

Craig's OPL Notebook – Fall – Week 7

Games: 198 Positions to fill: 594 Unfilled Positions: 25 or 95.4%

Yellows: 40

Reds: “0”

Mentored Games: 3

Recap:

Holy cow, take a look at that, that thing up there in parentheses, yeah that's right “zero” send offs...zip...nada. Since the founding of the OPL in the fall of 2008 we have never had a weekend with no send offs. Didn't mean we didn't have problems with players, coaches, parents or spectators, but it means we found various ways to deal with those problems. Kudos to all of you. Also notice that up above, yellows, is now purple. A lot of you let me know that you had trouble reading that yellow color. Aren't referee's great? We adapt, when things don't work we try something different until we get it right!!

Coming Attractions:

So, we just finished week 7, we had 198 games. This weekend is basically the last weekend of the full Fall Season. Next weekend, Nov. 5th and 6th we have the remained of the Premier Division games, 50 of them, in addition to the start the OPL Directors Cup. I will send out information about this tournament next week but it is essentially open to all teams that are not part of the Northwest Champions League. This is a big deal for these clubs and it should be approached that way.

Then we have the Northwest Champions League High School Boys tournament at Tualatin Hills Parks and Rec on December 10th and 11th. I am really excited about this event. Semifinals will be held on Saturday and the finals held on Sunday. The age groups involved will be U15, U16, U17 and U18 boys. The OPL with the help of the ORC are going to turn this weekend into a training and education weekend for “all” referee's. Not just those who will work the tournament. We are working out the details now so I don't want to say something that I'll have to adjust later...been there, done that! But this will be a great opportunity for everyone to be involved in training and education at a time of year that we normally just hibernate as the winter is starting. Stay tuned.

What's that little devil doing on my shoulder?:

Ok what do think? This is your 50th game you just finished since the end of August? Your 60th? Some of you I don't even want to know! Your uniform is standing up by itself in your closet? No there's not something dead in your closet it's that aromatic smell of your uniform. You seem to have a constant limp. Aches everywhere. Why did I sign up for this again? And then...and then, there's this little twerp giving me lip about a call I just made against him. Are you kidding me? Do I really have to explain this again for the 15th time to you, you little @\$#&.

Ok take a deep breath, calm down, find that inner calm referee and bring him out. We all get a little short this time of year. We've heard it all, we've explained it all, we've thought we've put up with it all and this other little @\$#& comes up to you and demands an explanation on a call

you made 20 minutes ago, which maybe could have been a bit of a stretch but, your thinking, let's get on with this. What's another tool in your bag? It's you, your experience. You are above the minor disputes that go on in a game, or you should be. The players and coaches are just as tired and mentally drained as you are. We need you to take that deep breath when dealing with an individual who is tired and frustrated. Calm begets calm. You will defuse a situation sometimes in just the way you deal with it with your voice and your body language. Let's use those tools when we get this deep into the season.

The last thing I would request from you are some of the funny situations you found yourself in this season. We all find ourselves shaking our heads sometimes because of what we've done or what others do. A good laugh goes a long way!!

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