

September 16, 2026

Football Officials,

We're getting to that point in the season where "busy" is the only characterization that feels accurate. My continued thanks to each of you for your hard work and commitment to football in Wyoming. Whether it's a bobble-heads game on a Tuesday afternoon, or a night under the lights, it all matters to those players and communities. They can't do it without us. I encourage you to remember to leave some fuel in the tank for those weekender games. Also, keep some powder dry for your spouses, kids, and loved ones. WE can't do this without THEM. As always, please reach out with film clips, questions, or anything else.

Week Three Training Email

1. Rules Knowledge – Own Your Learning!

- a. Week Three Rules Quiz: <https://forms.gle/8fvUM6HVfk8HsD987>
- b. I invite your feedback on these quizzes. Please enjoy as you hit the road this week!
- c. We had 41 individual responses this week; the most thus far this year -- Awesome!

2. Field Mechanics

a. Last Week's Video

- i. I quickly want to touch on an item from last week's video -- the final play dealing with a defenseless receiver. I want to be clear. A defender can do everything right and it still be a foul. In the same vein, just because a hit is really hard doesn't mean it's a foul. Again, we must see the whole of the play.
- ii. Here's what to strive for... We all process a hard hit and check off the boxes related to Targeting and Helmet-to-Helmet, that's easy. Just take one more breath, pause, and also check the box for Defenseless Player.

b. Free Kick Adjustments

- i. I hope everyone is enjoying the new FK mechanics, I think it's an overall net gain for our work, though there is certainly a learning curve. A couple notes on these new mechanics as the inaugural season of these mechanics continues:
 1. 6-man football
 - a. As discussed earlier this year, our default on 6-man football kickoffs is the onside kick mechanics. We can modify as needed, but this default puts us in the best possible position to officiate this brand of football.
 - i. BJ and LJ have R's free-kick line.
 - ii. U and HL have K's free-kick line.
 - iii. R – you're solo.
 1. Make sure you have at least 2 on either side of the kicker!
(4 for 11-man; 3 for 9-man)
 2. Kicker can't reach the end zone... like ever.
 - a. There are just some kickers that can't boom it deep. It can make for a long run to cover those kicks that land far up-field.
 - b. Wings: Feel free to adjust up to the 10- or 15-yard line as needed to offer the best coverage. Be sure not to go too far, though, as there's a reason we're deeper than the kick receivers.
 - c. It is totally fine to adjust this on the fly as you see the free kick situations for both teams. Just like we adjust to see what we need on a scrimmage down, we can do the same here on a FK down.

3. Officiating Philosophy

a. Hurdling and Leverage

- i. We are seeing a significant increase in actions by defensive players on scrimmage kicks and scoring kicks (i.e. FG's and Try's) that constitute Hurdling or Leveraging.
- ii. Now... you won't find the vernacular, "Leverage or Leveraging" in your rulebook. That phrase is only found at the college and professional level. However, we still have rules that assist us in what is and is not allowable.
- iii. Hurdling
 1. Rule Book: 2-22; 9-4-3d
 2. This one is pretty simple – no player of either team can hurdle an opponent unless they have a body part other than their feet on the ground. It is a foul regardless of whether they "clear" the opponent or not. They also don't have to go over the middle of the opponent, any hurdle attempt over any part of the opponent is a *Safety Foul* and must be thrown!
 3. Umpires and Wing Officials – be looking for this on the line during scrimmage kicks. All officials can see this when it's the runner – and since it's becoming "fashionable" at the higher levels, we need to nip it in the bud at our level. Remember, a hurdle is knees or feet first...

iv. Illegal Personal Contact

1. Rule Book: 9-4-3e
2. Case Book: 9.4.3 Situation E (Advantage Gained Illegally)
3. Now... I'm not going to make friends with this one. **It is Illegal** for a defensive player to, "position himself on the shoulders or body of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage." – This is "Leverage" -- whether we have the phrase or not.
4. We are seeing defensive players try to "shoot the gap" between the Center and Guard in an attempt to block a kick.
 - a. If that defensive player puts his hands on an opponent in order to accomplish this -- whether to raise their body higher up off the ground, or to make their way through the A-gap (or any gap) easier -- it is a foul.

v. Officials:

1. If you see this in the pre-game, talk to the players about it.
2. During the game, Umpires, you can remind the defense that they can't hurdle or leverage off a teammate or opposing the offensive line. While that word isn't in the book, it's an easy term to use here. As it states in the Case Book, it's an Advantage Gained Illegally.

4. Film Room

- a. Link: <https://youtu.be/SfDzROIHuI>
- b. Many thanks to the crews featured in this week's film!

Keep trying to hit the Bullseye!

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