

PFWA Pool Reporter Joe Reedy Interview with NFL Senior Vice President of Officiating Walt Anderson

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Question: On the muffed punt, it looked from a couple of angles like the player signaled for a fair catch. Why didn't fair-catch interference apply there?

Anderson: "Because the punt returner was actually contacted by his own teammate who was actively blocking a Chargers player. And when a teammate of the returner is actively blocking, that teammate is responsible for his own contact even if it's into the player who signals for a fair catch. So, the contact was actually by the teammate of the Dallas player who had signaled for the fair catch."

Question: Okay, and the review was initiated by the Chargers?

Anderson: "Correct because the ruling on the field was that it was illegally touched by the Chargers. So, there wasn't a ruling on the field of a change of possession. It was just a normal punt with an illegal touch. If we had ruled on the field initially that the ball was touched by the receivers and then awarded to the kicking team, then it would have been a booth review to either confirm that's what happened or if the reverse had happened, then we would have changed it. But because it was ruled on the field that it was not touched by the receiving team, that's why it was a coach's challenge."