



COLLEGE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING, LLC

POSITION OF THE UMPIRE

Beginning with the 2010 season the National Football League now positions the umpire in the offensive backfield, opposite the referee. The CFO has been considering whether to make this change for NCAA football and has experimented with it in spring games and practices for two years. While the stated position of the NFL for the change is the safety of the umpire, our experience in college football is that there are no more injuries to umpires than to officials at any position. The issue for the CFO to consider is whether making such a change would noticeably improve football officiating.

The coordinators of the Division I conferences have discussed this issue during its last several national meetings. After much careful consideration the coordinators are convinced that the umpire's current position is not a significant safety issue and that the quality of the officiating is likely to suffer by making this change. Based on our experience the umpire's role in detecting false starts and offensive holding is compromised when he moves into the offensive backfield. In addition the subtle but important impact that the umpire has on "working the inside" with the interior linemen of both teams is a well-understood value of his being in the current position.

Therefore, at the June national meeting the Division I coordinators voted unanimously to recommend that the umpire remain in his traditional position. The national coordinator has endorsed this stance and presented the recommendation to the CFO Board of Managers at its meeting on June 22, 2011.

The CFO Board of Managers has unanimously approved the recommendation that the umpire for NCAA football games remain in his current position in the defensive secondary.

Rogers Redding
CFO National Coordinator of Football Officials

June 23, 2011