

**December 5, 2009**



An interview with:

**WALT ANDERSON  
COORDINATOR OF FOOTBALL OFFICIALS  
BIG 12 CONFERENCE**

PETER IRWIN: We're now joined by Walt Anderson. Do you want to make any opening comments on or just take questions?

WALT ANDERSON: I'll take questions.

**Q. Could you walk us through the process that you went through to determine there was one second left?**

WALT ANDERSON: What we do as pretty much with any replay situation is first determine if the play is reviewable, which this one is because it involves a clock error at a critical time in the game.

So we knew right away that you had the potential for when did the ball hit out of bounds and where was the clock? So we immediately up and page the officials. Let TV know that we're reviewing the play.

Right away TV sent us a shot where we had the flight of the ball. They superimposed the clock, and so it's by rule a question as when the ball touches something there is time on the clock and there was. There was a second left, so we put that back up.

**Q. Did the clock operator in the press box make the error?**

WALT ANDERSON: It's not an error really by the clock operator. Because what you have to understand is in any situation the clock operators are told to, you know, to wait before they hit the button until they see that the ball is clearly, you know, hitting something. Of course, when it's out of bounds there's obviously opportunities where the clock operator may not have had a clear picture of exactly when the ball hit something.

So he waits until he actually sees the ball has clearly hit something either on the ground or

out of bounds. Then he pushes a switch that stops the clock.

As most of you are aware, with clock situations there are always going to be some delays, which is, again, one of the reasons why instant replay was determined that the status of the clock was something that you wanted to have the opportunity to utilize instant replay to correct an obvious error.

**Q. I'm assuming you guys used the Big 12 clock operator tonight?**

WALT ANDERSON: Yes, our Conference assigns clock operators to each game.

**Q. There were a few instances throughout the ballgame where the officials had to adjust the clock, take time off, put time back on. I wasn't sure between tonight's game and your experience in the NFL, is this a problem with the clock situation at Cowboy Stadium or something else?**

WALT ANDERSON: Oh, no. I'd never say there was a problem with the clock in Cowboy Stadium. You know, the thing you have to realize is there is one clock operator in terms of the game clock and there are seven officials out on the field. All of them ruling on various aspects of the game.

There are certain times when one official may be signaling to stop the clock, and the clock operator may just not be at that particular time at that particular instance looking at that particular official. Particularly if it's a quick signal. Then he looks back and that official is no longer, you know, stopping the clock.

You could certainly have situations where the clock runs a certain amount of time and you end up making those corrections. Again, I think we made a few clock corrections during the game today, and this is exactly what we want the officials to do.

It's also why the Replay Rule, Rule 12:3, is the specific rule that deals with the circumstances of which plays are reviewable of which any type of

an egregious clock error can be corrected. And that's like all of the reviewable type plays that are part of Rule 12, it's really for these type of events that happen that you want to be sure that an error of judgment doesn't end up being made on the field that is really a matter of fact. In terms if there is time left on the field, if the ball is legally declared dead, then the intent of the Rules Committee when they put the instant replay rule in is to be able to correct them.

**Q. Were you looking for ball hitting ground or ball crossing the plain of the boundary?**

WALT ANDERSON: No, the ball by rule has to hit something. So the plain is actually only involved when you're looking at either the line of the game for a first down in terms of when forward progress is stopped, or the goal line as to when a player penetrates with the ball the plain of the goal.

But on the status of whether a ball is dead or still in play, it's when the ball hits something.

**Q. What did it hit in this case?**

WALT ANDERSON: It hit the railing over there by one of those suites that are on the ground level.

It may have bounced around a little bit, too. Once we saw it hit something, that was the point at which we stopped the clock.

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