



2024 Football Memo – Pre-Season

July 29, 2024

WELCOME

The 2024 football season will soon be starting! The SDHSAA believes everyone is preparing for another exciting year. You recently received your 2024 SDHSAA football rules books, online testing, online rules meeting information and other essential information for the 2024 football season. Review the information carefully. Please note your mailing address—**it is especially important to keep your mailing address and email address up to date with the SDHSAA Office.**

Recommended Activities Prior to the First Region Meeting

- Complete Online Rules and Mechanics Meetings
- Review 2024 NFHS Preseason Guide
- Review 2024 and 2023 Points of Emphasis
- Complete Open Book Test
- Meet With Your Crew and Discuss Your Goals
- Attend a Jamboree or Local Scrimmage
- Watch Videos on the SDHSAA Bound website
- Come Prepared to Discuss Rules, Mechanics, and Philosophy

Website Resources and Video Review

The SDHSAA has found that one of the most effective training tools for promoting consistency and improved officiating is through video review. We have updated our Football specific page to include added resources and will be posting all communications to this website for easy, one source access.

A special and great big thank you to **Mark Smith** of Pierre for his compilation of videos and the new voiceover commentary.

These plays are not meant to pick on any one official, crew or team. These plays are meant to be a learning tool to help promote what we all want to see from our officials.

<https://www.sdhsaa.com/activity/football-officials/>



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Football Officials Links

[SDHSAA Handbook – Football →](#)

[2024 Deadlines & Reminders →](#)

[Pre-Game Conference →](#)

[Classification of Holding →](#)

[Basic Principles of Microphone Use →](#)

[Leadership and Officiating →](#)

[State Event Requirements & Selection Process →](#)

[Instructions for Game & Play Clock Operators →](#)

[Instructions for Line-to-Gain Crews →](#)

[Tinted Eye Shields →](#)

[Mercy Rule Timing Regulations →](#)

Region Meeting Information

[2024 Meeting Sites & Dates →](#)

[NFHS Officials Manual Points of Emphasis →](#)

[Scrimmage Kicks Mechanics Change →](#)

[Referee Position →](#)

[Umpire Position →](#)

[Back Judge Position →](#)

[Working The Wings →](#)

2024 Jamboree Information

[Sioux Empire Officials Clinic \(June 24-25\) →](#)

Sports Officials Council Mentoring Program

[Program Description →](#)

[Game Report →](#)

[Voucher →](#)

Officials Observation Program

[Sample Observation Forms \(actual forms submitted online\) →](#)

[Forms Submission Instructions →](#)

Go to www.sdhsaa.com □ Officials □ Sport-Specific Information □ Football

Content on this page will be updated throughout the season
Pay close attention to the “Rules Information” sections at the bottom
the page for added video and rules review

South Dakota Changes – Updates for 2024

1. The Head Linesman and the Line Judge will switch sides after halftime. The Line Judge will start the game on the chain sideline. **This is a mandatory switch for all games.** Prepare as necessary to accommodate all associated mechanics and positioning on scrimmage plays, scrimmage kicks, and free kicks.
2. The is **no Mechanics Exam requirement** for crews to be playoff eligible.



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2024 NFHS Points of Emphasis

Please pay particular attention to the Points of Emphasis from the NFHS and Officiating Manual Committee. Detailed information is included in the pre-season handout and in the rules and mechanics on-line meetings, also review 2023 POE's.

1. Sportsmanship and altercation prevention and protocol
2. Player equipment and enforcement
3. Formations

2023 NFHS Points of Emphasis

1. Helping the runner
2. Communication between coaches and game officials
3. Game Management

MINIMAL GAME ADMINISTRATION EXPECTATIONS

- Clearly communicated event itinerary
- Required field markings and game equipment
- Clock operator(s)
- Line-to-gain crew
- Game Official accommodations
- Visiting team accommodations
- Support personnel
- Medical personnel
- Security personnel
- Hospitality for game personnel and administration, inclusive of game officials

What is Your Plan to Get Ready for the 2024 Football Season?

Two non-negotiables as a SDHSAA official:

- **Absolute #1** – Correct rules knowledge and correct rule application. Setting aside and not knowing the rules as an official cannot be defended
- **Absolute #2** – Fitness and mobility, all officials must have the ability to physically move and perform well at an elevated level. This is a personal responsibility and an expectation. Let's all commit to putting in the time to improve our fitness and mobility

What are you doing to get ready for the 2024 SDHSAA football season?

- Rules Knowledge—acquire a reverence for the rules and be guided and inspired by them
- Current Mechanics—Study and Understand—Right Place—Right Time



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- Be in position to manage and officiate the play
- Physical Workouts/Health

Be The Very Best High School Football Official You Want to Be!

- Going Into the Season--What Are You Going to Work On--We All Have Gaps
 - Build on your strengths
 - You can always get better

Work On Being Excellent—Be the Best You Can Be—Preparation

Maintain effective communication with all participants

Decisive—Consistent Decisions and Signals—Same Body Language

The SDHSAA Expects Your Best

SDHSAA Standardized Coin Toss Procedure—Review and Reminder

The coin toss mechanic **MUST** be used in all SDHSAA varsity football contests this fall as listed on Pages 108-110 of the 2024-2025 NFHS Football Officials Manual, with the toss occurring at the **SDHSAA Mandated time of immediately prior to kick-off after all introductions, starting line-ups, announcements, National Anthem and other associated pre-game items have been completed.** Having the toss occur immediately prior to kick-off not only matches all other levels of competitive football, but additionally allows for:

- Consistency among all officials and host sites,
- An additional opportunity for recognition of a team's captains for each game,
- Elimination of players being taken out of warm-ups and pre-game preparation
- Elimination of any advantage/disadvantage a team might gain by knowing the outcome of the toss with multiple minutes to prepare based on the result.

Coin Toss Takes Place as The Absolute Last Item Before the Kickoff

Pre-Contest Medical Time Out – Review

Prior to each competition officiated by SDHSAA Registered officials, head coaches or on-site administrators will need to be prepared to answer the following five questions before the game begins.

1. Who is the game administrator for each team?
2. Is there a qualified medical professional on site?
3. Is there an emergency action plan for this venue?
4. Is there an AED available?
5. Where is the emergency exit/entrance for the facility?

The “Pre-Contest Medical Timeout” **must be conducted prior to every contest.** If acceptable answers are not provided, officials must contact the SDHSAA to inform the SDHSAA staff of the situation. The “Pre-Contest Medical Timeout” can be conducted with the host-site athletic director prior to the coaches meeting, but **must be done day-of, on-site.** Distributed with each officials



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packet this year was a card that has the five questions on it. Officials please carry the card with you and be sure to ask these questions prior to the game contest so you are aware of the answers to these questions, should there be an emergency.

SDHSAA Requirement Reminders

Officials must work during the current football season a minimum of five (5) regular season football games to be eligible for selection for quarterfinal, semifinal or final football playoff games (not applicable to 1st round games).

Only officials having certified status will be hired to work the playoff games. Crews having a “registered” official(s) will be allowed to replace the “registered” official(s).

Coaches and Officials—Online Rules Meeting

Online rules meeting PowerPoint presentations will be available from August 1 to August 31, 2024 (11:59 PM CST). All officials and coaches will need to view individually to receive credit. If you plan to view the presentations together as a coaching staff or officiating crew, each coach and official will need to be logged into a computer (you could use the computer lab at your local high school).

Coaches and Officials—Online Test Requirement

During the 2024-25 school year, the SDHSAA will be using the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) online exams system for conducting the open-book test requirement for each sport.

The online football open book test will be available August 1 to August 31, 2024 (11:59 PM CDT). You can print a hard copy of the test from the SDHSAA website prior to accessing it online. You will complete the test online. The test questions will be in the same order as the hard copy you print.

The SDHSAA strongly suggest you use the hard copy of the test to write your answers beside each question, then log in and submit your test answers online. This must be done before August 31.

When you submit your answers online, you will immediately receive your test score. You WILL NOT receive information as to which questions you missed until after the test window closes on August 31.

The score required for the Part I open book test is 80%. You will only be allowed two tries to take and pass the test (80%) and this must be done prior to the August 31, 2024, deadline.

Officials—Online Mechanics Requirement

Officials only are required to view the online mechanics meeting. This requirement is in addition to official’s requirement to view the online rules meeting.

The SDHSAA strongly suggests that coaches view the mechanics meeting, so you understand the mechanics and positioning of the officials on the field.



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Officials: A \$25.00 fine and probation is assessed if the online mechanics meeting requirement is not met.

SDHSAA Supervised Test Date Wednesday 8/28/2024

- To move from “registered” classification to “certified” classification, officials must take and pass the supervised test (closed book)—score at least 75% to pass.
- The supervised test will be offered at Aberdeen Central, Buffalo, Mitchell, SDHSAA Office, Rapid City Central, SF Lincoln, Sioux Valley (Volga, SD), Watertown and Yankton.
- An official may stay in the “registered” classification indefinitely.
- Registered officials are restricted to working only at regular season contests.
- **Please contact Marsha at the SDHSAA office as to the location in which you would like to take the test by Friday August 16th. (605-224-9261)**

SDHSAA Football Jamborees

Football Region Coordinators have scheduled Jamborees for you to attend and meet the requirements. Achieving all requirements, including updated Jamboree attendance is a requirement for post season assignment eligibility.

Football Officials and Coaches Concerns

- If you have any play situations during your games that officials statewide should know about to help them become better officials, please send plays to be included in weekly bulletins.
- If you have questions about rule interpretation, please forward your concerns to: **Justin Ingalls – Email = coordinator@sdhsaa.com or Phone (605) 201-9721**
- If you have any questions or comments about any information, you will receive this football season--please forward it to me.
- If you have any ideas for newsletter topics that would benefit all the SDHSAA officials, please share your topic(s).

2024 Football Observation Program

We have in place football observers for the 2024 season. This group of resolute veterans are here to grow and support officials across the state. Our goal this year is to observe 100% of our crews at least once – whether that be in person or via video review. Please be open and cooperative with our observers as they provide feedback. This is a valuable program as we strive for



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consistency and growth. If you and crew would like to be observed, drop me a note and I will make sure we have someone onsite to help.

2024 Football Region Meetings

You have received a list of football region dates for all 11 regions. Mark the dates for the regional meetings in your area on your calendar.

Plan to attend more than one regional meeting. With the rules and mechanics meetings online, this will be your opportunity to have face-to-face discussion with other officials in your region.

Be the official to step up and be a presenter at a regional meeting. This will give you the opportunity to research a topic for discussion, which will make you a better official.

Best of luck for a safe and successful
2024 SDHSAA football season

Remember, MIBT = Make it be there

For suggestions, feedback, and comments, please feel free to contact.		
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