
“Ant” officials



Black, White or Gray?

The rules are
written in black
and white.

ART. 4 . . . A soft, flexible pylon, which is 4 inches square, 18 inches high, either orange, red or yellow in color, and does not create risk, shall be placed at the inside corner of each of the intersections of the sidelines with the goal lines and the end lines, as well as with each intersection of the hash marks extended and shall be placed either 3 feet beyond the end lines or on the end lines. When properly placed, the goal line pylon is out of bounds at the intersection of the sideline and the goal line extended.

ART. 5 . . . The goal:

- a. The goal is the vertical plane midway between the sidelines extending indefinitely above the inside of the uprights and the front edge of the crossbar and in the same vertical plane as the inside edge of the end line.
- b. The top of the crossbar shall be 10 feet above the ground, measured from the base of each upright to the top of the crossbar at the intersection, or at each end of the crossbar perpendicular to the ground when a single pedestal is used.
- c. The crossbar shall be 23 feet, 4 inches long.
- d. The uprights shall be 23 feet, 4 inches apart inside to inside and each upright may not exceed 4 inches in width.

NOTE: It is permissible to use college or professional fields with goal post uprights set at the width specified by their respective codes.

- e. The uprights shall extend a minimum of 10 feet above the crossbar.
- f. The goal posts shall be padded with resilient, shock absorbing material to a height of at least 6 feet above the ground.
- g. The horizontal crossbar and the uprights above it shall be free from any decorative material except paint which is recommended to be either silver, white or yellow in color. One wind directional streamer may be attached to the top of each upright. Wind directional streamers shall be 4 inches in width, 42 inches in length and either red, orange, or yellow in color.

SECTION 3 GAME EQUIPMENT

The NFHS does not perform scientific tests on any specific items of equipment to determine if the equipment poses undue risks to student-athletes, coaches, officials or spectators. Such determinations are the responsibility of equipment manufacturers. For additional information on Equipment Guidelines, see Appendix C.

ART. 1 . . . The ball shall meet the following specifications:

- a. A tan-colored cover consisting of either pebbled-grain, cowhide or approved composition (leather or rubber) case without corrugations other than those formed by the natural seam grooves and the lace on one of the grooves.



Figure 1-3-1
Football Dimensions

Black & White

- All fouls are relevant
- Play is 100% correct or incorrect, factual
- Out of Bounds / Delay of game
- Letter of the rule book
- Fan perspective, biased lens
- The replay booth

Gray

- Some fouls are discretionary
- Officials' judgement, personal view and position
- Holding, pass interference
- Spirit of the rule
- Officials filter out emotion & weigh severity of violation
- On-the-Field ruling

Black, White or Gray?

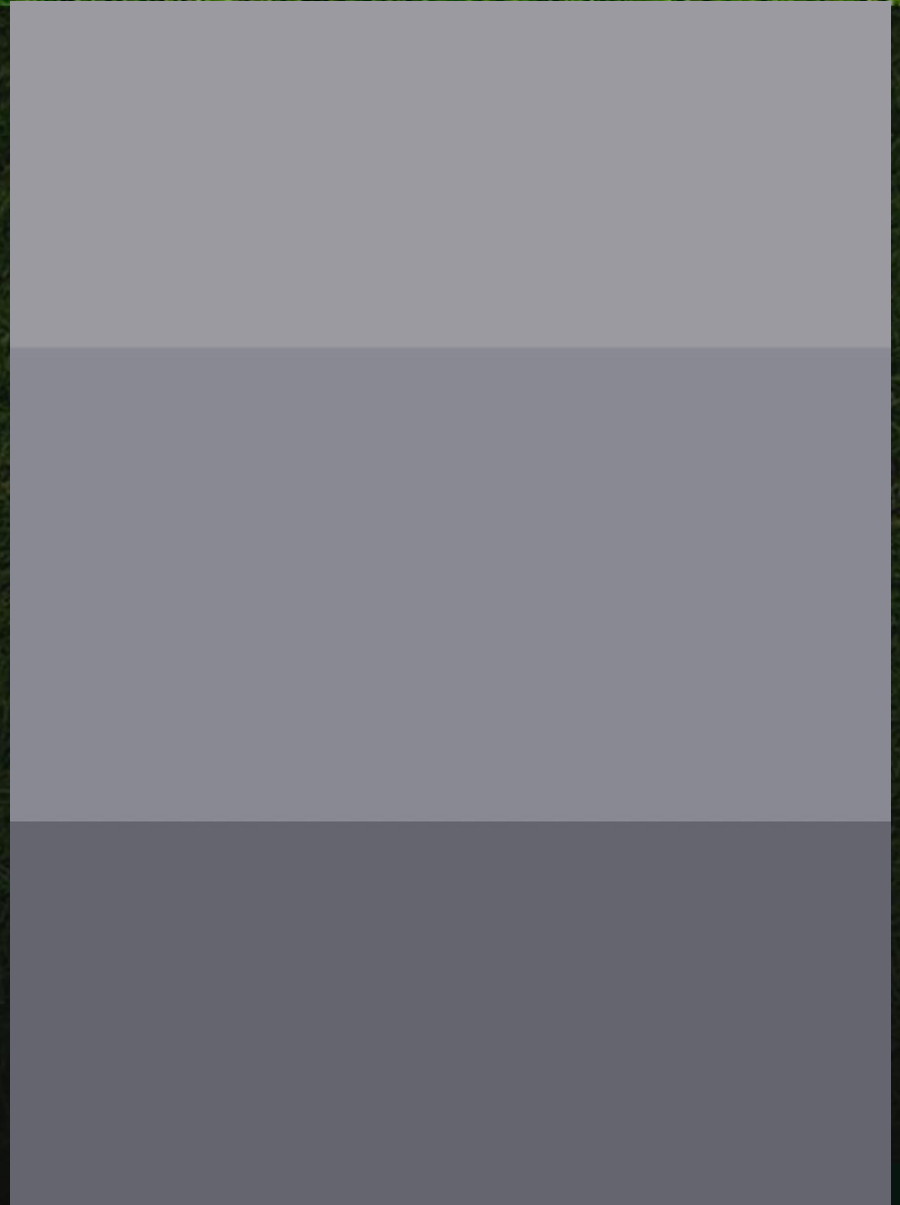


Officials wear Black and White.

Black, White or Gray?

. . . .

But it's ok to
officiate
in the gray!

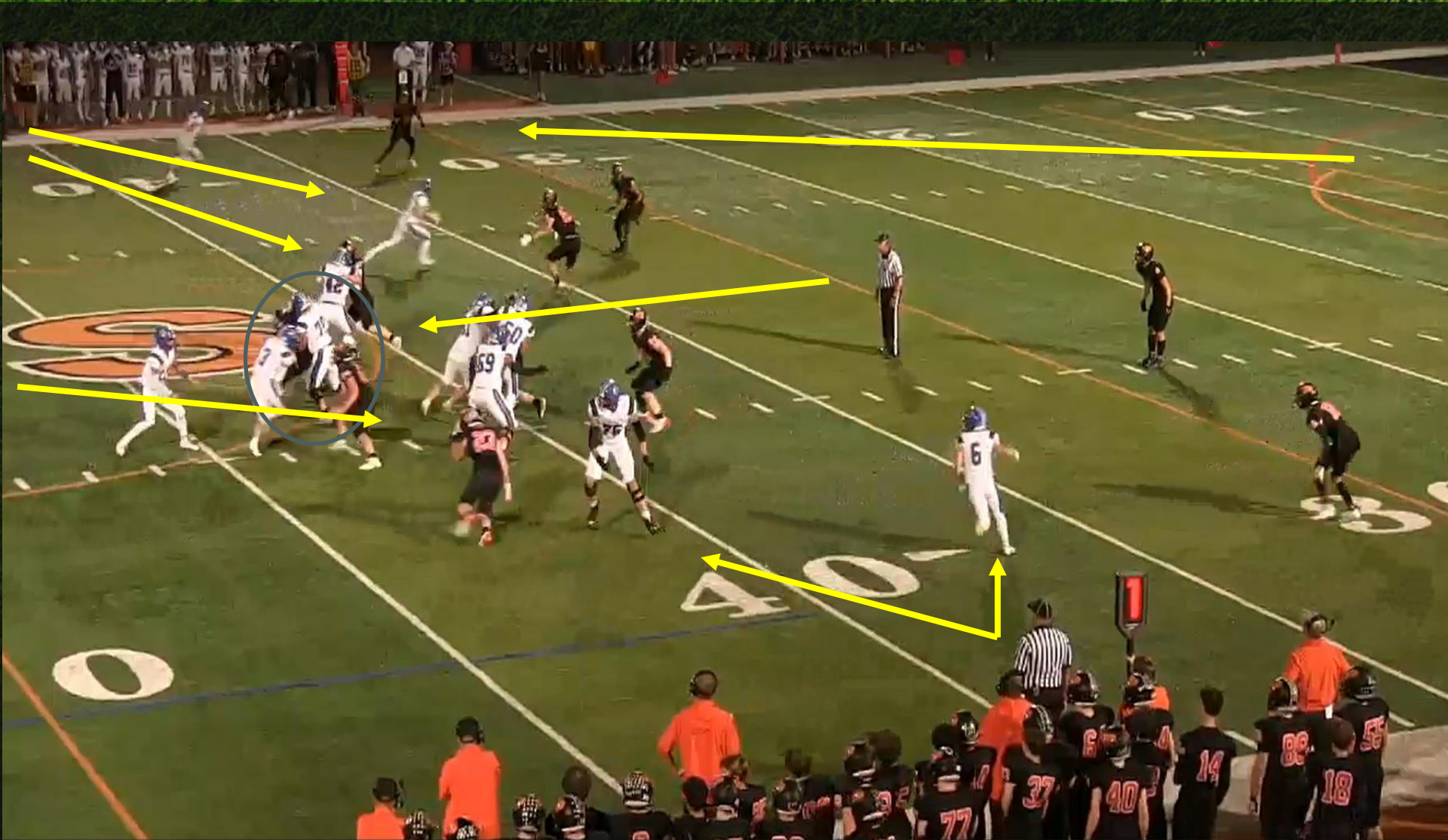


Judgement & Philosophy

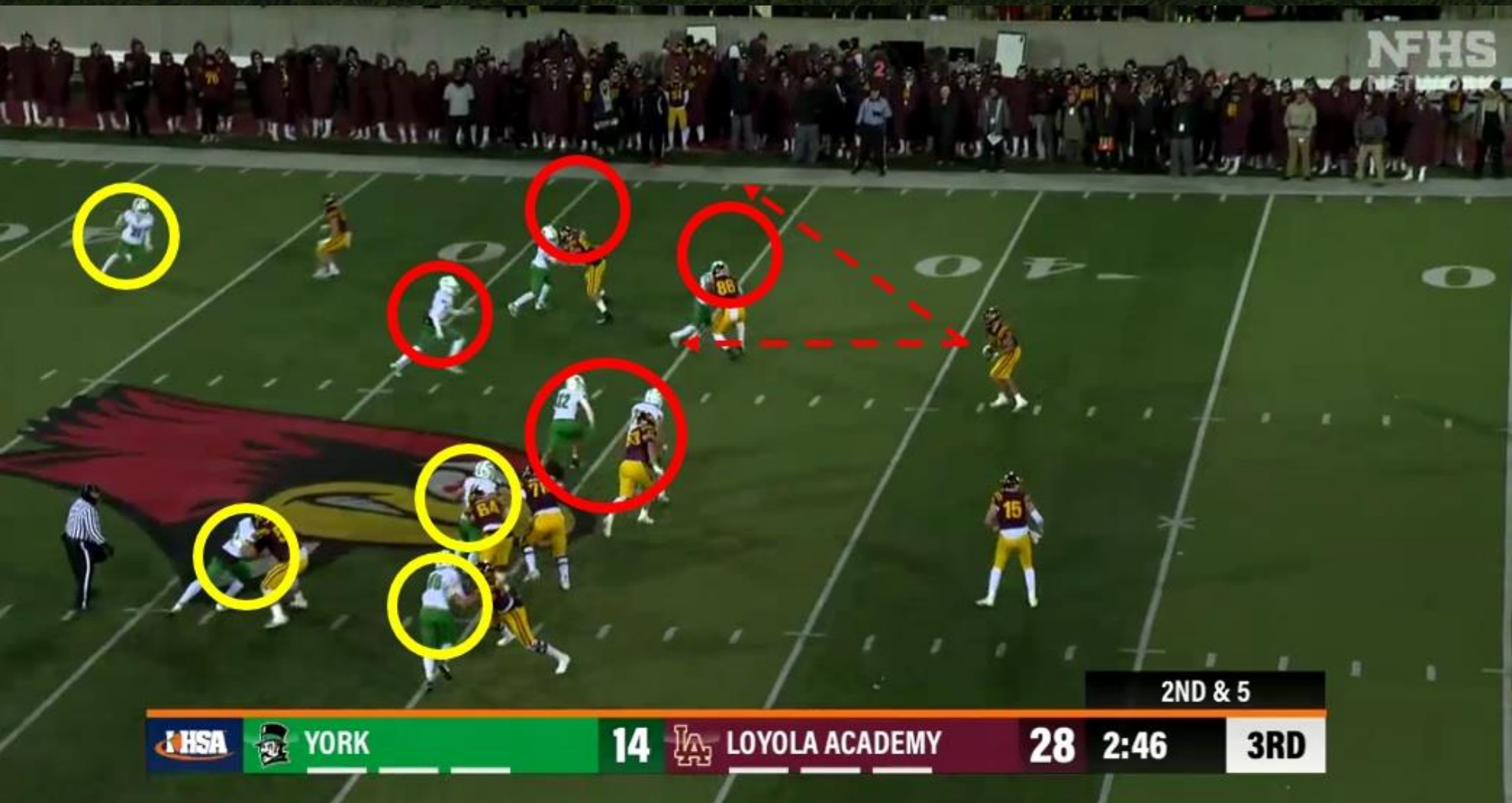
Three Points of Philosophy

- Primary Coverage Area
- Point of Attack (POA)
- Advantage / Disadvantage

Primary Coverage Area



What is the Focus of Offensive Play?



What is the Focus of Offensive Play?



Advantage / Disadvantage

- Point of Attack (POA)
- Did the foul create an

Advantage for the offense?

Disadvantage for the defense?

Advantage / Disadvantage

Did the foul disrupt:

- Rhythm
- Speed
- Direction
- Momentum

Judgement & Philosophy

The philosophy of high school football officiating is to apply the rules of the game with common sense, while avoiding extremes

Judgement & Philosophy

- Understand the rules
- Interpret the rules
 - Know the intent of the rule & how it applies to different scenarios
- Apply the rules
- Use common sense
- Manage the game

Judgement & Philosophy

- Understand the concept of “letting the game play” vs penalizing minor infractions
- Explore the balance between enforcing the rules strictly and ensuring a fair and competitive game
- Prioritize player safety in decision making

Crew Communication & Consistency

- Emphasize the importance of crew communication on the field
- Discuss strategies for reaching a consensus on close calls, aiming for consistent application of the rules across the crew
- Discuss how to identify situations where a penalty might not be necessary to maintain game flow

Three Points of Philosophy

All Fouls:

- 1) Primary Coverage Area
- 2) Point of Attack (POA)
- 3) Advantage/Disadvantage

- Slow Down; See the Foul, Think the Foul, Call the foul
- Make sure all elements of the foul exist

Judgement Areas

- Pre snap fouls are game interrupters but must be called
- Blocking: Advantage / Disadvantage and Point of Attack philosophy
- Pass Interference:
Advantage / Disadvantage and was the foul in the area of the pass

Safety Fouls

- Slow Down, process the foul
- Verify all elements of the foul
- Focus on your primary coverage
- We CANNOT miss safety fouls

Flagrant Fouls

Indicators of Flagrant Fouls:

- Time/Distance
- Acceleration
- Low to High (Launch)
- High Aim Point
- Impact Escalating

Mitigating Factors:

- Time/Distance
- Stationary or Minimal Forward Movement
- Low (or lowering) Aim Point
- Target compression
- Impact Reduction

Game Control & Safety

- Safety fouls must always be called no matter where or when they occur during the game
- Unsportsmanlike acts can deteriorate a game and cause game control problems
- Always err on the side of safety, even if in doubt

Be the Best Greyhound You Can Be!!

- Read the play at the snap
- Focus on your Primary Coverage area
- Watch the Point of Attack (POA)
- Observe and process all elements of foul
- Ignore the Ants, but call the Elephants that put a player at a disadvantage and impacts the play

What Type of Official are You?



THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE

