



GAME OFFICIALS' NEWSLETTER



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SPRING 2001

SPORTSMANSHIP

*Personal insights on sportsmanship by Peter C. Hantzis,
Woburn High School Boys' Varsity Soccer Coach.*

The problem:

In the early 1990s the MIAA published alarming data on the increasing number of yellow and red cards received by boys high school soccer teams. This trend reflected a clear increase of poor sportsmanship in the boy's game. I believed that we as coaches had the primary responsibility to reverse this trend.

I understood the problem in the following way. I believed that the level of sportsmanship displayed by teams was primarily a function of the emphasis placed on it by coaches. Furthermore, I believe that there are three types of coaches with regards to sportsmanship.

The first type promotes sportsmanship but does not prioritize it. This coach prioritizes winning. He or she would like to have both, but if pushed will choose winning. I believe that this type of coach is the most common. This coach will often tolerate poor sportsmanship.

The second type prioritizes sportsmanship. He or she of course would also like to win. If he has to choose between the two, however, he will choose sportsmanship. This represents the smallest group of coaches. This coach does not tolerate poor sportsmanship.

The third type of coach believes that sportsmanship and winning may actually be mutually exclusive. He wants to win at all costs. He teaches his kids to cheat and gain any unfair advantage that they can. This coach

promotes poor sportsmanship.

Sadly I concluded that the majority of coaches were either of the first type (who tolerate poor sportsmanship) or the third type (who promote poor sportsmanship). I was determined to become the second type of coach. This meant, however, that I could not tolerate poor sportsmanship under any circumstances.

The treatment:

Although as a coach I believed that I had always promoted good sportsmanship, I also knew that I needed to do better. I had usually penalized poor sportsmanship by sitting any player who received a yellow card, but there was too much wiggle room. In 1997 I made it an ironclad policy. If any player receives a yellow card during a game, he is removed from that game for the remainder of the game. No exceptions. If the best player gets a card in the first minute of the game, he sits. I had also made a recommendation through Phil Vacarro the commissioner of our league to the MIAA to recognize good sportsmanship. This led to the MIAA's decision to award certificates of sportsmanship to all players from any team that receives two or fewer yellow cards during the regular season. Positive reinforcement on one end and punishment on the other end.

The results:

Our 1997 team received the sum total of one yellow card for the entire season. This was the most "sportsmanlike" soccer team ever at Woburn High. It was also the first Woburn team to win the Middlesex League championship. Message to the type 3 coach: winning and sportsmanship are not mutually exclusive. The kids, by not arguing with officials or fighting with their opponents focused their energies on playing and winning.

The following year 1998 would provide the biggest challenge to the policy. The team once again did very well. It finished second in the league and qualified for the MIAA tournament. In the opening game of the tournament we were quickly down 2-0 but still hopeful. Then it happened. Our leading scorer (sophomore Jason Paige) got a yellow card. Even though leading scorers tend to be treated roughly by opposing teams, Jason had to learn not to retaliate. He came out of the game and stayed out. Neither Jason nor any of his teammates asked for Jason to be sent back into the game. Our kids understood that if the rule did not apply to Jason, it could not apply to anyone. Miraculously, our team came back to win the game. Jason's replacement, a little freshman named Joey Luchesse scored the winning goal with 30 seconds to play. Message to type 1 coaches – if you choose sportsmanship first good things usually happen.

The 1999 team reached the pinnacle of sportsmanship. It played the entire regular season and received 0 yellow cards. This team also posted the best regular season record in school history (17-1) and once again won the Middlesex League Championship. I repeat: winning and good sportsmanship are not mutually exclusive. I was so impressed with the team's sportsmanship that I rewarded them by removing the penalty for the MIAA tournament. Through 4 intensely competitive tournament games – you guessed it – no cards. The kids had internalized the value of good sportsmanship.

The 2000 team went the regular season with 1 yellow card (for delay of game). Once again a great record of sportsmanship. Once again I rewarded them by removing the penalty for the MIAA tournament. The result once again was that for six tough and physical games 0 yellow cards. The reason it was six games was because they never lost. They went undefeated for the season and won not only the Middlesex League title but also the North Sectional title, the EMASS Championship and the State Championship!

The final tally for the 1999 and 2000 teams was 42 wins, 2 losses and 2 ties and five championships. Most importantly and some would say remarkable, in these 46 games they received the sum total of one yellow card. I

repeat winning and sportsmanship are not mutually exclusive.

Postscript:

Jason Paige went on to become Woburn's all time leading scorer, made the All State and All New England teams and captained the 2000 State Championship team. After his sophomore year, he never again received a single yellow card.

Peter C. Hantzis, Varsity Boys Soccer Coach
Woburn High School

SEVENTH ANNUAL SPORTSMANSHIP SUMMIT



More than 400 administrators, coaches and captains attended the Seventh Annual Sportsmanship Summit on November 20, 2000.

Held at the Radisson Hotel in Milford, the conference focused on coaches' education, the role of the captain and translating the sportsmanship message to fans. The goal of the annual event is to promote good sportsmanship and citizenship among athletes, spectators and the community. Under the MIAA philosophy, ethical behavior and integrity are essential ingredients for all interscholastic athletics.

Keynote presenters at the summit included Eddie Slowikowski, author and motivational speaker; Marlyn Goldhammer, president, National Federation of State High School Associations and executive director of the South Dakota High School activities Association; and Daniel Doyle, founder and executive director, Institute of International Sport, University of Rhode Island.

The following panel of high school student-athletes did an outstanding job rounding out the day:

Jamal Jordan, Boston College High School
Brian Fitzgibbons, Boston College High School
Jill Macari, Reading High School

Corey Furden, Natick High School
Katie Mulvihill, St. Peter-Marian Central Catholic
High School

During the summit, the MIAA also presented its annual awards to District Sportsmanship Winners. The district athletic committees chose the schools for exemplifying outstanding sportsmanship.

Award winners are as follows:

- District A – Tewksbury High School
- District B – Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
Wakefield High School
- District C – Abington High School
- District D – Bourne High School
- District E – St. Mary's Jr./Sr. High School
- District F – Hopkins Academy
- District G – Lenox Memorial High School
- District H – Our Lady of Nazareth Academy

OFFICIALLY SPEAKING.....

A SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

The Cape Cod Football Officials Association has initiated a Sportsmanship Award to be given annually to a Cape and Island Football program that best exemplifies the characteristics of good sportsmanship on the football field. The award will be given annually to a grade 7 through grade 12 or grade 9 through grade 12 program that encourages good sportsmanship on the football field at all competitive levels. The Cape Officials decided to give the award to follow through on the efforts of the MIAA to encourage good sportsmanship in all athletic endeavors.



On November 14, 2000, Nauset Regional High School was the first recipient of the Sportsmanship Award for the football program. Although the football program at Nauset High School has only been active the past five years, the coaching staff and school administration has carefully built the foundation of the program on good sportsmanship. Players are encouraged to assist other

players after a play is completed. Positive comments between players are the norm not the exception and the coaching staff has developed a team approach to success and mistakes, sharing the awards and disappointments with all team members. In addition, the team commitment to the sport has been developed through hard work both on and off the football field. For the past five years, the football program raised their own funds to keep the program active. This may be one of the reasons the program has such a strong team commitment and positive encouragement attitude.

The MIAA, through its sportsmanship form and "taunting" card have led the way for the development of a positive attitude on the football field. Officials have the opportunity at each game and at each level of competition, to remind players of the importance of good sportsmanship in athletic endeavors. Athletic competition has always provided a training ground in character and good sportsmanship. The CCFOA supports the efforts of the MIAA to emphasize the importance of good sportsmanship on the football field and in all athletic events. We hope by initiating the Sportsmanship Award we will continue to encourage good sportsmanship at all football games on the Cape and Islands.

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

As I write this message for the final newsletter of the 2000-2001 school year I am amazed at the ease with which it is to communicate with each game official. The MIAA and our school administrators need to be aware of game officials needs and/or suggestions. Game officials need to be aware of MIAA rules and the suggestions made by our member schools. This newsletter attempts to address both of these issues.

Game officials are again reminded that the MIAA is here to help. We at the MIAA stand ready to support our game officials in every way possible.

**NEW BASEBALL BAT
STANDARDS**

As always, we wish every game official a smooth and successful spring sports season.

Marshall Sawyer

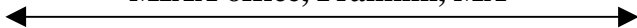
UPCOMING MEETINGS

Game Officials' Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 27, 2001

1:00 P.M.

MIAA office, Franklin, MA



Spring Game Officials' Pre-Season Meeting

Tuesday, March 27, 2001

Buffet at 5:45 P.M.

Meeting at 6:15 PM

MIAA office, Franklin, MA



The Game Officials' Committee meeting works from a prepared agenda, and is open to any official. The committee members always leave a place on the agenda for officials to speak or ask questions.

The Game Officials' Pre-Season Meeting is a much more relaxed version of the committee meeting. Here officials take much of the responsibility for the meeting and its discussion. Game officials at these meetings do not hesitate to point out problems and to suggest solutions. It is a very relaxed atmosphere and there is generally some good "give and take" at the meetings.

We ask the officials, if they are planning to attend these meetings, to call Judy Erickson at the MIAA office (508-541-7997).

A new baseball bat standard takes effect with the 2001 Baseball Season.

The new standard calls for a narrower, heavier, and more wood-like bat. The bat diameter is reduced from 2 3/4 inches to 2 5/8 inches, and the unit differential, namely the difference between bat length measured in inches and bat weight measured in ounces, will be reduced from five units to three units.

The presence of a mark denoting compliance with the NCAA bat rule will be one assurance that a bat is compliant with the size and weight components of this new high school rule.

As per violation of this rule the official rules of major league baseball will have jurisdiction.

Rule 6.06 "illegal bat" – A batter is out for illegal action when –

- (d) *He uses or attempts to use a bat that, in the umpire's judgment, has been altered or tampered with in such a way to improve the distance factor or cause an unusual reaction on the baseball. This includes bats that are filled, flat-surfaced, nailed, hollowed, grooved or covered with a substance such as paraffin, wax, etc.*

No advancement on the bases will be allowed and any out or outs made during a play shall stand. In addition to being called out, the player shall be ejected from the game.



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