

South Carolina Football Officials Association Board Meeting

March 28, 2023

SCHSL Office 6:00 PM

1. Call to order: Jeff Nettles

Members Present:

D1-Chip Dickert

D2-Brian Parker

D3-Brad Smith

D4-Alan Boatwright

D5-Garrick Messer

D6-Darryl Jackson

D8-Cary Collins

D9- Chuck Drake

D10-Greg Hawkins

D11-Keith Hajnal

D12-Ricky Robinson

D13-Todd Johnson

Pres-Jeff Nettles

V-Pres- Steve Sawyer

P-Pres- Tim Cahill

Sec- Alphonso Smith

SCHSL- Charlie Wentzky

Parliamentarian-Tommy Brush

Officials Rep: Not present

2. Invocation: Todd Johnson

3. Approval of Minutes: January 30, 2023: Board of Directors Meeting

- Discussion by Chip Dickert on minutes to include Rookie Exam Vote from January 2023 Meeting.
- Jeff Nettles advised Minutes to be approved would include Rookie Exam Vote.

Recommendation to Approve: Chip Dickert

Second: Todd Johnson

Motion Passed 16-0

4. Committee Reports:

A. Budget Proposal for 2023: Tim Cahill Finance Comte Chairman

- Tim Cahill review 2023 Budget with revision that was approved by Finance Committee.
- Recommendation to only Budget and spend revenue that was generated by SCFOA in 2023 Budget.
- Budget Include a cut in State Finals gifts to 1500.00 for 2023
- Scholarships was cut to 2 (500.00 each) for 2023.
- No Budgeted Funds for All-Star Games Funds to be generated through donations.
- Recommendation by C. Wentzky to pay North/South Expenses if Necessary.
- Keith Hajnal objected to paying for Chain Crew Hats
- Ricky Robinson advised these hats have been given for 15-20 years and our officials take pride in this an appreciate this small gift.
- Brian Parked asked C. Wentzky to advise if he could get hats donated with a sponsored logo on the hats.
- S. Sawyer advise he was not in favor of taking anything from our officials that had earned their reward as a State Finals Official.
- *Recommendation By Darryl Jackson to approve Budget with the addendum that if Funds were not secured by donations for North/South games SCFOA would allocate the necessary funds for this event.*

Recommendation to Approve with Addendum of N/S. Game: Darryl Jackson

Second: Cary Collins.

Motion Passed 15-1

B. Governance: Ricky Robinson

- Governance Committee held a February 3rd Meeting.
- 2 proposals were presented to Governance Committee to Review
 1. Membership Numbers to reduce the 5% threshold to dissolve a district.
 2. ECO proposal Guidelines for SCHSL Playoff assignments.
- ***Both Motions Failed in Committee***

C. Mechanics: Steve Sawyer

Mechanics Changes Not Approved for 2023

- Umpire Moved to the Backfield (Can be Utilized in Sub-Varsity Games)
- Penalty Flag Change
- Moving Umpire/Back Judge position on Kickoff.

Approved Mechanics Changes for 2023

Discussion:

- Darryl Jackson wants to review changes that did not come out of committee.
- R. Robinson review and change grooming standards to what basketball does.
- T. Johnson question about tattoos.
- K. Hajnal questioned if we are losing officials because of facial hair
- Collins question about facial hair being a hot topic.
- T. Johnson asked question about Facial hair and qualifications for playoffs. C. Wentzky confirmed that officials with approved facial hair that meets the SCFOA grooming standards would receive full playoff consideration.
- A. Boatwright utilized his time on this topic to delivery a very passionate statement on quality officials that are not allowed to officiate because of the current grooming standards and advised it is time to change and update these standards for the future of SCFOA.
- C. Drake advised to put pictures of the new standard out with the new grooming standard.
- T. Cahill did not believe officials dropping out because of facial hair was an issue.
- J. Nettles advised facial hair should not matter if officials look professional.
- C. Wentzky advise was to police it, meet with officials that have facial hair before the season starts to view it and advise if it is acceptable. If not, District Directors should take cooperation points.

2023 Mechanics Manual Changes
These Changes were Voted in Favor of by the
SCFOA Board of Directors

Grooming Standards

The mechanics manual currently states the following concerning grooming standards: Male grooming standards shall conform to the following:

- No hair on or touching the shirt collar or extending over the ear
- No sideburns below the lowest point of the ear lobe
- No facial hair, other than a neatly trimmed mustache, which shall not extend lower than the edges of the mouth.

The proposed rewrite is as follows:

Male grooming standards shall always promote a professional appearance and shall conform to the following:

- Hair must be of natural color, neatly trimmed, not touching the shirt collar nor extending over the ears. Hair arrangements may be worn but not be visible from underneath the official's hat.
- Officials wearing only a mustache must conform to the following standards. The mustache must be neatly trimmed and shall not extend below the edge of the lip nor extend beyond the edge of the mouth. Fu Manchu or handlebar, walrus, or any other type of mustache that may not be considered professional in appearance may not be worn.
- Facial hair such as full beards or classic style goatees may be worn. These must always be neatly trimmed and not exceed ½ inch in length. Patchy, spotty, or clumps of hair which do not promote a professional appearance are not allowed. Beards or goatees shall be fully grown one week prior to week zero and meet your District Directors' approval to not be questionable at the start of the season. Facial hair shall not extend below the Adam's apple area of the neck.

The purpose of this policy is not a license to simply not shave during the season. If a beard or goatee is desired to be worn, it must be grown fully one week prior to week zero and approved by your district Director at that time. If an official does not have a beard or goatee that

is grown in fully and presents a spotty or incomplete, nonprofessional look at any time during the season, he will be asked to clean shave before his next game assignment.

Timing Change for Sub Varsity Contest

Section Page and Number Pg 44, 9.11

Current Wording:

For sub-varsity games, the clock shall start on the ready-for-play signal:

Following a change of team possession. (Exception: A charged time-out is granted to either team before the ready-for-play signal).

Proposed Change:

For sub-varsity games, the clock shall start on the ready-for-play signal: Following a change of team possession.

Exception 1: A charged time-out is granted to either team before the ready-for-play signal:

Exception 2: Clock will start on the snap inside of 2 minutes of each half.

Rationale: The sub-varsity timing rules shorten in real time the game duration. However, when inside of two minutes of a half, traditional clock rules should be used to allow teams to gain additional reps without a dramatic effect on real time game length

Clip Placement on the Chain

Section Page and Number: 6.3, Pg 13

Current Wording: The first clip is placed on the center of the yard line closest to the rear rod whenever the chains are set for the initial series of downs

Proposed Change: The first clip is placed on the BACK EDGE of the yard line closest to the rear rod whenever the chains are set for the initial series of downs

Rationale: Measurements often come down to a couple

inches. This may greatly impact the game. Using a yard line's back edge gives a more fixed point with less ambiguity. On grass fields, yard line width may vary on the same field (Especially at lower levels) and reducing clip placement variability improves measurement accuracy.

Other Mechanic Manual Sections Impacted: 6.4 Instructing the chain Crew, 9.8 Measurements-Linesman Duties

Bean Bags

Bean Bags

All crew members must utilize either a Black and White Striped, White, Black, or Blue bean bag (no bright orange or other colors). Pink may be utilized during the month of October.

Rationale: To prevent Officials from using just any color Bean Bag.

7 Man Mechanic Proposal

Current Wording: 5.5 Measurements

Field Judge – Be near the down marker and set the chains for the next series if a first down is awarded. Have a new ball for the next play if necessary.

Side Judge – Be near the down marker and set the chains for the next series if a first down is awarded

Proposed Change: The Field Judge should clear players for yard to gain measurement and secure a ball for the next play if necessary.

Rationale: There is no need to have 2 officials monitoring one box.

Recommendation to Approve Grooming Standards and Mechanic Changes: G. Messier

Second: Alan Boatwright

Motion Passed 14-2

D. Scholarship: Keith Hajnal

- 2 Applications for 2023 those 2 applicants will receive the 2023 Scholarships that are budgeted.

E. Hall of Fame: Jeff Nettles

- 1 Carry Over 2020-2022
- 5 Hall of Fame Nominees for 2023 (none approved at this time)
- March 2024 Next HOF Banquet
-

F. All Star Games: Garrick Messer

- Discussed Donations to All Star Games
- Mullinax was in attendance for N/S Game. Room Rate may go up.
- D. Jackson question about how Shrine Bowl request funding. (C. Wentzky advised they submit an approval through his office)

G. Review Board: Marshall Connor (Not Present)

- Advised through J. Nettles to have new officials submit applications to him to review.
- New information on officials to be reviewed April/May/ June for 2023.

H. Special Committee for Clinic/Ratings: Tim Cahill

- Committee Reviewing separate Business/Exam /Clinic Options
- Currently review every aspect of the SCFOA Ratings
- Anticipate having recommendations to membership in 2024

5. Unfinished Business:

A. Veterans Exam: Todd Johnson

- Writing of the 2023 SCFOA Officials Exam
- Discussed Philosophy of writing the Exam and having the SCFOA Rules Interpreter and an independent person who is not a district director writing the SCFOA Exam.
- Darry Johnson wanted to know if this is a 2-year commitment
- Greg Hawkins advised in his opinion the Bylaws do not say it is a commitment of any set time frame
- Tommy Brush advised in his capacity as parliamentarian any matter that comes before the board be put in place for 2 years in his interpretation of the By-Laws

Recommendation to Have C. Wentzky write the 2023 SCFOS Exam: Todd Johnson

Second: Chip Dickert

Motion Passed 16-0

6. New Business/Proposals:

A. Table Motions- Brian Parker

- Brian Parker wants to table all motions brought before the Board until next Board Meeting.
- T. Cahill and A. Smith advised there is already a procedure in place to do this already set up.
- T. Johnson advised the business of the Board cannot wait for 2 months until a decision is made.

Brian Parker: Motion to table all motions brought before the board until the following board meeting.

Second: Sam Felder

Motion Failed – 13-3

B. Rookie Test Discussion- Todd Johnson; Chip Dickert; Greg Hawkins

- Todd Johnson advised the little things are tearing us apart as an organization and as a board. Spoke of the philosophy of us working together for the greater good of the

organization and doing the things that are right for the benefit of the entire membership.

- Chip Dickert, nothing new to add to what Todd Johnson said
- Greg Hawkins, nothing new to add to what Todd Johnson said
- Darry Jackson advised he wants rookie exam for first year officials only mainly covering rules 2, 6 and 10.
- Tim Cahill- Advised there were glitches in the rookie exam, but it was the first time it was given. He sent out improvements that were needed to the directors. Glitches in some rookies getting wrong ratings fell through the cracks.
- S. Sawyer advise there were a lot of glitches in the implementation of the rookie exam.
- C. Wentzky went over how the Arbiter Ratings are used and how they are calculated. On a test the closer to 100 the better in Arbiter it is the opposite. Officials with an Arbiter rating of 0-399 will get assigned anything below 399 will not get assigned. It is up to the directors to provide SCFOA a list of officials who took the Rookie exam and their rating will be above 399 and not get assigned. Recommended first year officials take the Rookie exam second year officials would be a choice but their ratings would be above 399
- K. Hajnal advised we put in the Rookie Exam for retention and now we want to kill it after 1 year.
- D. Jackson advised he polled his district, and they were in favor of the rookie exam.
- T. Cahill advise the Survey Monkey results on the rookie exam. 67.5 % of people who responded were in favor of the rookie exam.
- C. Dickert advised in his opinion survey was not valid, not scientific, and not a good survey.
- B. Smith advised his district was in favor of the rookie exam.
- Jeff Nettles. Advise the following points
 1. He was elected and asked by veterans to come up with a rookie exam to help with retention of officials.
 2. The rookie exam is critical to retaining young officials.
 3. Recommended the exam be taken by First- and Second-year officials only.
 4. In his opinion SCFOA needs the rookie exam.
 5. Advised he know there were mistakes made in the first year of the rookie exam, but it must be given time to work and 1 year is not enough time.
- Chip Dickert advised he did not want to do anything to bring dissension and discord on the board and would rescind his recommendation to eliminate the rookie exam he made in the January 2023 meeting.

Chip Dickert Made a motion to rescind his motion to eliminate the 2023 Rookie exam.

Second: Darryl Jackson

The Following Recommendations were made.

1. Rookie Exam for 1st year officials
2. Second year officials will have exam choice
3. 3rd year officials will take the veterans exam.

Motion passed 16-0

C. Video Discussion: Keith Hajnal

- Reviewed several video plays from 2023 Season for discussion.

D. Proctor Exams—Steve Sawyer

- Want to recommend for security of the exam that proctors take the exam on Saturday morning and not Friday night same as basketball so there is less opportunity of test questions and information getting out to membership.
- No vote or motion was made on this during the March meeting.

E. Other New Business: Jeff Nettles

1. Clinic Awards, wants District Directors to start getting list together for awards. Needs list of 3rd year officials, 15-year officials and 25-year officials
2. The following Districts have elections in 2023 (1,4,7,10,12) Please get him those winners once your meetings start.
3. Need North/South Shrine Bowl donations get members of your district to donate 1 game fee.
4. Reading room will be assigned in July.
5. Needs a list in July of all members taking Rookie Exam
6. List of District Meeting dates, times, and locations.
7. Mechanics begin to work on mechanics.

Alphonso Smith: The following By Law did not gain approval for change in Committee and must be acted upon by the Board on August 1, 2023:

- *Should membership of any geographical district constitute less than 5% of the total registered SCFOA officials as of August 1 of any year, the Board of Directors shall issue a Notice of Intent to dissolve that district. If, on May 1 of the following year, that noticed district remains less than 5% of the total registered SCFOA officials, that district shall be dissolved as of May 2. The members of the dissolved district shall then (by majority vote) be group merged with any bordering district.*

7. Old Business:

A. Recruitment and Retention- Jeff Nettles

- Recruiting of officials and retention is very important to SCFOA begin to work on this.

8. Commissioners Report: Charlie Wentzky

- Registration is Open Registration deadline April 30th.
- New Rules have not been released he will get them to District Directors as soon as he gets them
 1. Towels do not have to be same color.
 2. Player out of bounds designation.
 3. Intentional grounding player receiving snap outside of boundary.
 4. Intentional Pass Interference removed.
 5. Defenseless Player (Receiver and Interceptor) Defines what is legal
 6. All But one, penalty on offense back to line of scrimmage.
- Asked the Board the question How do we get better today.
- SCFOA Board Meeting are now 4 hours long need to start from 1-4 in afternoon not 6 PM at night.

9. Executive Session to discuss Personnel Issue: Jeff Nettles

Jeff Nettles Motion to Move to Executive Session

Second: Darryl Jackson

Motion Passed 16-0

Motion to Accept Recommendation of the Executive Session: Jeff Nettles.

Second: Tim Cahill

Motion Passed 16-0

10. Adjourn

Jeff Nettles Made a Motion to Adjourn

Second, Todd Johnson

Motion Passed 16-0