



October 14, 2013

Re: Press Statement for Immediate Release

As President of the Louisiana High School Officials Association, I would like to express my extreme disappointment with the arrest of two LHSAA contest officials at the St. Paul versus Mandeville football game on Friday, October 11, 2013.

By NFHS and LHSAA contest rules, the game officials take jurisdiction of the contest 30 minutes prior to the scheduled game time. They assume responsibility for this contest until they declare the game final, postponed or forfeited. The officials are responsible for the safety of the players, coaches and game officials. The game officials may have the entire stadium cleared if they feel like it is a safety issue.

In the past, a Basketball game has been played with empty stands due to bad fan behavior. In the event there is a problem before, during, or after a game, Game Administration shall be consulted and may intercede to assist the officials in the proper and safe administration and management of the football game.

Officials in Louisiana have a long history of working with law enforcement, athletic directors, principals and other Game Administrators in keeping fans and other personnel a safe distance from playing fields. In this case the police officer failed to comply with a request for sideline safety for himself and the individuals on the sideline very close to the field. Instead the police officer assumed the responsibility for a high school contest, game management, and took jurisdiction over the contest beyond the proper protocols, and beyond his authority. When the Referee wanted to find the principal to resolve the matter, the Covington police officer decided to show his assumed authority and arrest the game officials.

Let me be perfectly clear, the LHSAA game officials in this case were following proper protocol. They followed the LHSAA, LHSOA and NFHS rules and protocol in relation to sideline control and safety. They were arrested for performing their duties and doing their job. When the officials noticed the crowd control issue, they acted in a manner to protect the safety of everyone involved and in the spirit of fair competition.

My hope is that the Covington Police Department recognizes that this police officer exceeded his authority and responsibility and intervened in a matter beyond his authority which is controlled by LHSAA, Federation, and LHSOA contest rules. The request for assistance did not transfer authority to him.

The Referee for the game was Jim Radcliffe. Jim has been officiating High School sports since the age of 18. He has dedicated most of his spare time for the past 36 years to officiating. Jim works NCAA softball and serves as assignment secretary for High School Basketball and Softball. Jim also serves as secretary for the Louisiana High School Officials Association.

The Head Linesman, Chris Gambino has worked High school football for 28 years. He is also on staff with the Gulf South Conference Officials Association. Chris has worked numerous playoff assignments as well as a LHSAA state championship game.

Both officials have the respect of coaches, athletic directors, and principals. They worked their entire career to serve the schools of their community. Both take serious the integrity of the game and safety of the student athletes.

s/Bryan Greenwood

President of the Louisiana High School Officials Association