

TOA Basketball "Newsletter"

Mid-January Report

Area Meeting II: Last week I attended the best KSHSAA Area Meeting I have attended in my 30+ years of officiating. It was the Make-Up meeting put on by the TOA at Hayden High School. Because of the snowy/icy weather, the attendance was held to 6 – that's right, six! However, it was a wonderful mix of veterans, those in the middle of their careers, and those just starting. It was rewarding to share information, discuss (and, cuss) topics, and work through the plays presented by the Association. Instead of the usual 1½ hour meeting, we stayed for more than two hours, and liked it. If not for the weather, we probably would have stayed longer!

I am a proponent of the old system of having three meetings. But the season isn't half completed and we're done with them. Why don't you get five or six of your officiating buddies and get together during the first couple of weeks of February and hold your own "Area" meeting – spend a couple of hours talking about basketball and officiating.

Area Meeting II Issues: "Ours is not to reason why; Ours is to do or die." The KSHSAA has asked that all officials be table side during introductions. As I read the Mechanics book, this looks to be in conflict with the Federation. Perhaps this is the stance they will take the next time it is published. Please do as asked by the KSHSAA – the same goes for uniforms (shirts in particular) and the wearing of the KSHSAA patch. I am not a patch "fan" only because there are no two that are attached in the same place. I have seen patches attached from the bottom band on the sleeve to basically up on the shoulder. The correct dimensions: 1 1/2 inches above the band on the left sleeve.

Important Issues: Preliminary Signals at the Site of Fouls: This is a very interesting subject for several reasons: Many of us simply fall out of the habit – some of us do give preliminary signals when it is an "important" foul or perhaps an "obscure" call. Some of us do let our partners know whether the foul was before the shot or on the shot (or after the shot). This is a matter of good communications – you need to let everyone know what the situation is – players – coaches – the bench – and even the fans. I try to be very strong in this area – except I cannot, for the life of me – remember all the signals and the proper order on an offensive foul. I'll get it eventually – hopefully. Some officials have another tool that can be very effective – their voices. My fog-horn, classically trained voice can be heard above the roaring noise at The Dungeon – sometimes that can be very effective.

On the other hand, some of get in a hurry and try to rush through the mechanics or not perform some of them because they made a call they were not sure about. That is not the time to be wimpy. Report each foul with the same amount of conviction – do not let doubt creep into your reporting or your officiating. If you obviously miss a call, don't miss another call because you are worried about the first.

This is probably the hardest, but the most important, lesson to learn in officiating. We aren't perfect, but don't let that stop you from being excellent!

More in a couple of weeks!