

# Make the Right Call



## How to Act When You're a Fan in the Stands by Julie Sternberg

Can officials be fans? Sure, as long as they don't act like them.

Typical sports fans get caught up in the emotion of the game. That's not an option for officials watching games from the bleachers. Whether you're in the stands observing other officials, a family member or a favorite professional team, you need to remember that you're an official first and act accordingly.

Just because all eyes aren't on you when you're watching a game from the stands doesn't mean people around you aren't going to see and hear what you are doing. What is acceptable behavior for officials in the cheap seats? Follow these six guidelines to represent the avocation the right way.

### 1. Don't advertise your stripes.

Don't wear your uniform or other apparel that identifies you as an official in the stands. If the crowd knows you are an official, questions about plays and criticism of your peers are sure to surface.

### 2. Don't argue with clueless fans.

No matter how much you would like to set clueless fans straight on their objections, it's not a good idea to confront them. You're likely not going to change the minds of those obnoxious few.

### 3. Be careful about answering questions.

When other fans come to you with questions because of your experience, avoid weighing in on judgment calls.

If you can clear up a ruling with a quick explanation, it's OK to do so, especially if it helps support the officials working the game.

### 4. Keep your observations quiet.

If you're in the stands to evaluate or observe the officials, sit in an area away from fans if that is an option.

### 5. Don't second-guess the game officials.

Never criticize or put down other officials in front of fans. You will undermine the integrity of all officials by criticizing a call from the stands.

### 6. Avoid being a fanatic.

Dress respectably and don't make a spectacle of yourself.

(The full version of this article can be found in, Referee magazine, March 2011, NASO Member edition)

### Special points of interest:

- DON'T ADVERTISE YOUR STRIPES
- DON'T ARGUE WITH CLUELESS FANS
- BE CAREFUL ABOUT ANSWERING QUESTIONS
- KEEP YOUR OBSERVATIONS QUIET
- DON'T SECOND GUESS THE GAME OFFICIALS
- AVOID BEING A FANATIC

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## Update to Spring State Tournament Sites

There have been a few changes to the spring state tournament sites. Here is an updated list:

### Baseball

1B, 2B - Parker Field, Yakima  
1A, 2A - County Stadium, Yakima  
3A, 4A - Cheney Stadium, Tacoma

### Soccer

1A, 2A - Sunset Chev Stadium, Sumner  
3A, 4A - Harry Lang Stadium, Lakewood

### Softball

1B, 2B - Gateway Sports Complex, Yakima  
1A, 4A - Merkel Sports Complex, Spokane  
2A - Carlon Park, Selah  
3A - RAC, Lacey

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Mike Saito, Seattle Basketball  
Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

## 2011 State Championship Judges: Spirit

**Cheerleading Championships**  
**January 22, 2011**  
**Comcast Arena, Everett**

**Head Judge**  
Kate Grieve

**Judges**  
Millie King  
Anne Taylor  
Travis Millspaugh  
Kasey Johansen  
Caity Kepler  
Mackenzie McIntyre  
Tara Wood  
Kim Cherry  
Dani Yorkston

**Dance/Drill Championships**  
**March 25-26, 2011**  
**Yakima SunDome**

**Head Judge**  
Cara Graham

**Judges**  
Natalie Murdock  
Jennifer Stokes  
Hailey Heinrich  
Keri Devine  
Marla Ann Boyd  
Heather Reese  
Amy Howell-Jones  
Claire Catt  
Deborah Kiernan-Ottum

Mindy Fischer  
Trinity Hutchinson  
Shayna Jones  
Laurie Daniel  
Becky Johnson  
Teresa Wilson  
Jeanne Wehr  
Bobbi Buttars  
Ericka Dall

**Interns**  
Natalia Sanoja  
Lynelle Vandenbos

“THE WOA  
ENCOURAGES  
THE MEMBERSHIP  
TO WORK WITH  
THEIR ASSIGNERS  
TO NOMINATE  
OFFICIALS WHO  
ARE DESERVING  
OF A WOA  
AWARD”

## Officials' Recognition Program

The Officials' Recognition Program is an area the WOA staff and Executive Board believe can become much stronger than it currently is. Over the last few years, the program has improved and many deserving officials have been recognized, but we can do better. The WOA encourages the membership to work with their assigners to nominate officials who are deserving of the following awards:

### **Official of the Year**

Local associations/boards nominate an official to be considered for this award. One official is selected from the pool of nominees to be the state official of the year for each sport.

### **Meritorious Service Award**

Officials are eligible to receive this award if they have 15 years of service, state tournament experience

and have been active as a local board member.

### **Hall of Fame**

The most prestigious award for a member of the WOA. Inductees are selected from a pool of qualified nominees.

If you know of an official deserving of any of these awards, please contact your assigner.



Terry Beckstead, Western Washington Wrestling

Photo Courtesy of Max Howard

## Spring Sports Reminders: Ejections and Concussions

### **Ejection Procedure:**

When filing an ejection report, it is important to remember a couple things:

1. Reports must be filed within 48 hours. Not turning in a report does not make the ejection go away (as some would like to believe).

2. Only include the facts of

the events leading to the ejection. Please do not include opinions or recommendations on what should happen to the offender.

### **NFHS Concussion Rule:**

The NFHS has replaced the rule governing “an apparent unconscious player” with a much broader rule covering a

player who shows any signs or symptoms of a concussion.

Once a player has been removed for signs or symptoms of a concussion, the responsibility is on the coach to make sure the player is evaluated prior to returning to play.

## Baseball: 2011 Rules Revisions

**1-1-2 - Lineup Card:** Added that the umpire shall not accept the lineup card until all substitutes are listed. There is no penalty assessed.

**Rationale:** Having all known substitutes listed will speed up substitution and player changes. A coach will still be able to add a substitute to the game with no penalty.

**1-3-2 through 5 - Bats:** Please review the changes made to this section.

**Rationale:** Recent bat products have circumvented the intent and spirit of the current rule. This change will minimize the ability for bats to be tampered with or altered.

**2-16-2 - Foul Tip:** A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly to the catcher's hands and is legally caught by the catcher. It is a strike and the ball is in play.

**Rationale:** Clarification and ease of application for the umpires and coaches.

**8-2-61 - Last Time By:** If a runner correctly touches a base that was missed (either in advancing or returning), the last time he was by the base, that last touch corrects any previous baserunning infraction.

**Rationale:** Clarification of a commonly accepted practice.



Gregory Mitchell, KPR Baseball

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey

## Softball: 2011 Rules Revisions

**3-1-3 - Lineup Cards:** A new penalty was established for a head coach who submits a lineup card that must subsequently be corrected with the proper name/number of a player or if substitutes are added after the lineup card is submitted and verified. The new penalty will be a team warning. If the head coach has to again make a change

to the lineup card after the initial team warning, he/she will then be restricted to the dugout/bench area for the remainder of the game. Previously, when the number was incorrect or substitutes were not listed, it caused a great deal of confusion without penalty. The new rule establishes a penalty if a coach fails to submit an accurate lineup card.

**8-6-18 - Interference:** The word "intentionally" was removed from the rule relating to interference by a runner who had been declared out or who had scored. Intent should not be the determining factor in ruling whether interference has occurred by a runner who has scored/been retired. The rule is now consistent with the definition of interference.

"INTENT SHOULD NOT BE A DETERMINING FACTOR IN RULING WHETHER INTERFERENCE HAS OCCURRED BY A RUNNER WHO HAS SCORED/BEEN RETIRED"

## Soccer: Violent Conduct and Abusive Language

The following definitions were sent to soccer contacts and athletic administrators in an effort to provide a clear definition as to what constitutes violent conduct and abusive language. The WIAA and WOA staffs will review every soccer ejection to make sure they meet the definitions established. In order to effectively implement the new policy, we are asking that officials continue to call the game in the same manner they have been.

**Violent Conduct:** "The commission of a violent act against an opponent, an official, a spectator, teammate or other individuals when the ball is in or out of play."

A player is guilty of violent conduct if he/she uses excessive force or brutality against an opponent when not challenging for the ball.

He/she is also guilty of violent conduct if he/she uses excessive force or brutality against a teammate, spectator, match official or

any other person.

Violent conduct may occur either on the field of play or outside its boundaries, whether the ball is in play or not

**Abusive Language:** Abusive language or profanity directed towards another individual (opponent, referee, or teammate)

Note: Incidental use of vulgar or profane language should result in a caution (yellow card) as per NFHS rule 12-8-1d



Don Hough, Seattle Metro Softball

Photo Courtesy of Dale Garvey



# Officiating the Game for the Athletes!

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### Note from the Commissioner:

Once again, congratulations to all the officials that worked a Winter State Championship, as well as those judges that will be working the upcoming Dance/Drill Championship in Yakima. The basketball tournaments were definitely a learning experience and we appreciate the feedback we have received. If you would still like to comment on the winter tournaments, please send me an email ([tstordahl@woa-officials.com](mailto:tstordahl@woa-officials.com)).

The 2011 WOA Conference and Golf Tournament registration information will be available next month. The conference is a great networking opportunity and I encourage every association/board to send a few people to the conference. At this year's conference, the sport-specific breakout sessions will include the development of the "WIAA and WOA Exceptions and Points of Emphasis" for each sport. Currently, we use this document in football, but it is time to put together similar information for every sport. More information on how this will be accomplished will be sent to the WOA Contacts. If you have any interest in participating in the development of these documents, please let your assigner know. We will be asking local associations/boards to provide recommendations on who should be involved in developing the framework for each sport.

Todd Stordahl  
WOA Commissioner



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Will Niccolls, Executive Director of Sports in Schools, and Coach Lorenzo Romar

## www.woa-officials.com

### WOA Spotlight: Sports in Schools

With school districts in Washington State slashing athletic budgets, kids are facing decreased opportunities to engage in healthy after-school experiences. Additionally, the recent addition of charging kids "Pay to Play" fees in public schools have increased financial barriers for many kids to participate in school sports. Started by local officials Will and Kyleen Niccolls, the mission of **Sports in Schools**, a 501c3, is to enrich the lives of kids by increasing athletic opportunities in schools. The

goal of the organization is to ensure that kids have the chance to stay engaged in and connected to their schools during after-school hours through positive athletic experiences. Sports in Schools does this by removing the financial barriers placed on many low-income families caused by the "Pay to Play" structure.

The fact that this positive experience is being taken away from the kids who need it the most is something that we as officials cannot allow. We as officials have a

unique opportunity to act as a role-model and be a positive influence on so many kids. In many situations, a coach or an official is the only positive role-model a kid may have. On April 30<sup>th</sup>, Sports in Schools is hosting [Seattle Sports Night Gala and Auction](#) with all proceeds going directly to fund middle and high school athletic participation.

To register for the April 30<sup>th</sup> Gala and Auction or for more information about the organization please visit [www.sportsinschools.org](http://www.sportsinschools.org).



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