

# Make the Right Call



## How To Be Consistently Right by Jay Rowan

Should being consistent be a goal for all officials? The answer is no. Being consistently right is what our goal should be. We always hear from coaches that all they want is for officials to be consistent. What they really mean is that they want them to be consistent in their favor.

Hopefully, what they really want is for officials to make the correct call. Being consistent isn't good enough. We must be consistently right in our calls.

Umpires are consistent if they call the same location of a pitch, a ball or strike every time. But, that doesn't make them good. If they are consistently wrong, who cares if they are consistent? Umpires who call strikes on pitches that can't be hit are putting the hitter in a very bad position. If an umpire calls an outside pitch a strike, the next time the pitch will be a little farther outside to see where the umpire will stop calling strikes. Few will complain if the pitch is a little outside the strike zone, but it has to be a hittable pitch. I always get annoyed when an announcer will say that pitch was outside but at least the umpire has been consistently calling the same location a strike or ball the entire game.

In softball, pitchers dominate

the game and therefore don't need any help. Calling strikes that aren't strikes is giving them too much of an advantage. That is a game that needs more offense and recent rule changes confirm that. High school softball changed the mound from 40 to 43 feet to get more offense into the game.

If we are consistently wrong in calling strikes that should be balls, we are going against what high school associations want. More balls being hit. More plays being made. More runs being scored. You will hear people complain that an umpire has a postage stamp strike zone and that is just as bad as having a zone that is too big. We have a strike zone, as defined by the rules, and our goal should be to consistently call it correctly. To be consistent, every bang-bang play doesn't have to be called an out or safe. Each play calls itself. See it, pause and make the call.

In basketball, a coach will say, "All I want is for officials to call it the same at both ends." Is he or she questioning the officials' honesty or does he or she mean if we have a collision at one end and we call it a charge, we have to call it a charge at the other end, if we have a similar collision? I

believe that is exactly what they are saying. I say, get it right. If we have a collision at one end of the court and we see the entire play, we must call it a charge or block based on what we see. If we have a similar collision at the other end of the court and we see the entire play, we should have a charge or block depending on what happened. That means we could have a charge on one end of the court and a block on the other end. We are being consistent because we will be calling them right at each end of the court. See the play and call it as you see it.

To be consistent, an official must be constant in how he or she approaches each call. If you set up the same way on each pitch, as an umpire, you should be able to make the same call on every pitch that is thrown in a specific location. If we are consistent in calling a pitch wrong, we can surely be consistent in calling the same pitch correct. Another example is when you set up as the lead in a basketball game and you are watching the defensive player, you are more likely to get the block/charge call right than if you are back and forth with the offensive or defensive player. Also, you will never be consistent in calling traveling if you don't know which foot is

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### Special Points of Interest:

- We must be consistently right in our calls.
- If they are consistently wrong, who cares if they are consistent?
- See it, pause and make the call.
- See the play and call it as you see it.
- To be consistent, an official must be constant in how he or she approaches each call.
- While no official will ever be perfect, consistent use of proper mechanics and concentration will increase the number of correct calls and decrease missed calls.

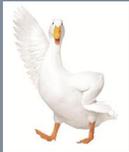
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Pier Hansen, Seattle Gymnastics

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](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)

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



Mike Williams, Western Washington

Photo Courtesy of Max Howard

## How To Be Consistently Right (continued)

the pivot foot. To do that you must concentrate on watching which foot is the pivot foot when he or she stops dribbling or gains possession of the ball. If you are not concentrating on that element of the game, you will be wrong on traveling, either missing it or calling it when it shouldn't be called. If you are consistent, with your mechanics, you will be

consistently right with that call. And in soccer, if you are consistently aligned with the second-last defender, you will consistently get the offside call right.

Be consistent, with your mechanics and you will be on your way to a well-officiated game.

While no official will ever be perfect, consistent use of proper mechanics and concentration will increase the number of correct calls and decrease missed calls. A good official strives not just to be consistent but consistently right.

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

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## WOA Executive Board Meeting - January 7, 2012

The WOA Executive Board meeting was held Monday, January 7.

The following action was taken at the meeting:

- Directed staff to work with the WIAA staff to streamline the development of the online clinics. The goal is to release the clinics one month prior to the start of the season.
- Changed the job title of "Commissioner" to "Executive Director".
- Approved a \$4000 sponsorship for the 2013 NASO Summit.
- WOA staff was directed to

send out an informational sheet outlining business practice expectations.

The board discussed the RTO Program

Three sub-committees were formed:

- Finance
- Governance
- RTO Program

Each board member was placed on a committee and they were directed to provide an initial report at the May meeting.

The Conference Committee convened at the conclusion of the Executive Board meeting

and discussed the upcoming conference and golf tournament. Registration information will be sent out in the spring.

The next WOA Executive Board meeting will be Monday, May 6 starting at 8:30am. The meeting will be held at the WIAA office.

Upcoming region meeting dates:

Region 2: Feb 11 - WIAA office

Region 4: Mar 19 - Spiffy's

Region 5: Mar 20 - Wenatchee

Region 5: Mar 21 - Sunnyside

## Spirit: Detecting Bias, Understanding Professionalism

Identifying one's preferences in styles, music, costuming, and composition is a crucial part of preparing to judge cheer and dance/drill competitions. When an official is mentally aware of bias, greater objectivity and professionalism is the result.

Judges may unconsciously expect to see certain elements based on their comfort zones or concepts they easily recognize and relate to. When a judge brings these comfort zones or familiar concepts to his/her attention he/she has the ability to leave them behind

and not let them affect scoring. By doing so, the judge then allows the program to grow on its own terms rather than requiring it to fit into a particular mold. Appropriate feedback is then given to the team and coach and allows them to grow and progress on their terms, within their range of abilities, thus helping teams experience greater success.

Cheer and dance/drill judges are to have an excellent understanding of professionalism. The world of cheer and dance/drill in

Washington tends to be small, and the result is a great degree of acquaintance between coaches, teams, and judges. Judges need to be aware that their behavior and actions are under constant scrutiny by peers, coaches, parents, and other audience members. If a judge maintains consistency in appropriate behavior and in assessing and scoring teams, he/she will have the ability to uphold high standards of professionalism and gain the respect of peers, coaches, and teams.

Article submitted by Cara Graham, WOA Executive Board

## Basketball Update: Backcourt, Too Many Quarters

### Fumble into Backcourt

**Play:** Team A has a throw-in along the sideline in its frontcourt. A1's throw-in pass to A2, who is in team A's frontcourt, is touched and fumbled by A2 into team A's backcourt. A2 hustles after the ball and is the first to touch and retrieve it in team A's backcourt. Has a backcourt violation occurred?

**Ruling:** No. When A2 touches the ball in the frontcourt, that ends the throw-in, but since A2 fumbled the ball and never had control of it, A2 may legally cause the ball to go into the backcourt, and any team A player may recover it (4-42-5a).

### Too Many Quarters

**Play:** Team A scorekeeper notifies the Referee that A2 played 3 quarters in the JV game and has now played 2 quarters in the Varsity game, giving A2 a total of five quarters for the day. The official requires team A to substitute for A2 and then assesses a technical to team A for use of an ineligible player.

**Ruling:** Incorrect enforcement. Player eligibility is a WIAA rule and is not to be enforced by the officials. The opposing coach may protest the use of an ineligible player. At that point, the official would direct the scorekeeper to make a

note of the protest and then continue the game. The schools have an avenue to settle the protest at the league, district and state level.

This same philosophy is true for situations involving players/coaches who have been ejected from a sub-varsity game and ask the officials if they can play/coach in the Varsity game. This is a WIAA issue and should not be addressed by the officials.

## RTO Program Update

**Basketball** - The individuals volunteering to participate as observers met at the WIAA office on January 9 to discuss the mission and goals for the RTO Program as it pertains to basketball. There were great discussions on philosophy and where the group felt the program should head. The key components to the program include:

- Professionalism
- Game Management
- Court Positioning
- Communication
- Rule Knowledge
- Rule Enforcement

RTO Basketball Observers will utilize video in addition to in-person observations in hopes

of being able to observe officials from all associations/boards.

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

## Wrestling Update: Mat Classic XXV, Hall of Fame

### Mat Classic XXV

Can you believe that this year will be Mat Classic XXV? Most of you have experienced Mat Classic either as a working official, a timer/scorer and in many cases as a past participant or spectator.

In an effort to help celebrate Mat Classic XXV we have created the 25 year Mat Classic Memories Request form. Please take a few minutes to put down YOUR favorite Mat Classic Memories.

It is very easy, just go to:

[www.wiaa.com/formentry.aspx?id=46](http://www.wiaa.com/formentry.aspx?id=46)

### Hall of Fame

Terry Beckstead, Western Washington, has been selected to be inducted into the Washington State Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony will be May 19 at the Olympia Red Lion Hotel. Information and tickets to the Induction Ceremony will be available in April.

Congratulations on such a great honor to be recognized for your commitment to the sport of wrestling.

### Video Observations

Western Washington Officials are currently using video to observe matches in their service area. WOA has asked the leadership of their association to provide feedback at the conclusion of the season and if all goes well, they may be asked to present their program and outcomes at the wrestling breakout session during the 2013 WOA Conference.



Woody Woodruff, Pacific Northwest

Photo Courtesy of Max Howard

## 2012-13 State Cheerleading

January 26, 2013  
Alaska Airlines Arena  
University of Washington

### Head Judge

Cara Graham

### Judges

Caity Kepler  
Kelli Grenfell  
Kim Cherry  
Jennie Foglia-Jones  
Charlene Johnson  
Laura Nation  
Breanna Stanek  
Dani Yorkston  
Tara Wood



Rick Oates, Pacific Northwest

Photo Courtesy of Max Howard

## WASHINGTON OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION

435 Main Ave S  
Renton, WA 98057

425.687.8009

[www.woa-officials.com](http://www.woa-officials.com)  
[info@woa-officials.com](mailto:info@woa-officials.com)

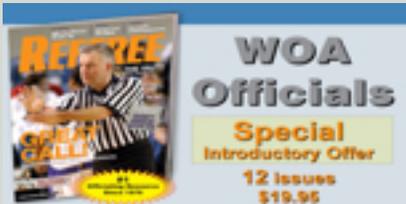


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## Note from the Executive Director:

The WOA Executive Board had a great meeting. There weren't too many action items, so it provided an opportunity for the board to discuss the direction of the RTO Program, as well as the new format for developing online clinics. It is important to take time to self-evaluate to find areas of improvement and re-focus

With three kids currently participating in interscholastic sports, there are a lot of opportunities to interact with WOA officials. It is great to see so many great officials providing a service to the community and affording these student-athletes with the life experiences that come through sports. It also allows for officials to share their stories and concerns in a casual setting. These interactions help the WOA staff and Executive Board in truly tackling the things that will improve officiating. A great example of this happened just the other night. As I sat with an official, I witnessed the gym manager bringing each of the officials food and drink. My comment was "Is this normal?" and the response was "That is why we enjoy coming to this school, they always treat us right and there are never any issues." The official stressed that the food was just an added perk, but they knew the gym manager would take care of any non-basketball issues, so the officials could focus on the game. A lot of schools do not treat officials great, so it is good to be reminded that there are schools that do, but like all comments, we usually only hear the negative ones.

Keep up the great work and don't be surprised if you see me at a game.

Todd Stordahl  
WOA Executive Director

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

### Rules/Mechanic Change Process

#### Rules Change Process

Do you have a rule that you would like the NFHS to consider? Is there a clarification or editorial change you think would help clarify a current NFHS rule? Every year, the NFHS rules committees meet to consider the rule changes, clarifications, and editorial changes submitted by the state associations. Once the committee has narrowed the list down to a handful they would like considered, the NFHS Executive Board votes on the recommendations from the rules committee.

If you are interested in submitting a rule change or clarification, it is important that the following process is adhered to:

1. Submit your proposal to your local association/ board.

2. Upon receiving the proposal, your local association/board should evaluate the proposal and decide if they are supportive of the change or clarification.

3. The WOA contact from your local association/ board should submit the proposal to the WOA prior to the end of the sports season.

4. Upon receiving the proposal, the WOA staff will discuss with the WIAA staff to determine whether or not the proposal will be sent to the NFHS.

5. The WOA will provide an update to the local association/board contact as to the status of the proposal.

#### Mechanic Change Process

Do you have a suggestion to improve the mechanics in a given sport? The process to changing a mechanic is a little different from that of the rules. Steps 1-3 remain the same. In step 4, the WOA staff will forward the request to the sport-specific committee for review and recommendation. If the committee approves the proposal, the proposal will go back to the WOA staff. At that point, the WOA staff will discuss the proposal with the WIAA staff to determine if there are any liability issues or unintended consequences resulting from the change. The WOA will then provide an update to the local association/board contact as to the status of the proposal.