

Good morning! Welcome to the end of the regular season 2019-20! Amazing it has arrive this soon.

For many of us, our season is about over – maybe a JH game or straggler regular season game remaining.....and many of us are getting to the part of the season we dream about – the playoffs!

Regardless of where you are in your officiating career or where you are in the current season, it is time to take a look back at this season – 2019-20 and ask ourselves if we accomplished what we set out to back in late November when we were working scrimmages or fall JH games. Have I really improved my own game? Am I mentally sharp in these mid-February play dates? Have I helped anyone else become a better official? Have I finally been able to fix that mechanic I had a bad habit with - using the correct mechanic on a PC or using open hands on a blocking foul instead of fists. Have I asked someone to come to one of my games and evaluated me this season?

Have I made sure my family knows I really appreciate them for supporting me in this great avocation?

Have I made any attempt to try to recruit some new, young people into officiating? Has it been successful?

This world of officiating is under attack from many sides, not just from spectators on a nightly basis! A judge recently overturned a wrestling official's call in Wisconsin. SportsCenter regularly shows 'missed calls' based on people who do not know rules. NBA travel calls are STILL questioned even when the NBA officials explain the rule!

Regardless.....this wonderful avocation we thrive on called basketball officiating is still the best! Personally, the friends I have made in officiating are my best friends. Many of us are still doing this *because* of the friends we have made and the people we are associated with.

As we transition from the regular season to the post-season and the off-season, take a look in the mirror again. Really be honest with who you are looking at. Personally, I know I am way closer to the end than the beginning. I LOVE what I do. I also know that I am content not working games 6 days a week anymore! I love going to games and watching other officials and trying to give them constructive feedback. I love going to watch my wife coach and my step-daughter and her team play! We all have different goals from what we do – just be honest with yourself!

Think about your goals for your future....are you happy where you are with your schedule? If so, GREAT! Are you looking to take the next step and take a shot at some college games? GREAT – be looking at dates and location of camps that will help you get noticed! Are you looking to learn three-person officiating and hopefully get a better varsity schedule? GREAT – look for THOSE types of camps for the summer. These is a definite difference between teaching camps and camps looking to add officials to a college staff. Do your research! Do you need some advice? Find that person in the district you are in who is 'in the know' and ask! Your chapter or district rules interpreter is a great person to start with – usually if he/she doesn't know the answer, he/she knows where to get the answer! If you need help, feel free to email me as well. Start planning now, not next October or November. If you have worked or soon will work your final game as a PIAA basketball official, THANK YOU for your service to the PIAA, to the schools, to the players and to your chapter!

Thank for taking time out of your day to read these and for all the questions and comments you gave me! Good luck to all who are working post-season games, hope the phone keeps ringing (or arbiter keeps sending emails)!

Friday Extra:

- 1) The three-person officials camp at Behrend (Penn State Erie) which focuses on learning three-person with only NFHS mechanics will be June 14 and 15. More info will be coming soon, but put it on your calendar! We again will limit officials to 3 games for each day you plan to attend.
- 2) Remember that the PIAA Finals are Thursday, March 21, Friday March 22 and Saturday March 23. This is a great event and a great way to network with other officials.....the Giant Center box office phone number is (717)534-3911. Try to make it a day!
- 3) The PIAA Officials Convention will be held Friday and Saturday, August 9 and 10 at the Harrisburg Hilton. More info and registration materials will be available later this spring – it a GREAT two days of being with friends and colleagues – plan to attend!