

**The TOA “Football Newsletter”
Week 3 – 2006**

“You Gotta’ Dance With the Girl that Brung Ya’:” This wonderful, old truism is especially appropriate when it comes to officiating. None of us can officiate the very best games on the schedule all of the time. And my point here is that we must treat all of the games we have with the same careful preparation – with the same effort – with the same attention to detail as the game we perceive to be, “The Game.” By the way, how many times have we been disappointed with the “Big Game,” and how many times have we been pleasantly surprised with the results of the “Ugly Game?”

The past two weeks have brought our crew two excellent games – close, hard fought – almost penalty free games. What’s in store for us for Week 3? Hopefully the same kind of effort – the same kind of desire and the same kind of coaches we saw the first two weeks. As is always the case, our Week 3 game will be influenced by our attitudes and by our expectations. When you expect the best from kids and coaches, that is usually what you get!

Revisiting: Game Management – the Chain Crew: Just one more thing about the location of the chain crew – the coaches – and the players. It almost seems as though some head coaches have not had the nerve as yet to tell some of their assistants that they are not invited to be in the two-yard belt that is supposed to be for three coaches and the chain crew. Last week we had a lot of coaches and a lot of players in that two yard belt. L and H need to constantly be reminding all parties to keep that area clear of those who are, by rule, not to be there.

Just an Observation: Last week I worked with a SEC crew working the Ole Miss – Missouri game in Columbia. It is always interesting to work with officials from different conferences and they, like crews from different conferences, did things differently at times. Two things struck me: Six of the seven on-field officials were former players at SEC schools (former players are hard to find on Big 12 crews – Tom Quick comes to mind). The other thing that was unique was that their supervisor, Rodgers Redding, wrote “The Book” on college officiating. Many of the things we have talked about over the years came from his teachings.

“Official’s Quarterly:” Here are a couple more thoughts from a recent “*Official’s Quarterly*” magazine: “Officials shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally... and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.” A good statement of philosophy except that what we do meets none of the requirements of a “profession.” Our avocation is indeed (hopefully) a passionate one – one that we strive for excellence – but a profession – I hardly think so. If we do not appreciate our role as a supporter of what the game can teach to our kids, we are in the

wrong avocation. Following is part of an epistle I wrote to the KVL principals as my tenure as their commissioner ended:

I truly enjoyed what I did for the betterment of co-curricular activities, especially football and basketball, the sports which I officiate. The weekly football letters were a labor of love, as were the monthly basketball letters. Watching officials grow up and get better brought great satisfaction. To watch our women officials increase in numbers and quality was especially gratifying; even if I did actually ignore Amy Bonner the first time I met her. Thankfully, she has become one of my very best friends and she has allowed me to share in her many, many successes at the D-I level in college and in the WNBA. Lauri Henry is another woman who has excelled at the D-I level of major college officiating – she started with me in the LOA as a student at KU and was a member of the first all-female crew to work a boy's varsity basketball game in the KVL. She also became the first woman in Kansas to officiate a State championship game! She now has dedicated a vast majority of her time to those in her family who need her – her husband, her daughter, and her recently widowed mother.

I would be remiss if I did not mention Mike Hayes: I have worked with him for nearly 30 years – his dogged dedication to doing the right things the right way should be greatly appreciated. He has always felt, as have I, that kids are precious commodities that require adult leadership from those who have a keen dedication to teaching values, along with athletic skills. One of Mike's finest attributes is his steadfast devotion to kids.

It is important to promote a better understanding and execution of co-curricular activities. Best wishes for the upcoming school year and never forget that, "we are all in this together!" FS