

Make the Right Call



WASHINGTON OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION

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Inspiring Umpire Among the Few, the Proud

by James Frankenberry



Mike Hodge has worked hundreds of softball games in his nearly 10-year career as an umpire. But a June game in New Hampshire holds a special place.

Hodge, who lost both legs in 1968 while serving as a Marine in Vietnam, worked behind the plate in an exhibition game honoring Michael Geary, a Marine killed in 2010 while serving in Afghanistan. The game took place during Hodge's 40-day, 12,000 mile motorcycle trip across the U.S. in memory of military veterans.

"I do believe everyone in attendance recognized the true purpose of that very special softball game," Hodge, 61, said. "That night was truly memorable and a highlight of my trip."

Hodge, North Bend, Wash., and a group of motorcyclists took a journey to four

corners of the country on a "Run for the Wall" trip for a POW and MIA awareness and healing mission from California to Washington D.C. Hodge has taken the "Run for the Wall" trip four times before. It started in California with stops in Key West, Fla., Madawaska, Minn., and Blaine, Wash., plus Amherst, N.H., about three weeks into the trip.

The 18U game at Souhegan High School was played before about 250 spectators. Hodge worked behind the plate with three other veteran umpires on the bases, including Glenn Colburn, umpire-in-chief for the New Hampshire ASA.

About 30 members of the Leatherneck Motorcycle Club escorted Hodge and five other riders to the field. A Marine Corps color guard presented the flag during the national anthem.

"Mike came down and greeted the fallen soldier's parents and expressed his gratitude," Colburn said. "The parents were very appreciative."

Then it was onto the game.

Hodge, a charter member of the L.A. Coastline Umpires Association, was named 2003

Southern California Umpire of the Year. He has worked five ASA national championships.

"He has a great personality and he's a take-charge kind of guy," Colburn said. "He's got a voice that's commanding and a heck of a presence."

Hodge has never let being a double amputee get in the way of his work behind the plate or on the bases.

"I lost my legs on the battlefield, but not my desire to live," he said. "Living means to participate in life, to be a part of and a contributor to society. And to also live my life to the fullest, realizing there are many others that didn't come home from that war."

"I've been told by many that I am an inspiration," Hodge added, "but I'm a regular guy trying to do the right thing and helping others."

(This article can be found in, Referee magazine, October 2011)



Photos Courtesy of Dale Garvey

Special Points of Interest:

- MIKE IS A MEMBER OF SEATTLE METRO SOFTBALL AND HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE WOA SINCE 2004
- "RUN FOR THE WALL" IS A POW/MIA AWARENESS AND HEALING MISSION THAT COVERS 12,000 MILES IN 40-DAYS, FROM CALIFORNIA TO WASHINGTON D.C.

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Make the Right Call



Dale Yamamoto and Fells, Seattle

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

Guaranteed Spot at the State Tournament

It is not too early to make plans to attend a state tournament this year in support of the officials, as well as being a part of the great environment of high school athletics at the highest level. State tournament

passes are available through your assigner for the reasonable price of \$10.

This is a great benefit provided to officials because of the great relationship we share with the WIAA. Hopefully all of you will take

advantage of the ability to purchase a pass and experience the best that WOA and WIAA has to offer.

Please contact your assigner to order a 2011-12 WIAA State Tournament Pass.

“HOPEFULLY ALL OF YOU WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ABILITY TO PURCHASE A PASS AND EXPERIENCE THE BEST WOA AND WIAA HAS TO OFFER”

2011 Emerald City Kickoff Classic

The 2011 Emerald City Kickoff Classic was held at CenturyLink Field on September 3.

The following officials were selected by their local association to work this year's games:

Blaine v Hazen

R: Mark Johnson, Whatcom-Skagit
U: Paul McKillop, Pacific Northwest
LJ: Justin Hughes, Pacific Northwest
HL: Dave DeKlyen, Whatcom-Skagit
BJ: Dave Donnelly, Whatcom-Skagit

Darrington v Oroville

R: Jim Carter, Snohomish County
U: Larry Gilman, Okanogan County
LJ: Marty Palmanteer, Okanogan County
HL: Ross Noe, Snohomish County
BJ: Jim Brotten, Snohomish County

North Mason v WF West

R: Steve Green, Peninsula
U: Sam Bakotich, SW Washington
LJ: Dave Zylstra, SW Washington
HL: Drew Jackson, Peninsula
BJ: Ace Beckham, Peninsula

Moses Lake v Coeur d'Alene

R: Jerry Heilig, Columbia Basin
U: Steve Spencer, Columbia Basin
LJ: John Dreisen, Columbia Basin
HL: Dennis Duke, Columbia Basin
BJ: Brian Gwinn, Columbia Basin

Mercer Island v Seattle Prep

R: Chris Storey, Pacific Northwest
U: Mike Carter, Pacific Northwest
LJ: Steve Wirth, Pacific Northwest
HL: Chris Cook, Pacific Northwest
BJ: James Canady, Pacific Northwest

The WOA thanks the Pacific Northwest Football Officials Association for hosting the hospitality room at the ECKC.



Dan Meyer, Inland Empire

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

Fall Certification Deadline: September 26

Since September 24 is a Saturday, the deadline to complete the clinic and test will be extended to Monday, September 26. Officials not certified by the deadline will

be unable to work any games at the high school level. Assigners will be reminded that using non-certified officials at the high school level places the local

association/board in legal jeopardy if something were to occur in a contest involving and official who had not met the WOA requirements for certification.

Football: Rules, Flags, and Mechanics

During the 2011 NASO Summit in July, an interesting presentation was made in regard to the rules of the game. This discussion was especially meaningful to the game of football. The moderator discussed the difference between rules that are elastic bands compared to those that are steel bands. The elastic bands are those rules that are at the discretion of the official. The steel bands are those rules that should never be overlooked as they pertain to the safety of the participants.

How would you categorize the following potential penalties:

1. Offensive lineman's hands slightly outside his frame away from the point of attack
2. Player clips 25 yards behind the ball carrier
3. Player voluntary leaves the field. He returns to the field during play, but well behind the action

Of all sports, football officials find themselves in these types of discussions and must use judgment in determining which

rules are elastic and which ones are steel.

Blue Flag Tribute

Thank you to all the officials who participated in the fourth annual Blue Flags for Prostate Cancer tribute.

Mechanic Experiment

Ten associations are experimenting with moving the umpire under the upright on a PAT. Based upon feedback at the end of the season, the WOA will determine whether to submit a mechanic change proposal to the NFHS.



Mike Williams, Western WA

Photo Courtesy of Northwest Sports Photography

Volleyball: Intermission for Special Activities

Due to the number of schools interested in hosting a special activity between the second and third sets of the high school varsity volleyball match, NFHS volleyball rule 11-Section 5, page 43, can be modified provided the following conditions are met:

1. The athletic director at the host school must request permission from the WIAA at

least one week prior to the first special activity. Approval may be granted for all regular season home matches.

2. The intermission between the second and third sets may be extended to a maximum of five (5) minutes for special activities, provided home management has properly notified the visiting team prior to the start of the match.

3. The time period between all other sets of the match shall be no more than three (3) minutes.

4. Unnecessary delay shall be charged if the time period between sets is extended (other than the five (5) minutes as approved between the second and third sets).

“THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RULES THAT ARE ELASTIC BANDS COMPARED TO THOSE THAT ARE STEEL BANDS”

Soccer: NFHS Points of Emphasis

Concussion Management: It is important to adhere to the state policies and procedures when dealing with players that are exhibiting signs or symptoms of a concussion.

Elbows: Officials should continue to monitor players for the dangerous and illegal use of the elbows in striking opponents. Such misconduct can produce serious injury

and, if allowed, threatens the integrity of the game.

Player Equipment: Enforcement of player equipment rule (4-1 and 4-2) begins with the players wearing only legal equipment. Coaches, as the adult leaders of their teams, must work with their players and officials to ensure that player equipment is safe and

legal. Officials must also emphasize player safety and legal equipment throughout the match.

Handling: Concern has been expressed that the infraction is not being officiated properly. Officials and players should continue to strive to ensure the integrity of the game is not compromised.



Kent McLeod, East King County

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey



Officiating the Game for the Athletes!

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(L to R) Don Wilson, Seattle; Steve Gustafson, Tacoma; Chris Kredit, Seattle; Bill Mills, Thurston County during a WCD Tournament game

Photo Courtesy of Hugh Beuhler



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Note from the Commissioner:

We are a few weeks into the new school year and it seems like we are back to business as usual. Every new year brings about the same challenges and concerns, but there are always a couple new wrinkles to keep us on our toes.

WOA staff has been working with the WIAA to provide an avenue for local associations/boards to purchase L&I coverage for games being officiating between non-WIAA member middle schools/junior highs. Many associations/boards have set-up their own account for their non-school games, but there are a few areas of the state that only work school games. It is essential to find a way to cover the officials without having to go through the process of setting up an account for just a handful of games. The WOA wants to make sure that officials working a school game, regardless of the school's WIAA membership status, have full coverage.

Todd Stordahl
WOA Commissioner

www.woa-officials.com

What Kind of an Official Are You? by Cornelio Galdones

Developing as a person is the most important part in developing as an official. The type of person you are is the type of official you'll be. Are you grounded with passion, compassion and common sense? Or are you a loose cannon who's a head case or basket case?

Reaching the top isn't all there is to being considered the best. How you conduct yourself defines you as much as what you achieve. You'll fool nobody. Associates can see right through any charade and figure out who you really are. There's no doubt ability helps, but the officials held in the highest regard are total packages. Character is what sets them apart. Excellence to them is not an act or a condition but a habit. You too

can go far by following their example.

Character was described in a nutshell by John Wooden: "Talent is God-given; be humble. Fame is man-given; be grateful. Conceit is self-given; be careful." Wooden was a legend. How about you? Are you a legend in your own mind or a legend in the minds of others? Growing as a person in the public's eyes isn't straightforward or static.

Looking after your own interests is normal. However, adopt and practice a set of core values that is agreeable and favorable to everyone else. Continue to evolve. Review current modes and fiddle with them. Try new ideals and build on them. Alter courses and thrive in them. Change to suit the times.

Failing is a letdown, but it teaches you. Failing to adapt, on the other hand, hinders you.

Be of honor and honesty. If you're thinking of bending the rules, think again. Pushing the limits of what is right and what is wrong could put you in hot water. Know right from wrong. What you might feel is right may be wrong to someone else. Police yourself. Own up to your actions, especially a lapse in scruples or judgment.

No official is complete without becoming a complete person. Pulling off that feat is easy if you put your mind to it. Take pride in your work by doing the right thing. Make it routine and the best of the rest will come.

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