

Since video review was introduced to the college game, the standard has been for the crew chief to go into the replay area and check the equipment before the start of every single game or series. This standard can be taken to another level to prevent some potential problems later in the game or series. First of all, replay is new to most everyone across the country. With that being said, what if the crew chief gets injured during game 1 of a series, and only he went in to check the replay equipment, and no one else on the crew has any experience with replay at all or with the equipment at a particular stadium? Let's say the crew chief is injured in the 3rd inning and has to be removed from the game. Now no one is familiar with the equipment. An alternative to help prevent this problem, is to take everyone on the crew to the replay area, prior to the start of a series or game, so that every member of the crew is familiar with, not only the location of the equipment, but also how the "talk" buttons work, the different camera angles available, etc. Failure to take this added precaution, can lead to a confusing, inefficient situation if review is necessary and the crew chief is not on the field for whatever reason.

Another added precaution, would be to check the equipment every day of a series. There are many reasons for this. Video review personnel at most schools changes throughout the course of the series, so many times umpires are working with different video personnel each day. Unfortunately, sometimes a school assumes that the video equipment is all set and ready to go, since it was working on Friday. Maybe, for whatever reason, school personnel forgot to do a pregame check. Now the umpires have a play to review, only to find that the screen isn't on, the volume on the replay box isn't working, etc. Just recently, there was a weather delay at a school, prior to the start of game one of a series. Fortunately, the crew did a thorough check prior to the game, only to find that the storm one hour prior to the game had knocked out the power to the replay equipment. There have also been instances of schools maybe having their replay screen and equipment in an area that stays locked, unless a game is being played. We would hope that game management would have someone responsible for unlocking that area, but it is not safe to take that for granted.

It would be a best practice to make sure every crew member is familiar with the location of the equipment and have a basic understanding of how it works. If nothing else, it will give umpires with little or no experience with replay, the basic knowledge they will need when they are the crew chief one day in the future. It will also prevent some headaches and make sure everything is as timely and efficient as possible, when video review is needed, by making sure everything is operable prior to every game that is played.