The Toledo Rockets were in position to do something they had done many times before...beat one of the "big-name" college football programs. The Rockets were in the Carrier Dome in New York, giving Syracuse all it could handle. The Rockets led late, but Syracuse drove for a go-ahead touchdown with 2:07 remaining in regulation. Alec Lemon caught an 18-yard touchdown pass from Ryan Nassib to make the score 29-27 in favor of the Orangemen, with the extra point still to come.

But Ross Krautman pulled it. He flat-out missed.

As the Toledo players saw the attempt sail wide of the left upright they must have felt a shot of adrenaline pump through their bodies. Down just two points with over two minutes left...an eternity in college football.

"What," they must have thought, "is that guy doing?"

The Big East official standing under the left upright had his hands in the air, signaling that the try was good. Despite the obvious flub the official, like the kicker, missed it.

"That's okay, the replay guy will get it," they had to have thought.

College football uses instant replay to fix obvious incorrect calls. It is a very simple process...the replay official sits up in a booth with each and every camera angle at his disposal. Every replay from over a dozen cameras within the stadium is there for the replay official to check for clear proof of a botched call. The long angle, from behind the kicker, showed indisputable proof the ball had sailed wide of the left upright. It is quite simple...if you are watching from behind and you see the ball pass in front of the upright the kick missed. It is not hard to figure that out.

However, it was too hard for the replay official at the Carrier Dome.

To make matters worse, Toledo was able to drive to a late field goal that tied the game at 30-30 and send it to overtime. The Rockets should have been celebrating a 30-29 victory over a Big East team...the kind of victory that means the world to a team from the Mid-American Conference. Instead they were getting ready for overtime, where they would eventually lose, 33-30.

After the game, Big East coordinator of officiating Terry Mcaulay released a statement about the mistake:

"After studying the videos of the Syracuse extra point attempt at 2:07 of the fourth quarter, we have concluded that the ruling on the field that the kick passed between the uprights was incorrect, and that the replay official made an error in failing to reverse that ruling. In reviewing the video, we have determined that the angle from behind the kicking team shows conclusively that the ball passes outside the right upright. Our review of the process determined that the replay official mistakenly focused his attention on the sideline angle, which proved to be distorted. We are confident that our officiating staff will learn from this situation in order to prevent a reoccurrence. "

Does that clear things up for you? Hey Rockets players and fans, do you get it now? It's all good, right?

Not even close.

This is the kind of situation that makes people lose faith in the integrity of college athletics. This was an unpardonable mistake that people should lose their jobs over. No BS statement from the officials' boss will take away from the fact that the Toledo Rockets were screwed, and they deserve something more because of it.

Think about what Mr. Mcaulay is saying. He wants us to believe that with every replay at his disposal, including one that showed the call on the field was unmistakably wrong, the replay official didn't see anything that would make him overturn the call. He supposedly focused on the sideline angle, which proved to be "distorted" instead of checking the angle each and every football game broadcasted on each and every network uses to show extra points and field goals...the long angle from behind the kicker. This smells to high heaven.

Why, this writer wants to know, would the replay official concentrate on the angle you can't tell anything from? Even if the kick was right down the middle, from the sideline angle you cannot tell if it was good or not. For us to believe this was the angle the replay official concentrated on, while ignoring the angle universally used to show whether field goals are good or not on television, is a reach of epic proportions. This would be like asking us to believe a replay official, when checking if the ball crossed the plane of the goal line or not, would use the long angle from way behind the play. Or the overhead shot from the blimp. It defies all logic or possibility.

Here is what happened, yes it is my opinion but there is no other way to explain this with the exception of calling the game a "fixed" game: The replay official did not want to look at the angle that would have showed the call on the field was wrong, so he didn't. He did not want to give Toledo, a team from a mid-major conference, a signature win at the expense of a Big East team. He also did not want Syracuse, a team from the conference he works for, to suffer a loss to a MAC team. Syracuse is trying to get back to respectability...losing to a MAC team would hinder this process. So he let the wrong call stand, and the Big East team ended up benefitting from a terrible injustice.

What should be done about this? There definitely should be repercussions and consequences.

First thing's first, Syracuse should vacate the victory. The Orangemen have to know they do not deserve that win and their record as stands does not accurately reflect games won and lost. This would also take the loss off the Rockets' season slate. Simply put, Toledo does not deserve to be saddled with a loss it did not deserve...especially when it actually won the game.

Second thing, that replay official should lose his job and be investigated. There is no logical reason for him to have made this mistake. I can understand he is a human being and human beings will make mistakes from time to time, but this was not really a mistake...it was sabotage. I defy anyone to explain it any other way.

Finally, the NCAA should do something about conferences employing officiating crews. All officiating should be coordinated through the NCAA, not through the individual conferences. If this officiating crew would not had an association with the team that benefitted from such a blatant miscarriage of justice people like me would not be concluding there was some nefarious reason for this refusal to correct such a clear mistake.

Toledo should hold its heads high and head coach Tim Beckman should be commended for how he handled the situation. He did not complain about it and spoke of how his team still could have won the game in overtime. This is how coaches with class handle situations like this. His Rockets were clearly ripped off, but he knows dwelling on what happened will not benefit his team in the long run.

The Big East should be ashamed of itself today, and with all of these teams looking to move to different conferences in college football today it is my hope they look at what happened to Toledo and rethink if they want to be associated with a league that would, instead of condemn and apologize something like this, try to explain it all away.

By the way, Syracuse was a 2.5 point favorite heading into the game.