

Topeka Officials Association

February, 2010

'Tis the Season: It always seems as though games in the month of February are more intense - more competitive - there is more “on the line” during the last month of the season. Some teams have “cashed it in,” and some are just getting geared up for the “late run” Whatever the case, be aware that this is the time for your best efforts. In many cases, seedings for post-season play are at stake. Remember that post-season play involves all the KSHSAA teams in Kansas. No matter the class size, from 1A to 6A, all the teams we officiate in February (or, for that matter, any other time) deserve our best efforts.

It Never Fails to Amaze Me: Working a BV game last week, a head coach became insistent that I had misapplied a rule: As I was coming down court to the T position, a poorly thrown pass by a Team A player struck a team mate in the calf and the ball bounded to another Team A player. Of course, there was no whistle as there was no “kicking of the ball.” The Team B coach went nuts - I calmly explained that it was just a bad throw and that no Team A player had made an effort to kick the ball. Obviously, the coach said, I was mistaken - he pursued that line of thought until I politely - yes, politely - informed him that my interpretation was correct. We agreed to disagree - but he kept bringing it up in a professional manner. Of course, his team was down by 20+ points!

End of the Season Disappointments: Nobody ever gets exactly what they want from life - at least all of the time. The last month of the season provides a time when **coaches** realize that even their excellence as a coach will not be enough to take his/her squad to the State Tournament - there goes a chance at being the next Bill Self or Frank Martin; **Parents** start to realize that their offspring may not actually turn out to be the next Sharron Collins or Cole Aldrich (hence, their kids will not be providing retirement funds for their parents) and they probably will not be receiving full scholarships. **Kids** will also realize that they somehow have let their parents down - their coaches down - the other kids in school down - the townspeople down. That's a lot of pressure for a high school kid.

But, it seems to be the case that almost all of the blame can be placed on the **officials!** Remember one of my favorite sayings: “ It is not how you play the game, it is how you place the blame!!”

Be Physical, physical... This is also the time of the season when all the nicks, bruises and muscle sprains tend to “gang up” on officials. And, is it my imagination or is it really true that my increasing age brings about more and more ailments? We all need to do whatever it takes to be in the best condition possible - we owe it to the kids and we owe it to ourselves and our families. And, we owe it to the game!! At the age of 61, I feel better than I have in several seasons (knock on wood)! I have lost some weight - my old pants (too cheap to buy new ones) waive in the breeze. In spite of all that, I can still guarantee you that no commissioner in history has hired me for my speed!!!

Be able to get where you are supposed to be - when you are supposed to be there!!

Post Season Assignments: If anyone tells you that they know how to get post-season assignments, laugh in their faces. The KSHSAA does what they do! And that is all you can say. How do you get those high numbers of recommendations? I don't even want to think about it.

I have worked a number of post-season assignments - I still believe that our duty is to work each game as well as possible - to treat administrators - coaches and players fairly. And, don't worry about who gets what assignments. It's just a game? No. Each game is a great opportunity to be a

meaningful educational experience!! After all these years, I still believe that!!