

AXIOMS OF FOOTBALL OFFICIATING

WHEN IN DOUBT:

- it is a touchback rather than a safety.
- the pass is incomplete rather than a fumble.
- the run has ended rather than a fumble.
- it is legal use of hands, rather than holding or illegal use of hands.
- the ball is accidentally kicked rather than intentionally.
- a departing player has left the field prior to the snap.
- offensive players are legally on the line.
- offensive players are legally in the backfield.
- it is a legal block rather than clipping.
- the passer has not intentionally grounded the ball.
- the passer has thrown the ball rather than fumbled it.
- the defensive back has legally initiated contact in passing situations.
- defensive signals are legal.
- call timeout for an injured player.
- players are legally moving rather than in illegal motion.
- the pass is forward rather than backward behind the neutral zone.
- the pass is backward rather than forward beyond the neutral zone or when there is no neutral zone.
- the ball is dead in the field rather than a touchdown.
- a player is inbounds rather than out of bounds.
- the block is legal rather than below the waist.
- the one second pause has been violated.
- as to touching the ball, a player has not touched it.
- as to disintegration of the clipping zone, assume it is intact.
- as to “caught or trapped” assume the pass is incomplete.
- don’t throw the flag.
- don’t blow the whistle.