Holding and Illegal use of the Hands!

PANEL;
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BLACK AND WHITE, OR GRAY

There are two things to consider:

1. The black and white;
   • It is holding or it is not!
   • We have no lack of certainty!

2. Or the gray;
   • This is what we get paid to separate out.
Can this be ignored?
What is a Hold?

• HOLDING = “restraining an opponent (other than a legal tackle)” .... ILLEGAL!

• BLOCKING = “obstructing an opponent (other than interference)” .... LEGAL!
Axioms:

1. Holding calls require more discretion than personal or safety related fouls.
2. A “good hold” has an effect on the play.
3. Call the first “good hold” you see.
4. Field position or game time has no bearing on the call.
5. Holding does not have to be related to blocking.
Hold or Not?

Referee Magazine, Dec., 2002
What Are Your Keys?

- Pay close attention to when a blocker gets beat.
- Was there an attempt to gain separation by the offended player?
- Can the opponent make a play on the ball?
- Could the hold affect the outcome of the play?
A “good hold” has an affect on the play. Good officials recognize this.

- See the entire action of the block. Don’t assume.
- Know and work your areas of responsibility. Do not be a ball watcher.
- Did the “potential hold” affect the play?
Preventative officiating can avoid excessive penalties. Never say, “#84 you were holding!” Instead say, “#84, watch your hands!” You may accomplish what you want, which is to stop #84 from holding, and not infer you allowed a foul to go un-penalized.
Will this affect the play?
• Know the status of the ball when the holding/hands call is made.

• Throw or toss the flag on the yard line on which the holding/hands foul occurred.
Illegal use of Hands

• Hands to the head.
• Hands outside the frame of the blocker.
• Hands in the back.
• Push/block against a receiver who is no longer a potential blocker.
OPEN-HAND BLOCK

• Remember — an open-hand block means just that — the hands shall be open on contact.

• If the blocker closes his hands with the arms extended, he is going to grab shirt.
What to look for here!
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Illegal use of hands
Is this legal?
Legal or Not ?
Appropriate times to no-call and warn player to “watch his hands”:

- If there is a grasp and it is quickly dropped and the grasp doesn’t change the path of the opponent nor slow him down.

- If there is a “potential hold” when LOS is not involved (change of possession) and if the “hold” does not cause the opponent to redirect or causes him to slow down.
Would this be a good “No-Call”? \(^{17}\)
• If there is a “potential hold” that occurs away from the point of attack or the location of the ball and has no effect on the play.

• If the “potential offensive hold” occurs after a pass has been thrown downfield.
Appropriate time to throw the flag (now you have a “good hold”):

- If the opponent can not gain separation.
- Offense holds on the LOS, tackle to tackle.
- Blocking back holds away from the possible sack on a passing play.
- Offense holds at the corner on a sweep.
- Defense holds a pulling offensive lineman.
- Defense holds wide outs, or holds coverage players on punt coverage.
- Defense holds eligible pass receivers.
- Holds that are obvious to the world even if they fit a no-call guideline.
Review:

1. Restriction is **illegal**.
2. Obstruction is **legal**.
3. Is there an attempt to gain separation?
4. Think, “potential holding”.
5. Look for keys, read the play, and officiate your area.
6. Where is the point of attack?
7. See the entire action.
8. Could the action **have an effect** on the play?
9. Could preventative officiating be used instead of penalizing?
10. Were illegal hands effective?

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This is what we see!