

Make the Right Call



Three Degrees of Consistency

When talking with coaches about the traits they would prefer to see in an official, the most common response, regardless of sport, is consistency. The problem with this response is that often times consistency is in the eye of the beholder.

According to Webster's Dictionary, consistency has two meanings that apply to the WOA:

1. A steadfast adherence to the same principles
2. Agreement, harmony, or compatibility, especially correspondence or uniformity among the parts of a complex thing.

Officiating is a complex thing. Between the national rules, state rules, and the interpretations, there are a lot of opportunities for officials to be inconsistent.

Executive Board Meeting
The WOA Executive Board will meet at the WIAA office January 9-10. January 9 will serve as a board work session. The agenda for the board meeting includes a recap of the fall season, up-to-date financial report, an overview of the winter season

The only way to adequately deal with consistency is to minimize the number of people involved in the process and to make sure officials are following interpretations as they are provided throughout the season. This may mean a change in "how it used to be called", but officials need to be able to adapt to the changes and understand there is a reason for the way in which a rule or regulation has been interpreted.

From a state perspective, there are a few ways to look at the issue of consistency. The first is that of the officials consistently enforcing the correct rules. This is obviously the best case scenario. The second is that of the officials consistently enforcing the wrong rule. In these situations, the officials are

Upcoming Dates

and requests for action from the region representatives and staff.

Scholarship Application Deadline

The scholarship application is located on the WOA web site. Applications must be received by March 15, 2011.

being consistent and it allows for a correction to be made in order to bring the officials in line with the proper enforcement of the rule. In this case, it is better to be consistently wrong than inconsistent. The third way is that of an official enforcing rules inconsistently. In this case, the issue not only involves making sure the official understands the correct interpretation of the rule, but will also need training on how to properly enforce the rule.

One way to promote consistency among your crew is to create an environment that encourages partners to raise questions if they do not agree with the way in which a rule is about to be enforced. A few seconds of discussion could lead to the correct call.

WOA/ArbiterSports Golf Classic
August 5, 2011 at AppleTree Golf Course in Yakima.

WOA Conference

August 5-6, 2011 at the Yakima Convention Center. Registration information for the golf tournament and the conference will be available in April.

Special points of interest:

- OFFICIATING HAS THREE DEGREES OF CONSISTENCY: CONSISTENTLY RIGHT; CONSISTENTLY WRONG; INCONSISTENT
- STEADFAST ADHERENCE TO INTERPRETATIONS WILL PROMOTE CONSISTENCY
- CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT WELCOMES INPUT IF A CREW MEMBER DISAGREES WITH THE WAY A RULE IS BEING ENFORCED

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Make the Right Call



Judy Roberts, Seattle

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

THE "BLUE FLAG TRIBUTE" AWARENESS PROGRAM IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF COACHES AND OFFICIALS WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT CAUSE.

NFHS Concussion Rule Refresher

When a player is removed by an official for signs or symptoms of a concussion, the coach is responsible for making sure the player is evaluated to determine whether or not the player has actually suffered a concussion. If after the evaluation, the player is deemed to not have suffered a concussion, the player can return to the game. If, on the other hand, the player is deemed to have suffered a concussion, the player will not return to play until being seen by a doctor. So, if a player returns to play, the

officials should trust that the process has been followed.

If you witness a player who exhibits signs or symptoms of a concussion, you are to do the following:

- Explain to the coach what you have witnessed and inform the coach that the player is being removed from the contest. Take another official with you when possible.
- Write down the player's number and time of game the player was removed.

- At this point, the coach is responsible for making sure the player seeks proper medical care.
- DO NOT ask for a note when the player returns to play. The decision for the player to return is solely the responsibility of school personnel.

It is important that officials follow the steps outlined by the WOA. Not following the approved steps may place an official's insurance coverage in jeopardy.

THANK YOU!!!!!!!

Thank you to all the semifinal football officials for accommodating the many changes that were asked of you due to the inclement weather. Could there have been any other types of changes....date, time,

location, and crew member changes? After it was all said and done, every official originally assigned to a semifinal game ended up working a semifinal game. Maybe not the game they were originally scheduled

for, but no one missed out on the opportunity to work. This could only have been done with the cooperation of all the officials assigned to the semifinals.

THANK YOU!

WOA and Fred Hutchinson Receive Award

On November 9, the WOA received an email informing us that the "Blue Flag Tribute for Prostate Cancer" was receiving the Communitas Award for community service. The award is presented by MARCOM, which is an institution that recognizes Cancer Research programs across the country for marketing and community service programs. Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and the WOA were joint recipients of the award.

2010 marked the third year of the "Blue Flag Tribute" in the state of Washington. Juan Cotto, the organizer of the program, has been able to use the WOA model to encourage other states to participate. The goal of the program is to get every state to participate within the next few years.

The "Blue Flag Tribute" awareness program is a great example of coaches and officials working together for a great cause.

Not only is Juan a director at Fred Hutchinson, he also serves as the head football coach at Highline High School. Over the last three years, Juan has worked with the WOA to develop a program that every official can participate in.

Jason Capps, PNFOA, was very instrumental in improving the professionalism of the program by doing the ground work to obtain quality flags for the event.



(L to R) Rick Langeland, EFA; Ron Schafer, IEFA; Dean Corcoran, SCFA; Ryan Blakney, CCFA; and Jeff Kinne, TRIFA prior to the 3A Semifinal Football game holding the 2010 Communitas Award

Photo Courtesy of Andy Barnes, WIAA

Basketball Update: Mercy Rule, Arm Sleeves, Socks

Mercy Rule

The WIAA mercy rule is in effect for all high school games. Please check with your assigner to find out if the mercy rule will be used by the middle school leagues in your service area. When utilizing the WIAA mercy rule, the coaches do not have to be consulted. As soon as the 40 point differential is established in the second half, the mercy rule is in effect the rest of the game, regardless of whether the margin is reduced to less than 40 points.

There have been issues reported by the schools in regard to the game clocks and shot clocks working independently from each other. If this situation arises, the WIAA has determined that the shot clock may be turned off. If the shot clock is turned off in girls basketball, there still will not be a 10-second backcourt count.

The clock will stop for the shooting of free throws, once the reporting process has been completed.

Arm Sleeves

Players who are wearing a compression sleeve on their

elbow, padded or unpadded, are required to have a signed physician's statement at the table, stating the requirement for the sleeve. Officials should verify the presence of the statement at the table once the wearing of the sleeve is identified.

Sleeve colors must adhere to the same regulations as undershirts (3-5-5).

Socks

Socks are not considered part of the uniform and therefore have no restrictions on logos (Case Book 3.6.1).



Hap Fakkema, Whatcom-Skagit

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

Role of the Wrestling Official in Concussion Management

A recent memo from John Miller, WIAA Assistant Executive Director, clarified how WIAA wants officials to respond to possible concussion situations.

As we look to putting the new concussion management protocol into action, allow us to share a strategy that has proven to be successful in not only addressing the safety issue, but in reducing questions and/or arguments from the coach. In the pre-meet talk, clearly and concisely advise the coach of the steps you are going to take.

1. If a wrestler exhibits behaviors you believe are consistent with a possible concussion, the match will be stopped.

2. Call the coach out to attend to his/her wrestler.
3. Tell the coach exactly what happened and the specific behaviors exhibited by the wrestler (signs/symptoms) that caused concern.
4. Advise the coach that the wrestler is now under his/her supervision and care.
5. Start the injury (or recovery) clock, and move away allowing the coach to attend to his/her wrestler.
6. Document on the scoresheet.

In using these steps, we have done our job. We saw a blow to the head. We observed signs/symptoms. We responded by removing the athlete from competition and put him/her under the supervision and care of the coach. It is the responsibility of the coach to make the

decision if a follow-up examination by a health care professional is needed. If the coach makes the decision to put the wrestler back in, the official should monitor closely. If he/she observes any repeated/additional signs, stop the match and repeat the process.

If the official is clear with the coach(es) in the pre-meet about the steps he/she is going to take, and reminds the coach that the intent of the rule is to protect the athlete and err on the side of safety (as stated in the on-line clinic, "When in doubt, hold them out."), it will establish a foundation for the coach to make a quality decision if things should become emotionally charged.

REMINDS THE COACH THAT THE INTENT OF THE RULE IS TO PROTECT THE ATHLETE AND ERR ON THE SIDE OF SAFETY.....
.....WHEN IN DOUBT, HOLD THEM OUT



Sam Nishi, Yakima Valley

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey



Officiating the Game for the Athletes!

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Note from the Commissioner:

Thank you to all the officials who worked a fall sport. There were a few issues throughout the fall that made for some interesting headlines, but in the end, the season concluded on a high note with the Gridiron Classic.

In an attempt to improve the consistency of officiating throughout the state, it is important that you adhere to the interpretations provided by the WOA. If you have any questions or concerns with an interpretation, please work with your assigner to address the issue with the WOA. Please remember that the WOA is the messenger for the interpretations. All rule interpretations must be made by the WIAA sport representative. Yes, the WOA has input into the interpretations, but the final word is that of the WIAA. It is important to follow the chain-of-command when requesting an interpretation. If necessary, the WIAA staff will communicate with the NFHS to obtain clarification. Just as it is important for the local association/board to have one voice with the WOA, it is necessary for the WIAA to have one voice with the NFHS. The fewer voices, the less chance of contradicting information being disseminated.

I wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a safe New Year!

Todd Stordahl
WOA Commissioner



Eric Cheatley, Lower Columbia and Todd Weber, Snohomish County

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

www.woa-officials.com

In Good Hands by Tim Sloan

As an official, there are many times when you can get away with an error if the participants can remain confident that you know how to take care of business. The corollary is that if you run up too much of a tab that confidence begins to wane. Human beings have spread exponentially across the planet over the centuries at least partially because they became adept at taking matters into their own hands when they felt they had to. Sporting events are a microcosm of that notion,

where predator and prey are individually numbered and hot dogs are sold. The successful officials continue to reassure the participants that they can feel safe and have a fair chance to win.

“Protect my player!” comes the cry of a coach who is starting to lose confidence in you. He doesn’t want you to block better than his left tackle evidently can. He doesn’t expect you to break the fall of his star player when he or she drives the lane and gets undercut attempting a layup. No,

coaches want you to establish it firmly in everyone’s mind that you will take care of business so the players can focus on playing the game. Bad things start happening when players feel the need to help you.

Do what’s appropriate to the situation and show participants that you understand what’s happening and can be counted on to take action, even if it means admitting a mistake.

They’re counting on you.

(The full version of this article can be found in, Referee magazine, December 2010)



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