

WOA Officials Go Blue for Cancer Awareness

Football officials in Washington drew attention to themselves with every penalty called the last weekend of September.

As part of National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, the officials replaced their yellow penalty flags with blue ones for varsity games Sept. 26-28.

"In most situations, officials want to avoid attention during games, but for three days we are hoping to attract a little attention with every penalty that is called," said Todd Stordahl, the executive director of the Washington Officials Association. "By switching to blue flags, it will at least make the fans notice that something is different. This is a great way for the officials to participate in an activity that will help bring awareness to something that has had an impact on many lives including some of those who are out on the field as officials."

Officials' Group Asking for Tougher Laws in N.H.

Premier Referees, an association of basketball and soccer officials based in New Hampshire, started an online petition to push for legislation that would increase New Hampshire penalties for assaulting an official and increase awareness about the problem. Simple assault is already a misdemeanor, but the proposed legislation would escalate assault on a game official to a higher degree, making it a Class A misdemeanor. That would mean a sentence of up to a year in jail and a fine of up to \$2,000.

There are currently 21 states that have specific legislation addressing assaults on officials.

Founder of Lacrosse Umpires Association Inducted to Hall of Fame

Maggie O'Sullivan, founder of the Washington Women's Lacrosse Umpires Association (WWLUA), was inducted into the Washington State Lacrosse Hall of Fame on Oct. 12. She served as president of WWLUA from 2010-12. One of the longest serving lacrosse officials in the state, O'Sullivan has presided over girls' games for two decades — a record that includes nine state championship appearances.

CBOA Honors Team for Sportsmanship

The Pittsburgh Area chapter of the College Basketball Officials Association (CBOA) presented its Schoenfeld Award for sportsmanship on Sept. 29 to the 2012-13 Penn State Altoona men's basketball team.

The Schoenfeld Award is given annually to a regional college basketball team at the Division I, II or III levels. It recognizes a collegiate basketball program that possesses, according to the CBOA, "the highest degree of sportsmanship, character and ethics among their players, coaches and spectators."

The recognition is named for Sam Schoenfeld, a former college basketball. Schoenfeld is one of the CBOA's founding fathers who died in 1956.

SOURCES: SEATTLE TIMES, WASHINGTONHSLAX.COM, PENN STATE NEWS

Your Rights and Responsibilities

Contract Protections: When Games Are Called Early

By Donald C. Collins

Q: My partner and I worked a baseball game for a local league. We started the game, but in the fourth inning we had to shut it down due to lightning. Storms continued, so we weren't able to finish the contest. The contract we agreed to did not address stoppages due to weather, but since we showed up for the game and worked it, we feel like we deserve to be paid a full game check. The league only sent half-payment. What are our options to be able to receive the full payment?

A: Officials have to take a stand when they don't receive full pay because they called a game "early." Officials should take a stand for two reasons. First, their contractual obligation is to enforce the rules of play. Second, take a stand for the good of the game.

The rules of play charge the official with the authority to terminate a game for safety reasons, impose regulations regarding weather conditions such as lightning, and charge the official with the authority to terminate a game for other reasons. When the official terminates a game pursuant to the rules of play, the official must be paid and the official must fight if he or she is not paid.

The best way to pursue payment is to work with school administrators or a league's governing board. The official should enlist his association's support in approaching the administrators and boards. Usually, the administrators are sufficiently removed from the fray of competition, and can convince the school or league personnel to tender full payment. However, if payment is not coming, officials should take legal action. The easiest way to do so is to go to small claims court.

The reason that it is vital to take a stand is that we simply can't afford to allow the athletic community to provide disincentives for safety. We don't want officials put in a position of balancing their checkbook against their need to stop games for safety reasons or for any of the myriad other reasons.

Next, it is certainly beneficial to cover forfeits and early terminations

member information [micp] consultation program

NASO members who have questions concerning situations pertaining to their officiating now have access to the Member Information and Consultation Program (MICP). MICP provides members with articles or information on specific topics. NASO can also put members in touch with an expert to discuss officiating-related information up to three times a year through MICP.

in a contract. An association should do some preparation prior to entering a contract. The best preparation is to prepare a questionnaire that covers the matters the association wants addressed. That would cover matters such as the officials receiving full payment where they terminate a game pursuant to the rules of play. The questionnaire should also cover how officials are paid where contests are cancelled or postponed either prior to officials arriving at the site or when the officials are at the site. Once the association has asked the right questions, it can proceed to prepare a contract.

Finally, officials should note that contracts are a two-way street. Officials may know what they want in a contract, and find that their clients have boilerplate forms. Generally, the party with the most leverage will win that battle of the forms. Indeed, some school districts have mandatory forms that cover everything from officiating to construction contracts. Officials should not despair. Rather, officials should inquire as to whether the other party's form has room for the officials associations' negotiated terms based on its questionnaire. Often, school districts and other parties incorporate addendums that cover negotiated terms. Donald C. Collins is the executive director of the San Francisco Section of the California Interscholastic Federation. He is a longtime basketball official and lawyer. This article is for informational purposes and is not legal advice. □