

Atlanta Summit to Showcase Top Speakers

NASO's 2011 Sports Officiating Summit — Image in Officiating: The Perception. The Reality. The Focus. — has an impressive list of officiating leaders that have committed to speak or be a part of panel discussions during the two-and-a-half day event.

The Summit will be held July 31-Aug. 2 at the Renaissance Waverly Hotel on the north side of Atlanta. Attendees will get to listen to the nation's best and brightest debate and inform on some of the hottest topics in the industry.

Following an opening keynote presentation, the first panel discussion

will get the topic off to a thoughtful start. "We Aren't Who We Think We Are" will examine data that will expose the beliefs officials have about other officials and about the working environment for officials. That panel is expected to include Curtis Shaw, the coordinator for several Division I college basketball conferences who officiated many NCAA Final Fours; Alan Smith, the president and executive director of the Georgia Athletic Officials Association; Mark Uyl, an assistant director with the Michigan High School Athletic Association and a college football and baseball official; and Jeff Triplette, a member of the NASO board of directors and an official in the NFL since 1996.

"The NASO Summit is the place for officiating leaders to share ideas and best practices to bring back home to improve all of our states, leagues and associations," Uyl said. "It is an great opportunity to be asked to speak on a panel discussion at the Summit."

The way the games have changed — not block/charge or safes and outs but through lawsuits, instant "highlights" on YouTube and talk radio — has been truly astounding over the last several years. Attendees will have a chance to hear from people who have been involved in that paradigm shift in officiating. Among those expected are NBA referee and NASO board member Bill Kennedy, NFHS assistant director and NCAA national coordinator of women's basketball officiating Mary Struckhoff and retired NFL referee Jerry Seeman.

"The NASO Summit is a tremendous opportunity for officials of all levels, and numerous sports to interact with some of the most dedicated people in sports officiating, who are giving back to the game, so other officials may benefit and make significant contributions in officiating," Seeman said. "Remember sports make it possible, people make it happen, and the most visible and important people, the officials, are the backbone and the integrity of the game."

One of the most popular sessions each year is the Q&A session on legal topics. Attorneys Alan Goldberger and Don Collins, along with American Specialty Insurance's (ASI) Lowell Gratigny will answer your questions.

One of the best ways officials can learn from other officials is to watch them break down their plays, showing what went right and what could have been handled differently. NFL referee Jerome Boger, WNBA and women's college basketball official Denise Brooks, NBA referee Joe Crawford and recently retired SEC football referee Steve Shaw will offer real plays, real rulings and real analysis.

In a seminar for local association leaders, Goldberger and ASI's Drew Smith will open Tuesday's portion of the Summit by discussing how today's business and legal environment requires associations to be operated on sound organizational principles. The session "CYA (Cover Your Association)," will arm you with solutions and guidelines.

(See "Summit Sessions" p. 8)

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Association Database

Assault of Official Pamphlet

There have been more and more reports of assaults on officials in recent years. Twenty-one states have stiffer laws or resolutions addressing assaults on officials. As a result of the inherent risk, officials should be prepared. The Western Pennsylvania Hockey Officials Association (WPHOA) provides its officials helpful Assault on Officials pamphlets in case they are attacked. They provide different pamphlets for the area states in which its officials work (including Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio). WPHOA officials print out the pamphlets for all states in which you skate and keep them in your bag. The pamphlets provide information on what you should do if you are assaulted, including the details you should write down. The assault law for the state, important phone numbers and a list of things to remember in an assault situation are also provided. Other associations can put together their own pamphlets for their officials to use. For an example of the WPHOA pamphlet, go to wphoa.com and click on the November 2009 links.

