

# Make the Right Call



## Certification Required for All High School Contests

In May of 2010, the WOA Executive Board passed a motion to require all officials working a high school contest to be certified. Prior to this action, only varsity games carried the certification requirement.

Why was this decision made? As with all changes, there were a few incidents that led to this topic being discussed and throughout those discussions, the question that kept coming up was whether or not all high school officials should be certified officials. Although the intensity and impact of a varsity contest is greater than a sub-varsity contest, the rules that govern the sport and the expectations of the officials are the same. As many of you know, the strangest things happen during a sub-varsity game.

The other concern was with the rumored changes being made by the NFHS to the concussion rule. Although there was some hope the NFHS would back off the proposed changes and allow states to manage how concussions were to be handled, the board felt it was necessary to make sure all officials working a high school contest are WOA certified. As we can see now, the NFHS went forward with their proposal and the changes have placed more responsibility on the officials. By requiring certification, it makes sure that all officials working at the high school level are aware of the changes and should understand their new responsibilities as it pertains to the safety of the student-athlete.

Beginning with the fall of 2010, to be a certified official, you must complete the Concussion Management requirement, complete the sport-specific rules clinic and pass the WOA test with a score of 70 or higher.

The WOA is working towards streamlining the certification process and how the data is recorded to help ease the administrative burden placed on the assigners.

Will certification be required at all levels? Eventually, the Board will have to determine whether certified officials will be required for all games, including junior high and middle school. The biggest impact on making this determination will be the need to protect officials and the best way to protect is to educate.

## Ejection Report Reminder

When filing an ejection report, it is important to remember a couple things:

1. Reports should be filed within 48 hours. Not turning in a report does not make the ejection go away (as some would like to believe).

Schools are required to sit the offender regardless of whether a report is received. Not filing the report within 48 hours leads to a lot of work for the school, WOA staff and your assigner.

2. Only include the facts of the events leading to the ejection. Please do not include opinions or recommendations on what should happen to the offender.

### Special points of interest:

- EXPECTATIONS OF OFFICIALS ARE THE SAME REGARDLESS OF WHETHER IT IS A VARSITY OR SUB-VARSITY CONTEST
- ALL OFFICIALS WORKING A HIGH SCHOOL CONTEST MUST COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:
  - CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT
  - SPORT-SPECIFIC RULES CLINIC
  - WOA TEST (70 OR HIGHER)

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# Make the Right Call

## How Not to Officiate by Julie Sternberg

“IF YOU FIGURE OUT WHAT TO AVOID, YOU’LL BE ON YOUR WAY TO OFFICIATING THE RIGHT WAY.”

Remember when your parents used to warn you, “Don’t ever do that” in reference to another kid throwing a tantrum in public or back-talking to an adult? By pointing out the bad behavior, they were teaching you what to avoid. Sometimes you can learn a lot from the bad guys.

The same holds true in officiating. There are some officials who get low ratings for a reason, but you can learn from them. If you

figure out what to avoid, you’ll be on your way to officiating the right way. Here are some ways not to officiate:

1. **Don’t care about your performance.** If you don’t care, it shows. It can be apparent in your arrival time, appearance and attitude.
2. **Don’t have a strong pregame.** Why would you want to get on the same page with your crewmates?

So you don’t crash and burn, for one thing.

3. **Don’t control your emotions.** Imagine if you let your emotions have free rein: after a coach berates you for a call, you step up and fight fire with fire. Guess who will get burned?
4. **Don’t admit errors.** Mistakes happen. If you never admit a mistake, you lose credibility.

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

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## WIAA Executive Board Recap - Basketball / Soccer

### Revisions to the State Basketball Tournament:

The first round games will be played at 33 sites throughout the state February 25-26. This change in format will call for 198 officials on Friday night. Of those 198 selected to work Friday night, 144 will also work on Saturday. The winners of the first round games will move on to one of the three finals sites. There will be 72 officials assigned

to the finals sites - 12 officials per site per gender. Officials will be assigned to a site and will work games in both classifications playing at the site.

The WOA is asking that local associations set aside policies related to officials sitting out state tournaments in order to make sure the best officials are working throughout the five days of state basketball.

### Increased Penalty for Violent Conduct/Abusive Language Red Cards:

The WIAA Executive Board passed a motion to increase the penalty for red cards resulting from violent conduct and abusive language to three games. This decision was reached as the WIAA attempts to clean up the sport of soccer and reduce the number of ejections in these two areas.



Chad Burch, Yakima Valley Basketball

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey



Eric Davis, Western Washington Wrestling

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

## Online Clinic/Test - Winter Sports

The winter sports tests and clinics will be available Tuesday, October 19. Please make sure to use the updated WOA URL when accessing the WOA site. Over the summer, the WOA updated to a secure server, so the URL begins “https” rather than “http”.

Fall sports officials were the

first to experience the new test developed by the WOA. As is the case with all new ventures, there were bumps in the road. Hopefully the winter season will have fewer bumps, but we are still asking for your patience in advance.

Another area of concern encountered during the fall is that of the concussion

management requirement. The concussion management presentation is separate from the sport-specific clinic. All three components must be completed in order for an official to be certified.

An official must be certified in order to work any contests at the high school level.

## Football Update: Overtime, Pink Whistles

Here are a couple issues that have come up over the course of the last few weeks:

### Overtime

Officials should assume teams will play overtime in the case of a tie, unless informed otherwise by the schools/league involved in the game. Overtime is considered an extension of the fourth quarter. Officials should not be the ones determining whether or not overtime will be played. If there are any questions, especially at the

sub-varsity and middle school level, as to whether overtime will be played, please ask for a clarification prior to the opening kickoff.

### Pink Whistles

Although the idea of officials using pink whistles in tribute to Breast Cancer Awareness is a great idea, the WOA has made the decision that football officials will participate in the Prostate Cancer Awareness efforts, while the volleyball and soccer officials will

participate in the Breast Cancer Awareness programs. We hate to say no to such great causes, but it is important that we do not over commit in our support. By doing this, the WOA is supporting a wide variety of events without overtaxing the men and women who are out officiating on a daily basis. Although some may not like the position taken by the WOA, there has to be a line drawn and the WOA feels comfortable with the rational used to reach this decision.



Tim Stevens, Pacific Northwest Football

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

## Volleyball Update: Line Judges

### 2010 Point of Emphasis

Line judges duties are vitally important to the expediency of the match. Their duties are listed in detail under Rule 5-8. Signals are illustrated in the back of the NFHS Volleyball Rules Book. It is imperative that line judges be trained, either by the host school or the officials organizations. It is preferred

for varsity matches that adults be used as line judges. Line judges should be trained prior to the beginning of the season and they should be trained with theoretical and practical training on scrimmage matches. Professionalism and impartiality are vital parts of their duties in addition to those specifically listed in the rules. During the match, their

only communication should be with the officiating crew. In the unlikely event that any team member makes inappropriate comments to a line judge, that action should be reported to the first or second referee on the next dead ball. Prior to the match, line judges are assigned their positions and should review the duties with the first referee.

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## Soccer Update: Tie-Breakers, Fourth Official

As the fall season winds down, there are a couple areas that officials and assigners should make sure are in order prior to assigning or working a contest:

### Tie-Breaking Procedure

Prior to the start of the match, verify with the coaches if

there will be a tie-breaking procedure. If so, clarify which procedure they will be using. Although the league may have already informed your association of the procedure, it is a good idea to make sure coaches and officials are on the same page prior to the start of the game.

### Fourth Official / Alternate

A fourth official/alternate should only be assigned to a contest after receiving a request or permission from the host site. The league, tournament, or district may not agree to pay for the fourth official, so verify prior to assigning an alternate to the contest.



Lisa Brouelette, North Chapter Soccer

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey



# Officiating the Game for the Athletes!

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### Note from the Commissioner:

*Before we know it, the fall regular season will be coming to a close and the game intensity will increase. The important thing as officials is to be ready for the increase in intensity and be ready to be the calming influence on the field or court. All season long, you have worked to get to this point, so enjoy it and have a great time. Officials, like players, enjoy the competition and look forward to the postseason opportunities. If you are lucky enough to work a state tournament game I wish you the best of luck. If not, I invite you to attend a state tournament and encourage those individuals who will be representing the officials at this year's fall state tournaments. Either way, I hope all of you have a great conclusion to the fall season and that you truly enjoyed the role you played in the interscholastic experience.*

Todd Stordahl  
WOA Commissioner



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## Working With League Coordinators



Eric Cheatley, Lower Columbia Football

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

It is important that local associations/boards establish a process for leagues to communicate standard operating procedures, as well as concerns throughout the season. Many issues come up during the season that should have been handled prior to the season beginning. The more information associations/boards can provide their officials in regard to the different leagues being serviced, the less likely it will be that there is an administrative error or

misunderstanding at the game site.

The model recommended by the WOA is currently being used by a handful of organizations in an attempt to streamline communication with leagues and allow for an avenue to have their concerns addressed. This model creates a liaison for each league. Since a liaison is only dealing with one league, they can dedicate more time to making sure the relationship between the organization and the league is functioning properly and

that any concerns from the league are handled. Often times, league coordinators will look to the assigners to solve all the problems, which can become an overwhelming task. Assigners have a lot on their plates without also having to deal with all the issues of the leagues.

By establishing a liaison program with your leagues, you will reduce the workload of your assigner while increasing the relationship between the leagues serviced by your organization.