

Coin Toss “Tips”

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Ever had a “senior moment” at a coin toss and wanted to call a do-over? It doesn't take much and you can't predict when you're going to have that moment and simply blank out on whether the visiting captain called heads or tails. Here's a few tips or ideas to get things off to a smooth start so your crew's credibility isn't questioned before they ever throw a flag...

I didn't like the procedure flipping and catching a coin, always afraid that I'd muff the toss and end up dropping it to the ground. So I did the traditional flip and let it fall to earth. As my reading glasses went from a 100 to a 275 over the years I was having a tough time seeing heads versus tails on the silver dollar I was using. Not wanting to bend over and prove I was half-blind by intently staring down the coin, I switched 10+ years ago to a favorite commemorative military coin that was gold on one side and blue on the other... simply gold side = heads, blue side = tails. I may have been half blind for reading, but not color blind. Now seeing the coin on the ground was a piece of cake.

Now came the second part to the puzzle... we went through the coin toss ritual for the captains, showing both sides of the coin and getting the visiting team's option. Our Umpire dutifully repeated the choice, as did I. But then the second the coin went into the air I was saying to myself, “What the heck did he call?” It was only two-seconds ago that the captain made his choice, I repeated it, the Umpire repeated it and now I'm scrambling to make it look like I know. It's a sinking feeling because if you screw up the coin toss you've just made it harder for your crew's pass interference and holding calls to be credible. You had it right in the palm of your hand and you let it slip away.

So I needed a new “crutch” or aid to make this part of the coin toss seem seamless. It dawned on me to use my down indicator for that “cheat sheet”. Going out to the coin toss I started keeping my down indicator on my first finger for first down... this was going to be “heads”. When the captain called tails, I'd discretely shifted my down indicator off my finger when readying the coin and announcing the captain called “tails”. Now when that senior moment came when the coin went in the air all I had to do was feel or glance down at my hand which was now directly in the path to the coin on the ground... “Tails was the call, captain you've won the toss”.

Now keep laughing about my senior moments and shaking your head about how you don't need these tips because you are a brain surgeon and your vision is 20-20. Your day is coming and it may not be a senior moment that starts your crew's day off on the wrong foot. It may just be your pride and stubbornness!