

# Make the Right Call



Washington Officials Association

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## No Hurry, No Worry

by Todd Korth

Sports officials must understand the game they are working or they're in for a heap of headaches, right? An official must know everything possible about the rules involved, the tendencies of both teams and his or her partner's capabilities in order to do the best job possible, right?

That's all true, but that's not all. With each play it is important for you to know what may likely happen, use the accepted mechanics and always try to be in the best position for the best angle and wait for the play or action to end. And then make the call.

That may seem like a lengthy process, but it happens in a flash. To be ready is to mentally prepare or anticipate an action before making a final decision - call or no-call, foul or no foul, violation or no violation.

Anticipating the play before making the call is one of the best officiating mind-sets to remember. If you can "feel" what's coming and adjust your position or your visual focus to the right area, you'll see the play better and have a great opportunity to make the right call. If you decide what you're going to see before you see it happen, you will get burned.

Good baseball and softball umpires quickly recognize when a team is in a bunt or steal situation. Football officials can sense a running or passing play for a first down or touchdown. Top basketball referees know

when a team will probably use full-court pressure or change defenses to attack an opponent. Alert soccer officials know who will likely receive the ball on a corner kick when a player runs from the other end of field into the mixer, and they can anticipate screening and pushing from an opponent. All of that helps officials to anticipate the play, not the call. In that process, apply timing, one attribute that separates average officials from very good ones, and withhold your call until the play is over or the time is right.

In baseball or softball, a runner will be no more or less out or safe if you wait until all action is over. If the shortstop throws the ball to the first baseman, who catches it long before the batter-runner arrives at the base, wait a fraction of a second. There is always a chance that the first baseman will drop the ball or pull his or her foot off of the bag, which may be just enough time for the batter-runner to be safe. In basketball, observe a player attempting a shot and the defender attempting to block the shot before calling a foul. Quick whistles by officials have often negated some great blocked shots, only to ignite players, coaches and fans with anger and frustration. Stay with the play until it's over and get it right.

Former players turned official often have an advantage in anticipating a play. As long as you have a feel for what play is coming and adjust your positioning accordingly, you will

see the play better. As a result, you'll get it right more often.

One area of anticipation that can prevent a game from disintegrating fast is when something unsportsmanlike has happened that might lead to retaliation by the offended team. For example, if a player hits a home run and taunts the opposing team while running the bases, be aware of that team retaliating in some way. That could be a knockdown pitch at the next batter or intentionally throwing at the player who taunted then the next time he or she is up to bat.

In some other sports, if a player is fouled hard, he or she may retaliate quickly with a hard foul out of frustration.

By anticipating any type of retaliation, an official can sometimes nip an ugly situation in the bud by warning the other team or players not to engage in that kind of behavior, if there is time. If that doesn't forestall the expected retaliation, at least you will be in a state of mind to issue warnings immediately in an attempt to calm down what, unchecked, could become an ugly situation.

Whether it's anticipating a play or situation or just knowing a team's tendencies, the game will slow down for you that much more. In turn, that kind of officiating mind-set will improve your ability to be in position at the right time and ready to make the right call.

(This article can be found in, Referee magazine, May 2013.)

### Special Points of Interest:

- Use the accepted mechanics and always try to be in the best position for the best angle and wait for the play or action to end
- If you decide what you're going to see before you see it happen, you will get burned
- All of that helps officials to anticipate the play, not the call
- By anticipating any type of retaliation, an official can sometimes nip an ugly situation in the bud
- The game will slow down for you that much more
- Will improve your ability to be in position at the right time

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Carol Finney, WIAA Hall of Fame - Class of 2013



### Aflac Has Landed at WOA

AFLAC has designed a web site for officials interested in looking into the benefits currently being offered to WOA members. Please take the time to visit the web site if you are interested in finding out more about these options. The web site is: [www.aflac.com/woa](http://www.aflac.com/woa).

Please contact Steve Pohlman if you would like to discuss these options or are looking for additional information. Steve can be reached at 206.310.9981 or [steven\\_pohlman@us.aflac.com](mailto:steven_pohlman@us.aflac.com)



WIAA State Softball Tournament

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

## WIAA Hall of Fame - Carol Finney

On May 8, Carol Finney will be inducted into the WIAA Hall of Fame - Class of 2013.

Carol officiated volleyball for the Washington Officials Association (WOA) for 39 years, which included middle school, high school, and several State Volleyball Tournament contests. She also officiated basketball for 12 years and was one of the founders of the Central Washington Board of Officials. She was appointed to the original Fee Review Committee, and served as Region 5 Board Representative for 10 years.

Carol worked District Volleyball tournaments for over 25 years. She has worked State Volleyball Tournaments in Renton, Wenatchee, Riverview (Finley), and Spokane. She currently manages the 1B, 2B, 1A State Volleyball Tournament at the Yakima Valley SunDome and the 1B, 2B State Softball Tournament at Yakima Kiwanis Park, which she has done for eight years.

She served as Assigning Secretary for Central Washington Volleyball for over 25 years, and part of the evaluation team every year. She was a recipient of the WOA Meritorious Award (1992), awarded the YVIAA

Distinguished Service Award in appreciation for dedicated service to the Youth of the YVIAA (2005), and was inducted into the WOA Hall of Fame (2012).

Carol has dedicated her life to helping the students of the valley and has helped develop the Central Washington Volleyball Board, which has become one of the top respected boards in the state.

Congratulations Carol!

Interested in attending the 2013 WIAA Hall of Fame luncheon? Please contact the WIAA for ticket information (425.687.8585).

## WOA Conference Online Registration Now Available

Online registration for the 2013 WOA Conference is now available. Please be aware that the early bird registration fee has been increased to \$40.

Based on information the WOA staff received on April 16, it was necessary to review the current expenses related to the current registration fee. The Yakima Convention Center made a change in caterer, switching to CenterPlate. This name may sound familiar to many of you, they are also the caterer for CenturyLink Field

and the Tacoma Dome. The change in caterer came with a promise that they would work with us. Over the course of the next couple weeks, WOA staff and conference committee members worked through the new menu and prices. After much deliberation, the committee and staff came to the conclusion that it was necessary to raise the conference registration fee. WOA staff and committee members have tried to do anything and everything to

avoid increasing the registration fee, but these latest changes just made it too difficult to avoid an increase. The price of meals and the manner they will use to count attendees required a change. We hope those who have attended in the past understand the need for the change and will make an effort to be with us at the conference again this August.

Thank you for your support and we anticipate a high-energy, well attended event.

## WOA Executive Board Meeting: May 6, 2013

On May 6, 2013, the WOA Executive Board will hold its final meeting for 2012-13 at the WIAA office.

Some of the agenda items for the upcoming meeting include:

- Region/Sports Reports
- 2011-12 Financial Review

- 2013-14 Budget
- Personnel Decisions
- Conference Planning
- Web Site/Database Upgrade
- Rules Clinic Update
- RTO Program

WOA Executive Board meetings are open to the public. Those wishing to have an audience with the Executive Board are required to contact the WOA to be placed on the agenda. If interested, please contact the WOA no later than Thursday, May 2 at noon.

## Baseball Update: DH, Subs, Batter Steps Out, Manual

### Return of the DH

**Play:** Team A's DH, B10, is batting for the pitcher. In the third inning, the coach decides to have the pitcher bat for himself. In the fifth inning, the coach decides to have the original DH bat for the pitcher. The defense immediately protests the original DH returning to the game.

**Ruling:** B10 is a legal batter. Since he was a starter, he can leave the lineup and re-enter one time, but he must re-enter in the same position in the batting order (3-1-3).

### Unlisted Subs

**Play:** Is a team required to list all substitutes on its lineup

card? Can a substitute's name be added once the game has started?

**Ruling:** All players should be listed on the lineup card, but since there is no penalty; there is no requirement that it be done (1-1-1, 1-1-2).

### Batter Steps Out Late

**Play:** B1 steps into the box to bat. Just as F1 pitches, B1 requests time and steps out of the batter's box with one foot. The umpire does not grant time and the pitch is out of the strike zone.

**Ruling:** The pitch is live and is automatically called a strike (7-3-1).

### WOA Mechanics Illustrated

Thank you to the WOA Baseball Committee for their time and effort in developing the WOA Mechanics Illustrated Manual. This is a great start and provides the WOA with a document to build on. The response to the book has been great and local associations have provided positive feedback. In the future, we will be asking the local associations to help in developing future editions.



John Leeper, Northwest Baseball  
Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

### Assault on Officials

Recently, we have received emails about officials being confronted and sometimes assaulted while in the parking lot or in a location other than where the game took place. This is definitely an unfortunate situation and one that should not be tolerated. If you find yourself in this type of situation, please do the following:

#### Verbal Altercation

1. Look for the game administrator or school security
2. Attempt to leave the area without escalating the situation
3. Contact assigner as soon as possible
4. Send an email to assigner and the WOA outlining what occurred

#### Physical Altercation

1. Call 911
2. Contact assigner prior to leaving
3. Send an email to assigner and WOA outlining what occurred

## Softball Update: HBP, Video, Conferences, Field Condition

### Hit by Pitch

**Play:** Lefty slap-hitting B1 moves out of the front of the batter's box and is struck by a pitch that prevents the ball from entering the strike zone.

**Ruling:** The ball is dead and B1 is charged with a strike (7-2-1h).

### Video Recording

**Play:** In the second inning, an umpire notices team A's trainer in the dugout recording the game with a hand-held camera. Is this a violation?

**Ruling:** Yes. Electronic communication devices, including audio and video equipment, are not allowed in the dugout (3-6-11).

### Two Defensive Conferences

**Play:** Can a coach conduct a second charged defensive conference with the same pitcher in the same inning with the same batter at bat?

**Ruling:** Legal, providing the coach does not violate the number of permissible defensive charged conferences (3-7-1).

### Field Conditions

**Play:** There is a disagreement between opposing coaches about whether to start the game because of questionable field conditions. What should the umpires do in that case?

**Ruling:** The home coach decides whether the grounds are suitable for starting the game (4-1-1).

## Soccer Update: FIFA Laws, USSF Certification

### WIAA Update - Part II

WIAA announced that FIFA Laws, with a few modifications, will be adopted for the 2013-14 school year. This change will bring about a few changes to the dues structure and certification requirements for WOA soccer officials. WOA staff will meet with soccer representatives to figure out exactly how these changes will be implemented and plan to

schedule a meeting with WOA Soccer Contacts at the end of May. WOA staff looks forward to this change having a positive impact on the game of soccer.

It is important for soccer officials to remember that this change does not go into effect until next year. All rules and interpretations remain the same for the spring season.

### USSF Certification

For the 2013-14 school year, all soccer officials must be USSF certified. The WOA will work with local associations to make sure every opportunity is provided to non-USSF officials to become USSF certified, therefore making them eligible to work WIAA soccer matches in 2013-14.



Kitsap Peninsula Soccer

Photo Courtesy of Ron Stordahl

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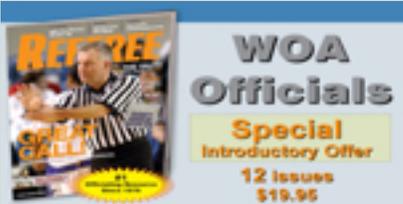
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Joe Winniford, Peninsula Baseball

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey



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## Note from the Executive Director:

Throughout the last month or so, the football and volleyball committees have been working on developing a rubric that will serve as a snapshot of what is expected of a WOA official. The rubric is divided into four categories: Beginner, Apprentice, Varsity and Postseason. The rubric will be a tool that could be used by officials, assigners, coaches, athletic administrators, WIAA and WOA as a road map to the progression of an official. This tool will assist in the development of training programs, observation criteria and expectations of an official working a WIAA contest. The next step will be to send the draft to local associations/boards for feedback - which we expect to do by the middle of May.

Thank you to all the committee members for the work they have done and for the workload that is still in front of them. The committee members have definitely made the RTO Program a success for 2012-13. WOA is hopeful that 2013-14 will see the RTO Program develop into a valuable program for both officials and the WIAA member schools.

The newsletter has provided a great avenue to share information, but the concern is whether we are including relevant and meaningful content. In order to make sure we are doing so, we are once again asking members to submit information they would like to see included in future issues. You can either email ideas to the WOA or submit an article (250 words or less). We are also looking for more photos from around the state. We get some great photos from Dale Garvey and the WIAA State Tournaments, but would love to include photos submitted by the membership.

Todd Stordahl  
WOA Executive Director

## [www.woa-officials.com](http://www.woa-officials.com)

### Take Advantage of the Time Off

Inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances may leave you with an unexpected open date on your schedule. Rest if you need it. But whether your officiating itch must be scratched or not, you have several options.

**Watch another game.** You can always learn something from watching other officials work. That is especially true if you're a less experienced official.

**Call your assigner.** You may earn the eternal gratitude of your assigner by offering your services as a substitute. If another official was injured or otherwise unable to fulfill an assignment, your unexpected availability may be a godsend. Even if you wind up not working, your assigner will likely appreciate your offer.

**Read.** Instead of studying rulebooks, mechanics manuals or other officiating-related material, pick up something

else. Read the newspaper rather than skim it. Go to the bookshelf and grab that potboiler you got as a gift but haven't even opened yet.

**Indulge in one of your other hobbies.** Most officials have interests other than officiating. Whether it's stamp collecting or woodworking, bird watching or photography, the time that would have been spent officiating can be devoted to another favorite activity.

(This article can be found in, Referee magazine, May 2013.)

### WIAA/WOA Football Camp: June 24-25

The 2013 WIAA/WOA Football Camp will be held June 24-25 at Central Washington University. This camp is a great way to network with fellow officials and to spend a couple days immersed in high school mechanics.

Camp registrations are limited to fifty campers, so make sure to contact your assigner to secure a spot for the camp.

The camp will focus on mechanics and philosophy. This is a great setting for young officials or officials who are looking at changing

positions for the upcoming season.

Please contact your assigner if you are interested in attending the 2013 WIAA/WOA Football Camp. Priority registration for local associations ends May 15.