

## FITCH FILES

### *Playing Referee. . .*

Just about everyone who watches sports likes to play official... we all feel we can do a better job than those on the field of play that are getting paid for this... Take this weekend for example... we all watched the San Diego – Denver game with dismay – yelling @ the TV trying to tell Ed Hochili's what the correct call should be... heck, I was in Chicago the game was in Denver I know for a fact he couldn't hear me but I found myself yelling it out loud anyway... Why? Why do we do this... I think it's on a number of levels...

- first off it's easy to second guess someone doing something you can't do...
- secondly, we have the best seat in the house – a 30 inch plus TV with the perfect camera angles... I've been on the sidelines and at game speed, at weird angles, you just can't see everything... I've seen a cornerback hold a WR off the line all the way down the field.. and no call.. Why, bad angles...
- and finally, it's the American way.... We have become a country FULL of complainers!!!

Now, let's be honest, how many times have you watched an NFL game and a wide receiver and cornerback are both pushing and shoving each other all the way down the field without either gaining an advantage but when the cornerbacks' feet get tangled with the receiver and he falls then you see the flag.

What should be the correct call? Prepare yourself, here are the rules governing tangled feet. If both of the players are looking for the ball, it is a **no** call. If neither of the players is looking for the ball, **no** call. If the receiver is looking for the ball and the defensive back isn't, **defensive pass interference!**

So ask yourself, did the officials just ruin a beautiful football moment? Did the official even ponder the beauty of the athletic competition between two highly skilled athletes? Probably not.

There are so many things the NFL officials have to keep an eye on. Contrary to popular belief, the officials have a school to go to and graduate from before they can be officials and more schooling to reach the pro level. To say that it is a tough and thankless job would be an **understatement.**

Officials are a necessary evil and are actually the third team on the field.

I'll bet if you could somehow put together a group of 15 NFL fans and show them a DVD of 30 of the toughest and we, the fans would miss the majority of those same calls—if not more, or just keep calling **holding!!!**

I would say that because us fans think we know the game, and think we know majority of the rules, but where we fall **short** is the interpretation of the rules.

I'll be the first to tell you all I want to hear from an official is “first down”, “touchdown”, and the whistle to start the clock. But without the officials doing their job, the game would be reminiscent of playing ball in the park and having the game stopped for everything.

So, mark this down as one man's opinion. I feel that of all the professional sports the NFL has the best officiating, due to the tireless work put in by the seven man crew on the field, the assistance of Instant Replay and thorough weekly review.

Join me next time as an official makes a call that you think was terrible then go read the rulebook and ask yourself: should I hate the referee or dislike his interpretation of the Rules?

Now that's my two cents... If you would like to provide your feedback here, visit my blog @ <http://asnn365.blogspot.com>