



DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GAME DAY OBSERVER

The Game Day Observer (referred to as GDO) program was introduced by the Executive several years ago as one method of monitoring our on field product and ensure compliance with established rules and procedures.

Over time not all officials were “on the same page” and this was one way of obtaining co-operation and compliance.

The first years of the GDO were (in my terms) corrective years. Bad habits were identified and dealt with at the field either at half time or at the end of the game. This was very important as in the past officials might not be made aware of concerns until the end of the season. We also went away from the individual official observation to the crew approach. This worked much better.

Observers are selected by the Evaluation Committee but the reality is with all the games we do it is usually the Senior retired or semi-retired guys.

In 2009 the MFRA agreed to allow the MFOA to work some positions at the lower level games and to provide GDO's. The MFRA members (for the most part) were very appreciative and improved noticeably over the year.

After several “corrective” years the quality of the MFOA on field product is one of the best in Canada, and can be proven by the number of officials we have sent to the CFL. Al Bradbury, Steve Dolyniuk, Ritchie Miller, Brian Chrupalo, Jamie Patterson, Dean McNeill (now back in amateur) and in 2010 Jim Carlisle.

Add in the assignments to Canadian amateur playoff games and we should be very proud of our accomplishments.

Is it coincidental the rush of officials to the CFL coincides with the introduction of the GDO program?

Now in 2010 our goal is changing slightly. The first few games of the year will be observed and procedures reinforced, but then we as observers go to games and need only to be a support and identify small issues that need improvement. I trust members view the GDO as a support, because although on occasion we come on as hard asses, which is not our intention. We appreciate every member who is willing to put on the stripes and our goal is to make him/her the best official they can be.

For playoff games it is our hope to have a GDS (Game Day Supervisor) at all playoff games whose job it is to facilitate any pre or post game meetings and to act as a support (if needed) after the game.

The GDO must identify strengths and weaknesses of the on field officials. This includes positioning, rules knowledge, uniform, teamwork and confidence. The GDO must bring to the attention of the officials after the game the good and the bad. Although the discussion is a group setting, there may be instances where a one on one is needed.

The GDO must submit his report to the Evaluation Committee within 48 hrs. There are several reasons for this. The first is the longer one waits the more one forgets, even with notes. Secondly our bi-weekly meetings often address any issues raised from the GDO reports because if it happened in one game, it will be happening in others.

The program is funded from within the MFOA with assistance from Football Manitoba the past few years.

The implementation of the GDO program has been very beneficial to the MFOA, MFRA, the leagues and most importantly, the teams, players and coaches who see a better quality and more consistent officiating.