

STARS & STRIPES

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JIM HENDERSON: ON DECK

Is there anything less enjoyable to watch and pay full price for than pre-season NFL football. Yes, pre-season NFL football when officials are trying to make their point at the expense of the paying and viewing customer's enjoyment of what has become America's Pastime.

In the off-season in response to the Super Bowl Champion Seattle Seahawks'

frequent and frequently successful mugging of opposition receivers beyond the acceptable five-yard limit, the NFL came up with a novel idea. Let's actually enforce the rules as the rule book says we should. Let's call illegal contact and defensive holding so stringently in the pre-season it will sufficiently deter teams from such infractions in the regular season.

The result has often made watching a game like having flaming bamboo shoots driven beneath your toenails....though not quite as pleasant.

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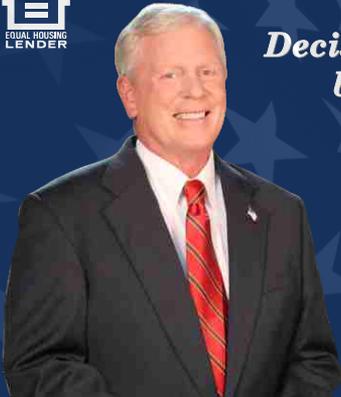


In the Saints' second pre-season game against the Tennessee Titans an astounding 22 penalties were accepted against the Saints, 10 against the Titans while 8 were refused. 40 penalties in all. Only the United Nations had more flags.

Subsequently a report surfaced that the NFL was auditioning over 20 developmental officials in pre-season. They were reportedly instructed to throw a flag over anything that might look like a penalty and we'll review it in the subsequent week and tell you if you were right.

It's hoped that such zealous enforcement of the rule book at the expense of the fans' enjoyment of the game will provide a chilling effect on NFL secondaries, their coordinators, and their head coaches, cleaning up the game for the regular season to follow.

If it does, the game will be the better for it. If it doesn't and such officiating vigilance continues into the regular season, fans and broadcasting networks will be on the verge of mutiny. "Give us our game back," they'll demand. "This is not what we paid for!"



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In observance of the upcoming holidays, all offices will be closed on: ★ ★ ★

Labor Day

Monday, September 1st

Columbus Day

Monday, October 13th

Veterans Day

Tuesday, November 11th

Thanksgiving Day

Thursday, November 27th

All offices will close at noon Friday, November 28th

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**Congratulations to the winners of the
Quarterly Stars and Stripes Drawing!**

**Denny Cawyer of Destrehan
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Each won a \$50 Visa Gift Card by entering last issue's contest drawing.

Thank you for reading this publication of Stars and Stripes!

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Please return by October 31, 2014 to be eligible for this drawing.
Winners will be announced in the next quarterly publication of Stars and Stripes.