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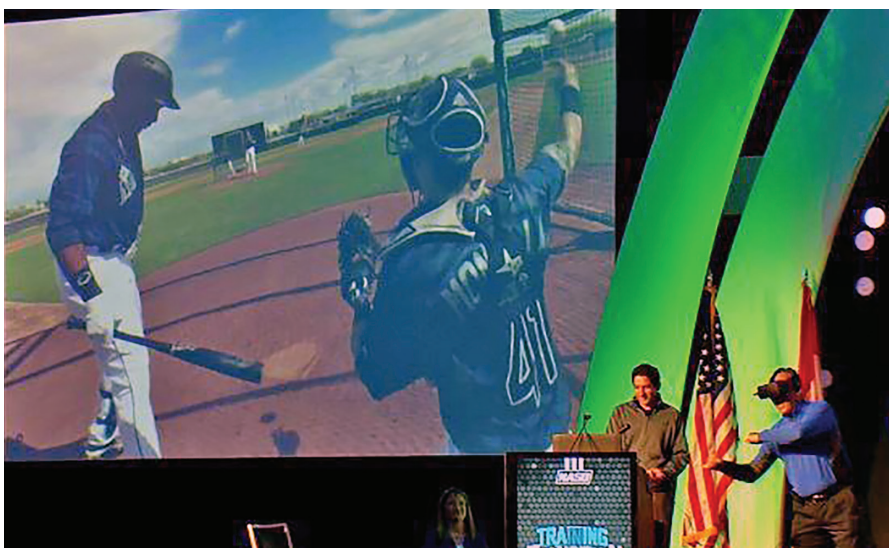
OCTOBER 2019

TRAINING TECHNIQUES, TECHNOLOGY AND MORE FEATURED AT THE NASO SUMMIT

A record number of NASO Summit attendees in Spokane, Wash., in July absorbed virtual reality, emotional intelligence, video relevance and other educational messages over the course of the three-day event. With the theme, "Training in Transition," the 560-plus sports officials from around the globe gained multiple educational takeaways to bring back to their associations.

"The Summit in Spokane was our 37th and looking back over all of them I would have to say that Spokane was extraordinary in a number of ways," said NASO President Barry Mano. "First of all, in attendance we set records for the Summit, and sponsorship support was at a record level. I think the educational sessions were extraordinary and imparted value that we had not seen at that level before, and the networking opportunities, with more than 150 sports organizations represented, were spectacular. ... The Summit has come into a hallowed space — that being accepted by so many as the Industry Event of the Year for officiating."

Attendees heard welcoming remarks from Mano at the Opening Ceremony Sunday night, July 28, along with Spokane City Council President Ben Stuckart, following a unique rendering of



Omar Ahmad, with STRIVR, demonstrated how virtual reality technology can help with training in the "Leading the Way" session at the NASO Summit in July.

the Canadian and U.S. national anthems by Mike Colbrese, retiring executive director of the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association. The next two days were packed with educational sessions featuring many leaders in the industry.

The first session on July 29 was titled after the Summit theme and featured discussions from Jason Nickleby, Minnesota State High School League director of officials; Dave Coleman, Pac-12 vice president of officiating; NFL referee Carl Cheffers; and Pati Rolf, USA Volleyball director of officials. They covered the relevance of learning through

video. A big theme was not overwhelming officials with too many clips. The key is to find the right clips to demonstrate what needs to take place from an official's standpoint on the critical plays that supervisors want to see improvement on.

"It's more about the quality. We want teachable moments," Cheffers said.

Developing a consistent message was also emphasized — the clips need to move officials onto the same page for enforcement. Age-specific videos and using technology such as tablets were also raised as issues in educating through video.

Rachelle Strawther, director of leadership training and development for Gonzaga University, spoke about emotional intelligence during the “Get Them to Believe” session. Strawther laid out a model to help officials better handle controversial situations.

Her model included three main components: self-awareness, self-regulation and empathy. She discussed the need for officials to become aware of their actions to understand why they respond the way they do in tense situations. That then allows the official to self-regulate behavior to improve responses in tense situations. This leads to the final step – empathy – as the official becomes better able to understand others and what drives their actions so that they can respond appropriately.

The final day of the Summit featured more technology and educational takeaways.

Omar Ahmad, with STRIVR, demonstrated virtual reality technology in the “Leading the Way” session. He placed goggles on Bill Carollo, coordinator for the Collegiate Officiating Consortium, and J.D. Collins, NCAA national coordinator of men’s basketball officiating, to let them experience the technology.

Carollo and Collins got the audience laughing as they mimed actions coordinated to the reality of sports actions projected on the screen. The virtual reality goggles are used to get reps for officials, allowing them to step into the game through the imaging.

In the same session, attendees heard from Duane Carlisle, a

fitness consultant for NFL officials who runs Carlisle Performance. He explained how technology tracks the movements of officials and then the data is used to help improve fitness.

Gary Frieders, president of the North Coast Officials Association, demonstrated Go Pro technology he utilizes as a teaching tool for volleyball officials. By attaching the device on the net, observers get close views of the action and officials’ judgments. The views are used in training to educate officials on plays, provide feedback and ways to develop.

The NASO Summit covered multiple other sessions, the Officiating Industry Luncheon and sport-by-sport workshops. The Celebrate Officiate Gala capped the three-day event. ■

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NASO MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of NASO is to:

- Serve members by providing benefits and services.
- Improve officiating performance through educational programs.
- Advocate opportunities for officials and engage in programs to recruit and retain officials.
- Create alliances with organizations that benefit from healthy officiating programs.
- Enhance the image of officials.

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NASO IN THE NEWS

NASO is the leading voice for sports officials across the country. As a byproduct of that, various media will contact NASO or those affiliated with the organization for comments or opinions on matters that affect sports officials. Here is a recent example of NASO coverage:

- “You Become a Target: Wisconsin Sports Officials Are Blowing the Whistle on Harassment and Assault” appeared on Fox 6 Milwaukee in early May. NASO President Barry Mano talked about how bad behavior at sporting events is impacting officiating. The segment also featured the 2017 NASO National Officiating Survey and NASO’s legislative efforts. To find the segment, Google search “Barry Mano, assault.”

NASO-connected events, such as the Summit, also make the news. Here are articles and

segments highlighting the event. To find the coverage pieces, Google search “NASO Summit.”

- “Mike Pereira Speaks at NASO Summit” included comments from the Fox Sports rules analyst about the Summit and the upcoming NFL season.

- “Virtual Reality on Display During Sports Officiating Summit in Spokane” highlighted one of the Summit sessions that featured STRIVR, a virtual reality company that uses technology to train professionals from the corporate and sports world.

- “Training in Transition” highlighted the NASO Summit and how it tackled some of the tough challenges in the industry.

- “Fox Sports Rules Analyst Mike Pereira Headlines Speakers at the National Association of Sports Officials Summit” was a *Spokesman-Review* article that highlighted the Summit. ■

ASSAULT PROTECTION COVERAGE ENHANCED

In NASO's ongoing efforts to ensure assaulted members pursue legal action against perpetrators and provide better benefits to its members, NASO and American Specialty Insurance have come together to offer an enhancement to the assault coverage available to members.

As part of the \$15,500 Assault Protection Program, NASO members may now, if assaulted while officiating, use NASO's assistance beyond just attorney's fees. Members may now be reimbursed for other related ancillary legal expenses. The program continues to offer assistance in finding an attorney and for medical expenses and lost game fees. The enhancement went into effect on Aug. 1.

The exact language of the Assault Protection Program reads:

"Provides for reimbursement of certain expenses and loss of game fees resulting from injuries suffered when an official is a victim of an assault and/or battery by a spectator, fan or participant while the official is performing officiating duties, or as a direct result of performing officiating duties at an organized sporting event. Legal fee reimbursement may also be available. NASO is able to connect the member with legal counsel; NASO will then provide reimbursement up to \$4,500 for reasonable non-contingent attorney fees and certain ancillary expenses incurred by the member in bringing a non-frivolous claim against the perpetrator. Such ancillary fees might include travel expenses, lost wages and other reasonable expenses. Reimbursement will be made

upon conclusion of the matter and is based on a verified fee agreement and attorney invoice. NASO will pay 60% of such fees up to \$4,500 and the NASO member is responsible for the remaining 40%. Legal and ancillary fees that exceed NASO's 60% contribution (\$4,500) are the sole responsibility of the member. Additionally, NASO's Assault Protection benefit pays up to \$100 for each game lost (up to \$1,000 and within 21 days after the injury) and a \$10,000 excess medical expense benefit for injuries suffered when an official is a victim of assault and/or battery by a spectator, fan or participant while performing officiating duties."

The enhancement follows on the heels of a dramatic increase in coverage by NASO in August 2018. That change saw the combined general liability and excess liability limit for each official increased from \$3 million per occurrence to \$6 million per occurrence, while the per official annual aggregate increased from \$7 million to \$14 million. There is also a \$20 million "group action" policy aggregate for collective action against groups of nine or more officials named in a single lawsuit (however, the policy aggregate only applies to "group action" lawsuits).

The Game Call/Assigners' coverage package also increased last August from \$50,000 to \$100,000 including defense costs.

The NASO membership rate remains \$116 yearly, even with the assault coverage expansion. (Healthy group membership discounts are available.) Details are available in the member handbook and the NASO website. ■

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NEW WRINKLES PART OF OFFICIATE WASHINGTON DAY

Todd Stordahl is looking forward to checking out the survey data regarding Officiate Washington Day when it trickles into the Washington Officials Association (WOA) offices in the coming months.

Until then, the executive director of the WOA must rely on his first-hand observations of the two-day event held the final weekend of July in Spokane, Wash., as a prelude to the 2019 NASO Summit.

"I think it went great," said Stordahl, who also serves on the NASO board of directors. "When I walked in the sessions it seemed the group was definitely engaged. We received a lot of good feedback, which is great to hear."

About 500 members of the WOA turned out for the July 27 general sessions, sports-specific breakouts, awards luncheon and presentations by NASO board secretary and *Referee* chief operating officer/executive editor Bill Topp, and Fox Sports football rules analyst Mike Pereira. A special morning session geared toward WOA baseball umpires and featuring former MLB arbiters Ed Montague, Dale Scott and Larry Young ran concurrently at Avista Stadium, home of the Spokane Indians of the Class A Northwest League.

One day earlier, almost 150 golfers attended the annual WOA golf tournament held at Hangman Valley Golf Course. It serves as a fundraiser for the group.

Stordahl shared the story of a WOA local association board member to illustrate why Officiate Washington Day is so important for the statewide



Bill Topp, NASO board secretary and *Referee* chief operating officer/executive editor, speaks before a large gathering at Officiating Washington Day.

organization. According to Stordahl, the woman arrived in Spokane convinced there was no reason to remain in a leadership position with her local unit. At the end of Saturday's events, she had re-committed to serving another term on her board.

"We're not going to know the true benefit of what happened until months, if not years, later," Stordahl said. "I think that's the reason you want people to stay — it was that eye-opening experience."

Saturday also featured a new wrinkle thanks to the WOA's unique standing as the lone statewide association in which every member is also an NASO member. As part of its companion piece to the WOA's program, NASO put together a "Fan Fest" experience for the officials featuring games and prizes, the opportunity to have their photo

taken and digitally superimposed on a mock *Referee* cover, and an information booth where WOA members could find out more information about NASO's products and services.

"Did they just take advantage of the fun things or did they learn something?" said Stordahl rhetorically. "I thought the concept was great. I thought the flow was great. I would hope the officials got something out of it."

Whatever the data and surveys show, Stordahl knows the WOA has set a high standard for its members going forward.

"The difficult trick now will be when we go back to Yakima for our own WOA event (for 2020) ... does the success of this one in Spokane challenge the respective sports committees," Stordahl said. "How do we take the positives and re-create some of it to create the same energy?" ■

LOPES AWARDED GOLD WHISTLE, PEREIRA AWARDED MEDALLION

Tom Lopes was honored with NASO's Gold Whistle Award and Mike Pereira the Mel Narol Medallion at the July 30 Celebrate Officiating Gala, which concluded the Sports Officiating Summit in Spokane, Wash. Mark Uyl, Michigan High School Athletic Association executive director, served as the master of ceremonies for the special event.

Lopes, recently retired executive director of the International Association of Approved Basketball Officials (IAABO), received officiating's highest honor for his significant contributions to officiating in the area of training and education. Lopes also officiated college basketball for 40 years (35 at the D-I level), including 20 consecutive NCAA tournaments and three Final Fours. During his speech, Lopes fondly recounted experiences from starting out in officiating, Special Olympics, his career in education, family and his position as IAABO executive director, from which he retired at the end of June.

Lopes also encouraged officials to remember why they are officiating and to pay it forward.

"When I announced my retirement, it was funny, I got four or five cards — I'm not sure I know the people — thanking me for something they attributed to me," he said. "The point is all the people you made contact with — you'll realize what you do for them. So, continue to make sure you pay it forward, pass it on. Help somebody. Nobody sitting here did it by themselves.



Mike Pereira, NFL and NCAA football rules analyst for Fox Sports and a former NASO board member, received the Mel Narol Medallion during the 2019 Sports Officiating Summit in Spokane, Wash.

Somebody helped them along the way."

Pereira, NFL and NCAA football rules analyst for Fox Sports, spoke on the importance of being part of the officiating family during his Medallion acceptance speech. He said the award, which recognizes an individual or organization that has made significant contributions to the betterment of NASO, was for all the officials in the room.

"For all the fun I've had over the years being connected with officiating, none of it compares to an evening like this when you're actually awarded something that you really probably don't deserve but that you accept on behalf of many,"

he said. "When I say many, I mean my family. And when I say my family, I mean all of you and anybody that's every stepped out on the court, field, pitch, diamond."

Pereira joined Fox Sports after serving as the NFL vice president of officiating. He also had a successful career officiating in NCAA Division I football and the NFL. He is a former chair of the NASO board of directors. Pereira was recognized for his work on the field, in supervisory positions, his current job as an officiating analyst for Fox Sports, and his role in promoting Battlefields to Ballfields, helping U.S. veterans return to civilian life through jobs in sports officiating. ■

Meet Your New NASO Board Member PAUL LAROSA



Louisiana-native Paul LaRosa comes to the board with a vast amount of

experience working in officials' organizations and as a high school football official for more than 40 years. LaRosa is the first person from Louisiana to serve on the NASO board. He is looking forward to the experience.

"I was very excited when I was asked if I would serve," LaRosa said. "My connection with officiating and interaction with NASO people over the years has been nothing but positive. I'm impressed with all the people I've met. I think this association is committed to officiating, is unique and important."

LaRosa said with the amount of stress facing referees and umpires in all sports, it is important that officials have an organization

like NASO.

"I don't think there has ever been a time in history where NASO has been needed more for high school officials," he said.

Because of the challenges officials are facing back in his home state, LaRosa is looking forward to learning from other board members. He said they are facing the same issues as others around the country: recruiting, retention, violence directed toward officials and low pay. Hearing the stories from others and what they are doing to address these issues is something LaRosa is looking forward to.

"I like to sit in the room with people who know more than me," LaRosa said. "I think the process of learning is being around people who are smarter than you. Throughout my career I've had that opportunity to work with a lot of smart people. If you listen, you will learn a lot of small things that can lead to a big win. I'm interested in hearing other people's perspective in terms of what has worked positively for them. Maybe it's training and recruiting tips or a way of how to motivate people after they've had a bad experience on a football field or on a basketball court.

I think what NASO does is bring all of these experiences together. To be a part of it at the highest level as part of the board means that I'm going to be able to sit in the room with people who have been through things that I have not experienced; I will be able to pick their brain in order to see

how they dealt with it."

While LaRosa will be new to the board, he has a lot of skills himself. His experience in the nuclear power industry as a former vice president of Entergy Corporation will be an asset to the board, in addition to his communication skills.

"In my professional career, I've had the opportunity to work with the highest level of senior management. I have the financial experience of working in a complicated industry that had to deal with difficult financial problems," LaRosa explained. "I worked in an organization where our primary responsibility was communicating complicated issues like the nuclear power industry to investors every day. So I have communication and organization skills."

LaRosa began serving his board term in July of 2019. ■

At a Glance

Residence: Metairie, La.

Occupation: Retired

Officiating Background:

High school football official for 43 years; president of Louisiana High School Officials Association; sideline liaison for Tulane University and member of NFL Gameday Day Team.

Favorite Travel City: Porto, Portugal

Favorite Musical Artists: Jon Batiste and The Neville Brothers

Favorite Food: Oysters with soft shell crabs

Hobby: Running

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CHANGE BACK?

You likely have heard it all before: “Don’t be afraid to change.” “It’s good to try new ways of doing things.” “Try mixing up things in your group.”

Those are all good suggestions for association leaders. But what if the changes you try don’t work? Below are a few scenarios that will help you know what to do if the changes you make aren’t for the better.

1. Meeting location

Your group has been meeting in the same high school classroom for years. Meeting attendance isn’t bad, but as a new leader you wish more members would take advantage of the free education. Your buddy owns a restaurant with a banquet room he said you can use on meeting nights as long as your group orders food. You think that might just be the change to draw more officials.

Result: The first meeting at the new location is a huge success. The regulars all show, but there are also many others. Unfortunately, the big turnout doesn’t last. By the end of the season, attendance is lower than ever. Many treat the meetings more like social hour than a meeting, which turns off those who really want to learn.

What should you do? Return to the old meeting location. It’s nice to be able to socialize with members, but meetings are for learning. Explain your reasoning for going back. To appease those who liked the restaurant, you can periodically bring in refreshments. Or you can suggest members go to the restaurant after the meeting for socializing.

2. Video learning

Your group is a little behind the times in incorporating video for its meetings. When you were elected, you vowed to use video for all training sessions after your first year. Instead of video, your group had been using PowerPoint, having group rules discussions and doing a role-playing session on how to respond to coaches. You and your board are excited about the training changes. You use video presentations at every meeting.

Result: Members embrace the video training at first. Showing the clips promotes discussion and excitement. But by the end of the season, members are asking what happened to the group rules discussion and the role-playing session. The members liked the technology upgrade, but not at the expense of some of the old standby meetings.

What should you do? Listen to your members. Keep the video training for most meetings but bring back some of the other popular sessions to break things up. It will please the members and cut down your workload.

3. Recruitment efforts

Your group has been using the same recruiting strategies for years. You decide to introduce a new idea. You know it will take work from members, but you’re excited about the potential for growth. You provide a free clinic for the community to learn about officiating. The effort is worth it when over 20 people attend.

Result: While the clinic attendance is promising, unfortunately only three prospects join the association. Your past recruitment efforts have yielded that many people and they aren’t as much work.

What should you do? Consider trying the clinic again in a few years. Go back to your previous recruitment drives in the meantime. Don’t be frustrated by the clinic results. Some who tried it may join in the future.

Trying something new won’t always work, but it’s worth the effort. Sometimes it will help you learn what members want. But don’t be afraid to go back to the old way either. Taking two steps back may bring your association together and move it forward. ■



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NASO BOARD DISCUSSES STATE PARTNERSHIPS IN SPOKANE

Discussion of how state associations and NASO can become even closer, conversation on the recent D.C. Court of Appeals decision concerning officials' independent contractor status and development of a new award to inspire officials were among the highlights of the July 28 NASO board meeting in Spokane, Wash.

The event, which coincided with the NASO Summit, marked a changing of the guard on the board as Julie Voeck, Debbie Williamson and Terry Gregson served out their board terms.

New members who were welcomed included Paul LaRosa, president of the Louisiana High School Officials Association; Dana Pappas, New Mexico Activities Association deputy director and 2019 NFHS Citation for Officials Award recipient; and Sandra Serafini, Professional Referee Organization director of strategic initiatives, who previously served on the board. Their first formal board session will be in October.

Craig Anderson, Illinois High School Association executive director and board member, thought the July board meeting went well, especially noting the involvement of the Washington Officials Association (WOA) and the success of its state day.

"There was a lot of good conversation about this year's Summit," Anderson said. "We recognize the importance and significance of state associations and what they

provide to NASO and what we provide to them.

"We want to encourage state associations to use NASO as a resource."

WOA and NASO came to a five-year agreement in 2017 that enrolled all 5,000 WOA members into NASO providing them with full benefits. The Summit in Washington state was seen as a culmination of that partnership spirit.

"WE RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STATE ASSOCIATIONS AND WHAT THEY PROVIDE TO NASO AND WHAT WE PROVIDE TO THEM."

**– NASO BOARD MEMBER
CRAIG ANDERSON**

"The Washington people were so engaged and interested. It demonstrates that an idea like that (signing up WOA en masse) can and will work," Gregson said. "You see something like that and oftentimes you don't want to be the first one to try it, but then you see it work and then you think it might be replicated elsewhere."

There was also discussion by the board of the D.C. District Court of Appeals June decision that stated that lacrosse officials in the Pennsylvania Interscholastic

Athletic Association (PIAA) are independent contractors.

The issue was brought to the forefront two years ago by a local Pennsylvania lacrosse officials association which was trying to organize as a union. The matter escalated with a National Labor Relations Board decision in 2017 that stated that the lacrosse officials were employees of the PIAA. It has since roiled around the courts for the last two years.

The board also received an insurance update from American Specialty Insurance President Drew Smith that led to a healthy conversation on changes in coverage, industry trends and how NASO members can benefit.

Anderson and Gregson also spoke of the still-in-the-works NASO Inspire Award. The board is considering the new award as an honor to be given to an individual or organization for efforts that inspire and invigorate officials. The Awards subcommittee is evaluating its criteria and other details before the full board votes on its possible implementation.

Gregson, who served the maximum two, two-year consecutive terms on the board, expressed excitement for the future of NASO. "I'm very confident that things are moving in the right direction (with officiating and NASO)," he said. "There is a lot of imagination and out-of-the-box thinking that goes on here. It's really expanded my scope of what officiating is all about." ■

SPORTS SECTION

DOWNTIME — MAKING THE MOST OF IT

By Rick Woelfel

It's common for officials working large tournaments to work an abundance of games over the course of a single day or a weekend. There will be breaks during that span that allow officials to recharge their physical and mental batteries. So, how best to make the most of that downtime?

- **Getting some rest is important, both physically and mentally.** Get off your feet. If you've been working outdoors in hot weather, get inside where it's cool, or, if necessary, in your air-conditioned car. If you've been working in cold weather, get somewhere where it's warm.

Give yourself a mental break. If you had a tough play in your last game, you might take a quick look in the rulebook or mechanics manual, or consult with a colleague. But don't spend your break time beating yourself up. That's counterproductive.

- **Take time to rehydrate, regardless of the weather.** It's important to maintain your fluid intake. If you wait until you're thirsty, you are already experiencing dehydration. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids over the course of the day or the weekend. Sports drinks such as Gatorade will replenish your electrolytes. But these drinks also contain

a substantial amount of sugar, and that, along with their acidic content, can enhance the risk of tooth decay. Consider diluting your sports drink with water and be sure to brush your teeth thoroughly.

- **Be sure to eat properly as well.** Working an entire day without eating will deplete your energy and lead to fatigue. Eat healthy if possible.

SEPARATE YOURSELF FROM PLAYERS, COACHES, PARENTS, ESSENTIALLY ANYONE EXCEPT OTHER OFFICIALS AND TOURNAMENT ADMINISTRATORS.

As officials, we must avoid any situation that would cause others to question or objectivity or integrity. In today's world that axiom is more important than ever. And it's something to be kept in mind at all times, even when we're technically off duty. With that in mind, here are some likely scenarios to keep in mind.

- **Be punctual.** First impressions count and being punctual is a way to make a good first impression. Be on site

well in advance of your first assignment. If your assigner wants you there 30 minutes ahead of game time, aim for 45 minutes or an hour. Not only is there no crime in arriving early, your being prompt gives your assigner some insurance in the event someone else is running late.

Along the same lines, be sure you have the cell number of your assigner, the tournament office, or your partner(s). If you get caught in traffic or are otherwise delayed, be sure to notify someone so another official can be inserted in your place if necessary.

- **Separate yourself from players, coaches, parents, essentially anyone except other officials and tournament administrators.** When you arrive at the tournament site, find out if there is a designated parking area for officials. If so, that will provide you with some desirable separation from coaches and parents and allow you to connect with your officiating partners prior to taking the field.

- **Avoid any unnecessary conversation.** During breaks, you may find yourself in line at the concession stand with coaches, parents and players. You're there to do a job, not socialize. If someone asks you about a call you or any other umpire made, tell them you're

not permitted to discuss it. If necessary, walk away from the conversation.

- **Be alert to any possible schedule/assignment changes because of weather or other circumstances.** The scheduled starting time of your next assignment might be moved up or, pushed back, or, an official might be needed to fill in. Make sure you're ready to take the field when it's time to do so.

- **Conduct yourself professionally at all times.** If you're in the parking lot chatting with your peers between games, watch your language, especially if players are within earshot. Be aware if the site where you're working has a "No tobacco" policy and adhere to it. Some tournaments provide complimentary refreshments for officials, some do not. Don't expect to receive free food/drinks and don't argue if you are asked to pay for your meal.

Rick Woelfel is a freelance writer from Philadelphia. ■

FOOTBALL

KEEPING A CLEAN, QUIET SIDELINE

By George Demetriou

One of the most frustrating things for wing officials is not having enough room to work along the sideline. In NFHS, there is an imaginary two-yard belt between the sideline and the bench area. Only three coaches may be in that belt and they must vacate it when the ball is live. In NCAA, the bench area is four yards from the sideline. The coaches must remain in a two-yard belt immediately in front of the

bench area and behind the "coaching line," leaving the remaining two yards for the sideline officials to maneuver.

The following information and tips will help you work the sidelines safely and properly.

Chain crew. On the linesman's side of the field (or on both sides if supplemental line-to-gain equipment is used), the chain crew must operate at least one yard off the sideline. Supplementary personnel are an essential part of game control. Anything other than a fully competent chain crew can make an arduous game for both linesman and referee.

It is the responsibility of game management to provide a chain crew. If the chain crew is not introduced to the officials upon their arrival to the field, their presence should be ascertained when the referee and umpire meet with the home coach. It is preferable to have four individuals: a down marker (box) holder, two to hold the chain stakes and a clip operator. But it can be managed with three people.

Safety is paramount. Before the game, the linesman must check the equipment. Any items with sharp or jagged edges should be replaced or covered with tape so they are not a hazard. The chain crew should be instructed to retreat and take the equipment with them if players approach. That protects the players and the chain crew.

Coordination between linesman and chain crew is essential. After reminding the box holder that all spots are taken from the forward point of the ball, it must be made clear whether the linesman will designate that spot or whether the box holder is expected to get it on his own. Two techniques are used. Some linesmen prefer

to go to the sideline and mark the spot with the heel of his forward foot when a first down is made, leaving it up to the box holder on other downs. That ensures the correct spot is systematically taken; more important, the linesman can attest to what was done. Other linesmen will allow the box holder to pick up the spot on his own for all downs within a possession.

Whatever technique is used on first down, once the clip is set, the chains should be moved back at least a yard from the sideline so they do not get in the linesman's way. Once a first down is awarded inside the 10 yardline, the chains are no longer needed and should be moved well away from the sideline.

Coaches and other non-players. In NFHS, only three coaches are allowed in the two-yard belt (called the restricted area) and they must share that area with the wing official (9-8-3). If players, nonplayers or coaches wander into that belt while the ball is live, the penalty for the first offense is an official sideline warning with no distance penalty. The wing official should throw his flag and the referee should give the proper signal while facing the bench area. The second infraction is a five-yard penalty, while the third and any subsequent infractions result in a 15-yard penalty. If the offender cannot be identified, the foul is charged to the head coach and counts toward his disqualification.

In NCAA play, neither coaches nor players may be between the sideline and the coaching line while the ball is live. While the ball is live and in the immediate action after the ball has been declared

dead, coaches, substitutes and authorized attendants in the team area must be behind the coaching line (9-2-5a). The penalty for the first offense is a warning with no distance penalty. The second and third violations result in a five-yard delay of game penalty for sideline interference and any subsequent infractions incur a 15-yard team unsportsmanlike penalty. If team B is the guilty party, the penalty includes an automatic first down, if not in conflict with other rules.

The preceding assumes the violators are not doing anything else contrary to rule. If taunting or official-bashing is taking place, the rules require an immediate penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct. In some areas, referees use the sideline warning to control chirping from the bench area.

There is no limit on the number of informal warnings that may be given and each crew should have a policy on how to handle sideline situations. If the first offense results in contact with an official, a formal warning should be given without hesitation.

George Demetriou has been a football official since 1968. He lives in Colorado Springs, Colo. ■

BASKETBALL

REFEREE THE TRIANGLE

By Dick Pratt

Teachers, especially those schooled in rhetoric, know about the rhetorical triangle. It's not an offense or a defense or even in your mechanics manual. But, the triangle has something to teach sports officials about communicating.

Here are legs of the triangle:

the rhetor — the communicator; the audience (or maybe that's audiences); and the purpose(s).

Appreciation to David Gooblar, associate director of Temple University's Center for the Advancement of Teaching, and his recent article "3 Questions That Can Improve Your Teaching" in the Chronicle of Higher Education.

Here's how the rhetorical triangle works and how it applies to officiating.

Purposes. What do you want to achieve? Enforce the rules as written. Teach the players, the coaches and the fans how to play the game inside the rules. Also, keep the game moving, don't be too picky with less-experienced players, and prevent either team from gaining an unfair advantage. Keep the rivalry game under control. Follow the written mechanics and game protocols. You are there to maintain the integrity of the game. This is why officials talk before the game, and after the game. In the end, did we achieve our purposes?

Audiences. The players want you to call the game fairly. Call it at both ends. Be consistent. They want to know what you've called (and maybe why). The coaches need to know; so do the fans. Whose ball is it? Communicate to the audiences what you called.

And then remember that there are some other audiences. The scorekeeper needs to know what you've got. So does the timer, and even the public address announcer. Calls have consequences. Your partners, the officials for the next game, the observers and evaluators (and maybe the media people), the trainees, the ADs — they all want to know what you've got. The fans (and others) will let

you know if they don't agree. Odds are good that about half of them won't agree on the close calls.

Communicators. Your job, you and your partners, is to fulfill the purpose and be sure the audiences are informed. Be in the right place to make the right call. Having made a call, be a good communicator. We are not as good at this as we think. Stop. Use the signals. Use your voice. Don't hurry — you're communicating, and the audiences need to know what you've got. They can't read your mind. Your partners need to know (including the scorekeeper and timer), as do the players, the coaches, the fans and all the other watchers. It's your job. Sometimes, that may also involve having a private word with a player or a coach. Be a calming influence on players or coaches who are out of control. Have a word with game management when the fans need some oversight.

Keep the triangle intact. Have a purpose. Know the audiences. Communicate the game.

Dick Pratt is a retired college professor and officiates high school basketball and volleyball from Shirley, Mass. ■

SOCCER

PREPARE FOR EVERY GAME TO BE YOUR BEST GAME

By John Van de Vaarst

A young, motivated and talented official was assigned as the referee in a college D-I highly contested conference game. The two assistant referees were seasoned veterans who have officiated high-level soccer for a number of years. It was a

night game and there were more than 500 fans attending. The young referee was extremely excited for the opportunity and the assistant referees were looking forward to doing whatever they could to help the referee be very successful. The pregame was very complete and it was a good dialogue between the entire crew. The assistant referees asked questions to ensure the referee covered every situation – all were ready to go out on the field.

During the national anthem, the referee looked into the stands and observed the crowd. The referee's adrenaline began to flow and she knew she was ready to officiate the game. It was a hard-fought contest and the referee worked very diligently to maintain control. The cautions that were administered were timely and assisted with game management. The referee ran well throughout the game and, almost without exception, was in the proper position. Both assistants were always in position and made several critical offside decisions as well as assisting with fouls they observed.

After the game, the referee was exuberant in the locker room. She thanked the assistants for their hard work. The referee team did a postgame review and unanimously determined that it was officiated almost flawlessly. The referee went home and stayed awake for several hours replaying the game and excitement that had just occurred.

The following weekend the same officiating crew was assigned to work together again. Only this time it was a low-level D-III amateur game between two teams that did not have a lot of skill. The crew arrived at the site and observed the home team put up the nets and finish marking the field. The field was in poor condition and there were several mud spots since it had rained hard earlier in the week. There were approximately 20 fans there to observe the contest. The pregame discussion was limited to which side the assistant referee would work on and a very short discussion about potential retaliations when players were fouled. The crew walked out to start the game and their enthusiasm about officiating the game was minimal at best.

Early in the game there was a hard foul and the referee awarded a direct free kick. The referee was not very close to the play since she was not running as much as usual. There was no attempt to speak to the player who committed the foul or to administer a caution. From that point on, the game became more physical and harder to control. Similar potential problems were developing because the assistant referees were not working at the 100-percent level. Their mechanics were not very sharp and, as a result, the offside

decisions were being questioned and dissent was becoming the norm. A defender committed a hard foul and the attacker was hurt. The referee walked to the situation and looked at the defender with disgust. At that point, a teammate of the attacker took matters into his own hands and head-butted the defender that committed the foul. The referee stood there in amazement and realized that an ejection had to be administered. The referee also realized that if she had dealt with the player who committed the foul, the retaliation might not have happened.

For the remainder of the game, the referee tried to work harder and focus more on the game. It was, however, too late. The players did not respect the officiating crew and began fouling more, arguing more and retaliating. The players felt they needed to take control since the crew had not. The game ended and the officials had to leave the field quickly since several players were vocalizing that they were going to assault the officials.

The previous situation provides a teaching moment. Whenever two teams enter the field, no matter what their skill level, the game they are playing is the most important one of the day. They play as hard as they can and do whatever they can to secure a victory. Every game an official is assigned should be the most important game of the day.

An official should never approach a game with an attitude that he or she has received a poor assignment and should be somewhere else working a higher-level contest. A lackluster performance is never acceptable. Only performing at a high level when



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the game is the premier game of the day does not bode well for the officiating crew.

The officiating crew must remember they are professionals and work each game with 100-percent effort. This approach will result in several positive outcomes. The game should be better controlled and there should be fewer opportunities for retaliation fouls. The players will normally respect the officiating team and their decisions when they observe the team doing its best and exerting themselves throughout the game. Feedback about the game to the assigner, league officials, etc., will be positive and the crew will be recognized with future assignments.

There are no easy assignments. In every game there is potential for hard fouls, retaliation and misconducts. The crew must prepare for the game as if it is the best game in the area. Pregame conferences should always be thorough and prepare the officiating team for the game. The officiating crew must be prepared physically and mentally for each assignment.

John Van de Vaarst is a NISOA National Clinician, National Assessor and former State Level USSF Referee and Assessor. ■

VOLLEYBALL

NEVER STOP LEARNING

By Jason Palmer

It cannot be emphasized enough the importance of continuing to learn and grow as a referee regardless of whether you are in your first year or 40th of officiating. For one, the rules change every year

and secondly, there is always a play or situation that will occur that you have never seen before. Because of this, rule knowledge is constantly in need of an update, like you would download updates for a program on your computer. Knowing and having the latest training practices keeps officials on top of their game.

Your referee career aspirations should not determine your willingness to want to become better. Continuing education for experienced officials is something that is often not talked about enough. While referees who are attempting to become college officials or those who are attempting to become Junior National or National USAV referees understand what it is expected of them to learn new rules and techniques all the time, referees who are not trying to climb that career ladder still have a responsibility to the sport. If you are comfortable just officiating the local freshman and JV high school games in your community, that's great, you are needed there too. But you can continue your officiating education as well.

There are resources available for continued learning. The NFHS "Learn" courses allow sports officials to view video content and learn how to implement rules for their sport. "Officiating Volleyball: Ball Handling" gives an overview of tips and techniques that officials need to make correct ball handling calls. Video examples of various contacts by each position are provided to assist officials in visually identifying ball handling faults. This course teaches and shows the difference between legal and illegal contacts, helping

officials be more consistent in their ball handling calls.

For USAV officials, the USAV Academy offers dozens of modules on a variety of situations an official will encounter. Regions often require only a limited number of modules to be taken and passed by officials each year as part of the certification process. But that should not stop you from exploring the content in the other modules. Doing so will only give you a larger knowledge base from which to draw upon when officiating a match.

For college referees, PAVO offers a variety of camps around the country. There are also clinics designed just for those who want to line judge. PAVO camps vary based on skill level. Some camps will be designed for advanced officials only.

Being evaluated on a yearly basis is critical to understanding your skill set to ensure you are being placed in a camp or clinic to fit your needs. Be open to instructions. Remember you are there to learn and get better for yourself and for the good of the game.

Jason Palmer, an associate editor for Referee, is a high school referee and a USAV Regional referee. ■

ASK US

BASKETBALL

Fighting and Peacekeepers

Play: During the dead ball following a traveling violation by A1, players A2 and B3 begin to taunt each other. B3 throws a punch at A2, and A2 throws a punch right back at B3. Recognizing a fight has started,

team A's head coach, team B's head coach, one team A assistant coach, and two team B assistant coaches leave the bench area. No other bench personnel leave the bench area. All coaches who enter the floor help break up the fight and keep any additional fights or other problems from occurring. What penalties shall be assessed for those involved in the fight and for the coaches who left the bench area? **Ruling:** In NFHS, A2 and B3 are charged with flagrant technical fouls for fighting and are disqualified. The head coach and any assistant coaches may go onto the court to help restore order when a fight breaks out among players. Therefore, there are no penalties for either of the head coaches and any assistant coaches entering the floor. The penalties for the flagrant technical fouls offset, and play shall be resumed at the point of interruption, which is a throw-in to team B for A1's violation (4-36-1, 4-36-2b, 10-4-8, 10-5-5 Note). In NCAA, A2 and B3 are charged with Class A technical fouls for fighting, are ejected and are subject to suspension. The head coach may go onto the court to help restore order when a fight breaks out

among players. Therefore, there are no penalties for either of the head coaches entering the floor. Other bench personnel, such as assistant coaches, may not enter the floor when a fight has occurred. Since the assistant coaches did not participate in the fight, they are simply ejected, but there is no other penalty. The penalties for A2's and B3's Class A technical fouls offset, and play shall be resumed at the point of interruption, which is a throw-in to team B for A1's violation (4-28, 10-3.1.j, 10-4.2.j, 10-5). In NCAA, A2 and B3 are charged with disqualifying fouls for fighting, are ejected and are subject to suspension. The head coach and any assistant coaches may go onto the court to help restore order when a fight breaks out among players. Therefore, there are no penalties for either of the head coaches and any assistant coaches entering the floor. The penalties for the disqualifying fouls offset, and play shall be resumed at the point of interruption, which is a throw-in to team B for A1's violation (4-22, 10-14.1.a.5, 10-14.1.b.1, 10-15.1).

BASEBALL

Not So Fast

Play: The home team has a runner on first and one out with the score tied 4-4 in the bottom of the last inning when B5 hits a home run out of the ballpark. Thinking the home run automatically wins the game, R1 leaves the base path and heads for the dugout. The first-base umpire declares the runner out for abandonment. B5 continues to circle the bases and touches home plate. **Ruling:** The only runner called out is R1 who abandoned the bases. By rule, B5 did not pass R1 who was already out. Because there were less than two outs when the batter

homered, the game ends the moment B5 touches home plate. The final score is 5-4. If there were two outs when the runner on first abandoned the bases, no run would score because the abandonment occurred before the batter-runner touched home plate. That would be a time play (NFHS 8-4-2p; NCAA 8-5c; pro 5.09b2).

Oops

Play: With a runner on second base and one out, the infield is playing at normal depth. R2 attempts to steal on the pitch. B1 hits a shot that hits R2 as he is sliding into third base and is in contact with the base just as F5 attempts to field the ball. **Ruling:** R2 is out and B1 is awarded first base. A base is not a sanctuary for a runner except on an infield fly (NFHS 8-2-4k; NCAA 6-2e, 8-2g, 8-5k; pro 6.01a11).

Improper Advance

Play: With a runner on first with one out, B1 strikes out on a ball in the dirt. He takes off for first base as F2 throws wild past first base and R1 ends up at third base. **Ruling:** Even though he is automatically out because first base is occupied with less than two outs, the act of advancing alone is not considered to be interference. The onus is on the defensive team to realize that the batter is already out (NFHS 8.3.3i; NCAA 5-3 Nt. 1; pro 6.01a5 Cmt.).

FOOTBALL

Backward Pass Batted

Play: Second and goal at team B's eight yardline. A1 throws a backward pass to A2 who, at team B's 10 yardline, bats it forward to A3. A3 catches the ball and scores. **Ruling:** That is an illegal bat in both codes. An in-flight backward pass may be batted backward by either team



but may not be batted forward by the passing team. The 10-yard penalty is enforced from the spot of the foul (NFHS 2-2, 9-7-3 Pen.; NCAA 2-11-3, 9-4-2 Pen.).

Free Kick Formation

Play: Is there a minimum number of players team R must have less than five yards behind its restraining line on a free kick? **Ruling:** Not only is there not a minimum, there is not a maximum. Before 1994 (NCAA) and 1996 (NFHS), team R was required to have five players within five yards of its free-kick line (NFHS) or restraining line (NCAA). Today no such rule exists and team R has no limitations on how few or how many players may be so positioned. (NFHS 6-1-3; NCAA 6-1-2c 6 and 7).

Trick Formation on Try

Play: Team K lines up for an apparent kick try. The snapper, wearing an eligible receiver's number, is wide while the other lineman shift to one side of the field. There are five linemen with proper numbers on the line, as well as a total of seven players on the line. The holder is seven yards behind the line and a kicker three yards behind the holder. The ball is snapped to the kicker, who rolls out. The snapper drifts into the end zone and catches a forward pass. Is that legal? **Ruling:** As described, that play is legal. The snapper may be an eligible receiver if he is on one of the ends of the line and is wearing an eligible number. Score two points for team K (NFHS 2-14-1 and 2, 7-2-5, 7-5-6a; NCAA 2-16-10, 7-1-4, 7-3-3c-1).

SOFTBALL

Interference

Play: With no outs and no one on, B1 lays a bunt down in front of home plate. F2 fields

the ball and throws the ball to first base. The throw hits B1 in the back. At the time the throw hit her, B1 was 10 feet from first base and was straddling the runner's lane, with her left foot completely in fair territory and her right foot completely in foul territory. **Ruling:** In all codes, this is interference if the umpire judges the runner to have prevented the defense from making a play. Since the batter-runner is outside of the running lane, she has put herself at risk for interference (USA Softball 2-3a; 8-2e, R/S 33; NCAA 2.28, 12.5.5, 12.17.1.5.2; NFHS 1-4, 8-2-6; USSSA 1-2g, 8-17e).

Protest

Play: With the bases loaded and two outs, B4 hits a line drive down the left-field line. The plate umpire declares the ball foul. The offensive coach tells the plate umpire she wants to protest the call as the ball was clearly fair. **Ruling:** In all codes, that is a judgment call and a protest is not applicable. The ball remains a foul ball and the protest is denied (USA Softball 1 - Protest, 9-2A-1; NCAA 7.2.2.1; NFHS 4-4).

Fair or Foul Ball

Play: With no outs and no one on base, B1 hits a long fly ball down the right-field line. The ball leaves the field to the left of the foul pole. After clearing the fence, the wind pushes the ball to the right and the first thing the ball touches is the grass beyond the fence, well to the right of the foul pole. **Ruling:** In all codes, that is a home run. The ball cleared the fence in fair-territory and therefore is considered a fair ball when it left the field (USA Softball 1 - Fair Ball, 8-5H; NCAA 11.4.6; NFHS 2-20-1e; USSSA 3 - Fair Ball, 8-14A-1).

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Soccer

Fouls and Misconduct

Play: The referee drops the ball, but before it touches ground defender B7 in the penalty area, it strikes attacker A2. The referee stops play to show the red card to B7 and restarts play with a dropped ball. **Ruling:** Correct. The ball is not in play until it touches the ground. Therefore the misconduct was not a foul and a penalty kick cannot be awarded (NFHS 9.2.d.; NCAA A.R. 9.3.2.b.; IFAB Law 8.2).

Extra Player on Field

Play: After a goal is scored by team B, the referee realizes before play restarts that an extra person was on the field of play when the goal was scored. The referee disallows the goal. **Ruling:** Correct. NFHS 3.1.1 Situation B (a) disallows the goal, cautions

the 12th player, and restarts with a goal kick by team A; NCAA A.R. 10.4.1.j. disallows the goal and provides for cautions to the player(s) and coach “as appropriate,” IFAB Law 3.9 disallows the goal with a direct free kick to team A from the location of the additional player.

Volleyball

Unnecessary Delay

Play: After team A scores a point to make the score 30-29 in the third set, the libero for team A enters the court from in front of the attack line to replace back-row player A24, who exits the court between the attack line and endline. The second referee steps towards the sidelines and requests an administrative yellow card for unnecessary delay from the first referee. **Ruling:** Correct. All libero exchanges are required

to take place in the libero replacement zone, between the attack line and endline. The first offense results in an unnecessary delay warning/sanction (NFHS 9-1 Pen.1; NCAA 12.2.2.3; USAV 19.3.2.7).

The Serve

Play: During the first set, a served ball by team S becomes lodged in a ceiling rafter. The first referee blows the whistle, orders a replay and then proceeds to have a new ball, that had been identified by the officiating crew before the match as one of three official game balls, brought into play. **Ruling:** Incorrect. A served ball that strikes the ceiling or any other object other than the net in between the antennas should be ruled out of bounds and a point awarded to the receiving team. (NFHS 8-2-6c; NCAA 13.2.1.1.3; USAV 12.6.2.1).

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