

Make the Right Call



Washington Officials Association

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Flawless Hustle

by Todd Korth

7 Keys to Put Pep in Your Step Without Making It Obvious

Hustle is defined in different ways by different sports officials, but many will point out that the physical - get from here to there as fast as possible - type of hustle is what counts most. Not so fast, Bucko. That is one kind of hustle, but there are many more - good and not-so-good - that are not only physical in nature but mental as well. By incorporating important keys to hustle into your game, it will complement your rules, philosophy and mechanics knowledge and help you be a better official.

Seven keys to great mental and physical hustle that every official should consider for his or her game include the following:

1. Be in shape. That is the foundation of hustle. Are you in good shape mentally and physically? Can you keep up with the physical demands that your sport(s) puts on its officials? Can you consistently run the floor or field from the beginning of the game to the finish without fatigue affecting your judgment or decision-making?

2. Stance is important. In order to hustle and get to the right place at the right time, you need

to be ready to move quickly. Don't stand straight up with your knees locked and expect to hustle down the court and field at a moment's notice. Depending on your sport, keep your knees slightly bent and your body relaxed so you can hustle into position when needed.

3. Know your surroundings. You should know what is around you when you're hustling up the court or field, so you don't run into game personnel along the sidelines. Good officials hustle and focus on everything that's happening on the field or court.

4. Have game awareness. Perhaps the most fundamental reason to know the teams' and players' tendencies lies in an officials' ultimate charge - to get the call right. Officials should do what they need to do by preparing ahead of the game and certainly in the pregame to make themselves aware of what players and teams generally do in certain situations. If a team plays an up-tempo style, you may need to hustle up and down the court more often. You should be prepared for that.

5. Know how to stop quickly. Sometimes signals can get

sloppy because officials hurry through them. Maybe they're walking or about to stop when they should be stopped, according to their mechanics manual. That's a negative form of hustle. Keep it simple. The ball or clock, in most cases, is dead anyway. It may seem like it's taking forever to convey a signal, but the scorekeepers will appreciate it. Coaches and your partner(s) will too.

6. Understand the levels of hustle. You need to be in the right position to make the best call possible. Quite often, that requires an intense effort and, at other times, not so intense.

7. Use sound mechanics. Utilizing approved mechanics from your officials' manual in a crisp, matter-of-fact manner can be perceived as an energetic contributor to the game.

Get comfortable with your place on the floor and the field so that rotations, positions and signals during the game become second nature and necessary motions are automatic. In turn, your attention will be in the right place.

(This article can be found in, Referee magazine, December 2012.)

Special Points of Interest:

- Are you in good shape mentally and physically?
- You need to be ready to move quickly
- You should know what is around you when you're hustling up the court or field
- Officials should do what they need to do by preparing ahead of the game
- Keep it simple
- You need to be in the right position to make the best call possible
- Get comfortable with your place on the floor and the field

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Dean Ratliff, Seattle Gymnastics and WOA Executive Board

Photo Courtesy of Max Howard



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.

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

Steve will also be in attendance at the upcoming Region meetings to provide a brief overview of the program.



Brian Stephan, Whatcom-Skagit

Photo Courtesy of Max Howard

WOA Executive Board Meeting - January 7, 2012

The WOA Executive Board will meet on January 7 at the WIAA office beginning at 8:30am. Guests are welcome to attend.

Some of the agenda items for the upcoming meeting include:

- Region/Sport Reports
- Conference Planning

- Fall State Tournament Recap
- RTO Program Update
- 2012-13 WOA Budget
- Executive Board Follow-Up
- Membership Breakdown
- Action Items as Submitted*

*Request for Action items were not available to be included in the newsletter. The meeting agenda will be sent to WOA Contacts prior to the meeting.

All requests for an audience should be sent to the WOA no later than December 27.

Be a Team Player

“ I hear you, Coach, but it wasn’t my call.” That statement can send shockwaves of negativity into a situation on the court or field. If you’re constantly trying to cover your backside with coaches, evaluators and assigners, your reputation with other officials will suffer. Do you want to “go to war” with someone you don’t trust?

Think like a team at all times. An official may not agree with his or her partner’s call or the way that he or she handled a situation, but that’s not a license to hang him or her, either. Don’t make excuses for yourself or your partner(s),

either. If it’s best to sort it out in the locker room after the game, not in front of coaches, athletic directors, evaluators, etc.

Remember that good assigners are looking for much more than people who understand rules and mechanics. They are looking for team players.

Officiating is an avocation for the majority involved. Take pride in what you do and share good thoughts with other officials.

When a fellow official does something wonderful, tell others about it. Recognize

someone’s first game, first playoff assignment, first college game, etc. It doesn’t have to be a formal recognition, but a simple mention at the postgame watering hole goes a long way.

Put yourself in a position to ensure other officials’ successes. Give back to officiating and be positive about it. Share in those successes and you in turn will feel better about officiating. After all, it is an avocation and you can make a difference by being a team player.

(This article can be found in, Referee magazine, November 2012.)

Ejection Reporting

This past fall, the WIAA implemented a process where school administrators were required to submit ejection reports. This was a required step in order to make sure all ejections are reported. WOA welcomed this process as a check and balance. The chance of an official and administrator not submitting a report would be a rare occurrence, so the WOA and WIAA would be able to follow up with whoever had not reported the ejection. There were only a few times WOA had to follow-up with a local association/board. Great job during the fall season, the bar has been set pretty high for the winter and spring sports.

What can we improve on? The one thing that tends to continue to happen and causes a lot of work for the assigner, WOA staff and WIAA staff is the post-ejection actions by officials. Commenting about the ejection to coaches, players or school administrators only leads to confusion and the beginning of a he said/she said battle over whether the ejection was valid. When attempting to have an ejection overturned, the school will provide the officials post-game comments to support overturning the ejection. Rarely does the statement match what the official actually said or what they intended to say.

When this occurs, the ejection goes from being black and white, to being filled with a lot of gray. This leads to numerous emails and phone calls to find out what actually occurred, but it usually moves away from the actions of the ejected participant and quickly is fixated on the actions and/or words of the official.

We know officials are not trying to complicate matters, but please understand that anytime comments are made that is exactly what happens. If someone wants information about the ejection after the game, please just tell them that a report will be submitted and they can direct any further comments to the WIAA staff.

Basketball Update: Intentional Fouls

Intentional Fouls (4-19-3)

The intentional foul rule has devolved into misapplication and personal interpretations. An intentional foul is a personal or technical foul that neutralizes an opponent's obvious advantageous position. Contact away from the ball or when not making a legitimate attempt to play the ball, specifically designed to stop or keep the clock from starting, shall be intentional. Intentional fouls may or may not be premeditated and are not based solely on the

severity of the act. A foul also shall be ruled intentional if while playing the ball a player causes excessive contact with an opponent.

Anytime during the game.

Acts that neutralize an opponent's obvious advantageous position and must be deemed intentional include:

- Excessive contact on any player attempting a try.
- Grabbing or shoving a player from behind when an easy

basket may be scored.

- Grabbing and holding a player from behind or away from the ball.

These are "non-basketball" acts and must be considered intentional fouls.

Game awareness. The probability of fouling late in the game is an accepted coaching strategy and is utilized by many coaches in some form. Officials must have the courage to enforce the intentional foul rule properly.

RTO Program Update

Volleyball - Video observation was available during the season. The WOA made the decision to focus resources on the training aspect and has a Volleyball Committee meeting scheduled for February 8 to begin developing the WOA approved training program.

Soccer - Video observation was available during the fall season. Due to the possible change in rules governing soccer, the WOA made the decision to delay implementing

a training and in-person observation program until the spring season. A Soccer Committee meeting will be scheduled prior to the start of the spring season.

Football - Over 60 games were observed during the second half of the season. The Football Committee will meet in the spring to begin developing the WOA approved training program.

Basketball - Schools have been sent a notice notifying

them that video observation is currently available. There is a RTO Basketball Observers meeting scheduled for the beginning of January. In-person observations will begin during the second week of January. The Basketball Committee will convene after the season to begin the process of developing the WOA approved training program.

All questions pertaining to the RTO Program should be directed to the WOA.

Wrestling Update: Stalling, Equipment, Slams

Stalling Penalty (8-2 Pen)

Opponent will have choice of position on the next restart if the third penalty is for stalling.

Special Equipment (4-3-5)

Properly reporting to the scorer's table wearing wristbands, sweatbands or bicep bands will be considered illegal equipment resulting in a technical violation.

Slams (7-1-1)

Slams are extremely dangerous and every attempt must be made to remove them from wrestling. It is the responsibility of wrestlers, coaches and referees to avoid

slams. Wrestlers must return opponents to the mat safely after a lift and must realize a slam may be called on wrestlers in the neutral, top or bottom position. Which wrestler's knees hit the mat first is irrelevant in determining whether or not a slam has occurred. The key is whether or not a wrestler is returned to the mat unsafely due to the overuse of force. Coaches bear the responsibility of teaching their wrestlers to return opponents to the mat safely and instructing their wrestlers not to perform lifts for which they are not adequately skilled. They must

never intentionally bring an opponent to the mat with excessive force. When possible, referees must attempt to prevent slams by reminding wrestlers of their responsibility to return opponents to the mat safely from any position. Referees shall stop the wrestling action to avoid an imminent slam whenever possible. Referees must call slams without delay. It is not acceptable to determine whether a wrestler is injured by a slam before making the call. Intentional attempts to injure a wrestler by slam shall be called flagrant misconduct.



Michael Thorner, Yakima Valley

Photo Courtesy of Max Howard

Change in Venue

Due to a scheduling conflict at Comcast Arena in Everett, the WIAA Cheerleading State Championship and Salute to Spirit will be held Saturday, January 26 at the Alaska Airlines Arena, University of Washington.

The change in venue is unfortunate, as is the case with any changes, but moving to the University of Washington provides a great experience for the participants. The atmosphere should be great for the event, as it is a great display of the many activities offered by the WIAA.

If you have never had the opportunity to see either event, you should mark it on your calendar as a "must see".



Ray Bala, Pacific Northwest

Photo Courtesy of Max Howard

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Steve Simonson, Chelan County

Photo Courtesy of Max Howard



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NOTE FROM THE COMMISSIONER:

Thank you to all the officials who officiated a Fall State Tournament. Your efforts are truly appreciated. There are a lot of individuals who serve in supportive roles and rarely, if ever, are recognized for their efforts. Yes, I am talking about all the officials who make themselves available to serve as line judges and scorekeepers for the Volleyball Tournaments. These are jobs that do not receive the proper recognition, but are essential in making the tournaments a success. So thank you for stepping up and helping out.

The WOA would also like to recognize the individuals who serve as evaluators during the football semifinals and Gridiron Classic. Thank you for taking the time to provide valuable feedback to the assigned officials, as well as the local associations and the WOA.

Winter sports are underway. Hope all of you have a great season. Stay healthy and remember to hydrate.....or should I say.....drink a lot of water. All kidding aside, have a fun and enjoyable season. It is important that you have fun while officiating.

On a final note, the WOA staff and Executive Board wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a safe New Year!

Todd Stordahl
WOA Commissioner

www.woa-officials.com

News and Notes

Winter Clinicians

The following individuals serve as clinicians for the WIAA and WOA. Throughout the season, they are often asked to help in determining the proper way to enforce and/or interpret the rules. Thank you for being there to assist in this process.

Basketball:

Steve Brown, Western WA
Mike Lloyd, Seattle
Steve Simonson, Chelan

Wrestling:

John deWeber, Whatcom-Skagit
Brad Mackay, Tri Cities

Gymnastics:

Dean Ratliff, Seattle

Please remember all requests for an interpretation must come from the WOA contact. In order to assist in expediting the request, please include the WOA on all correspondences.

Baseball Mechanics Manual

The WOA Baseball Committee put the finishing touches on the new WOA Baseball Mechanics Illustrated. The book will be ready for distribution by mid-January. The book is a hybrid of NFHS and CCA mechanics. This project will hopefully bring more consistency to the mechanics being taught throughout the state.

The committee members who assisted in this project include:

Tim Stevens (Chair), Northwest
Dean Strong, Snohomish
Erik Nilson, Northwest
Joe Winniford, Peninsula
Ed Rhoades, Central Col Basin
Jeff Gates, Palouse
Garth Benham, Inland Empire

Thank you for your time and effort to complete the project within the tight timeframe so it will be ready for 2013.

Region Meetings

Region 6 was the first to hold their meeting this year, on October 29 in Spokane. Followed by Region 1 on November 5 in Burlington. The next two meetings will be Region 3 on January 21 at Bellarmine Prep and Region 2 on February 4 at the WIAA office.

Region meetings are targeted for assigners and local board members to discuss local, region and state issues. These meetings allow for a great opportunity for local leaders to get together to discuss trends and find out if there are any common issues that could be resolved with a cooperative effort.

The WOA Executive Board encourages all assigners and local officers to participate in the Region meetings.