

MCJA Newsletter

October 2012

Welcome to Cheer Season 2012-2013

- The new two-year manual was mailed to officials and coaches in mid-September
- Round 2 changes go into effect. D1=12, D2=10, D3=8, D4=6 Competitors
- The online Rules Meeting opened on October 8, 2012. There is a LIVE Rules Meeting on Friday night November 2, 2012, at the Lansing Radisson
- MCJA Fall Conference is November 3, 2012, at the Lansing Center. Register on line at mcjacheer.com
- Some schools and conferences are requiring officials to register with Arbiter. The ArbiterSports Assigning System provides online access to real-time game information for assigners, officials, leagues and teams

MCJA will continue to strive for better statewide communication and training. As the season progresses, please watch for updates via the MHSAA website and emails from MCJA with the subject line- "Looking for Officials".

Officiating is an avocation. Jack Roberts sums up our love of officiating and our sport by stating in Benchmarks, Fall 2012, "The best officials not only like sports, they like people. They're active in officiating not only for recreation but for human interaction. Not merely for some money, but mostly for more meaning in their lives through fellowship with a crew of officials, friendships with area coaches and administrators, and working with young people."

Cheers To You!
Stacy



What is the New Official Mentoring Program?

The program provides an opportunity for seasoned officials to share their knowledge and expertise with new officials. It benefits new officials by giving them a friendly resource where they can benefit from the coaching, guidance and encouragement a mentor can provide.

Experienced officials gain a fresh perspective and develop new relationships. MCJA builds a stronger, more cohesive community. (Mentees must be knowledgeable, prior to mentoring, about the cheer manual, updates and competition process. Mentees are not compensated at trainings; only contracted officials receive official pay).

Contact Jill Lansky for assistance finding a mentor in your area. JillL@kpl.gov Be sure to let Jill know which region of the state you plan to officiate in and if you are focusing on panel or safety.

Patience * Politeness * Professionalism

What's Your Call?

A flyer completes an inverted exit with a snap down landing. Is this legal? No, an eight point penalty would be given since an inverted exit landing must be a step-down landing.

A flyer completes a double twist to a cradle. Is this legal? No, an eight point penalty would be given since a twist with no more than one complete rotation may be performed to a cradle dismount.

A flyer is in a dead man lift and is popped to a sponge losing contact with the bases and spotter. Is this legal? Yes, a momentary loss of contact with the flyer when the flyer is being transitioned from an extended/extension level stunt to a double-based sponge is allowed. During the transition, the flyer may not change bases.

In the second round, a division one team performs with 13 competitors. Is this legal? No, a void round would occur since the team is over the mandated number of competitors.

In the second round, a division three varsity level team competes with six competitors. Is this legal? No, a 10 point penalty would be given since the team competed with under division mandated number of competitors.

A team competes with 13 competitors in round one and 14 in round three. Is this legal? No, a 10 point penalty would be given since the number of competitors in round three does not match the number of competitors in round one.

A Middle school team competes with 5 competitors in first cheer/round 2 and 11 competitors in the second cheer/round 3. Is this legal? Yes, the only requirement for middle school number of competitors is that they have more than four and less than 16 in each round. The competitor numbers do not need to match nor is there a required competitor differential.

Submitted by Cindy Tyzo



TO WEAR or NOT TO WEAR!

Cheer officials are to wear black slacks/skirt and white blouse/shirt and/or a black blazer. Please try to wear black shoes. A black lanyard with no writing for your badge or the badge may be on the left side of your jacket or shirt.

Do Not Wear:

- Excess jewelry
- Any color that is not black
- Any color that is not white
- Corduroy
- Leggings
- Blouses/shirts with pinstripes or dots, etc.
- Pants or skirts that are pinstriped
- Sweaters that have glitter or jewels

Submitted by Candy Cox



Officials often are blamed by fans, athletes, and coaches for the results of a competition. The recent “lockout” of the NFL football officials brings this to the forefront nationwide. Reports have been made that some of these replacement officials do not know the rules of the game. It has been further assessed that they are careless and incorrect in officiating the game.

When we put on our MHSAA patch to serve as officials, we are putting ourselves in a position to be scrutinized. The fans, athletes, and coaches are counting on us to be the best we can be. Officials have “big shoes” to fill. Therefore, all of us must place ourselves on a self-evaluation plan. Some considerations that one might take serious are the following:

1. Am I approaching this contest knowing that I must evaluate with no bias of style or reputation of the team?
2. Have I studied and restudied the Girl’s Competitive Cheer Manual? The material in this Manual was approved after much scrutiny by officials, coaches, and MHSAA staff. This Manual serves as our official guideline! You will note that many officials have their books highlighted and tabbed. This is certainly an indication that they have thoroughly studied their Manuals.

Be Your Best

Submitted by Marilyn Bowker



3. Have I attended training sessions to develop skills in officiating? Many new things come up so officials must keep up to date. This is an opportunity for novice judges to learn the details of team evaluation and learn about procedures in officiating. Experienced officials find it very important to sharpen their knowledge and skills. Training sessions provide an opportunity to share ideas and techniques with others as well as developing collegiality with other officials. We have so many cheerleading categories to evaluate that refinement is never ending.

Have I taken the opportunity to practice judging using a CD or other electronic device? It is easy to be “rusty” when you are judging your first competition of the season.

Do I have a checklist of what I will need when I leave for my competition destination? Other articles in this newsletter address: WHAT WE NEED TO TAKE and A PLAN FOR EMERGENCIES.

Do I have a plan when I arrive at the competition? For example: Greet the other officials, get a list of order, prepare the judging sheets, work on Description Sheets in conjunction with other officials, put sheets in order for Rounds 1, 2, and 3, and watch the clock so you can report on time. Use a professional demeanor in the Officials Room as others are “judging” the officials.

Do I handle questions from coaches, fans, and administrators in a professional manner? Avoid confrontational conversation.

Can I “pat myself on the back” following the competition and say “Good Job.”



!!! EMERGENCY!!!

What do you do in case of an emergency??



You are on your way to a Competitive Cheer Meet and you have car problems?

- ◆ Call the AD or the Meet Manager
- ◆ Call the other judges contracted for the meet
- ◆ Always have your contract with you so you have contact numbers available

As you are driving to the meet you realize you have gray slacks on?

- ◆ Stop at a Wal-Mart, Meijers, Kohls or some other store and purchase a pair of black slacks/skirt.
- ◆ Always carry an extra set of judging clothes in your vehicle.

You are delayed because of traffic, accident or the weather?

- ◆ Call the AD or Meet Manager
- ◆ Call the other judges contracted

You are unable to officiate due to illness or an emergency situation?

- ◆ Call the AD or the Meet Manager
- ◆ Call the other judges contracted
- ◆ Try to find a replacement and let the school know.

It is important to have contact information for the other officials that will be at the meet . Always leave enough time when traveling for emergencies. If you are unable to contact the AD, Meet Manager or any of the other officials please call Candy Cox at 517-617-1269.



MCJA Fall Conference
Saturday November 3, 2012
Register on line at MCJAcheer.com

Stay or GO.... When Should Safety Judges Stop a Performance??

As a Safety Judge I have often struggled with the decision whether to stop a performance for an injury or possible injury that could occur based on the team's skill level. The nurse inside of me struggles even more. No longer are the days of pom-pom waving, cheerleading is a competitive and demanding sport, which requires as much (or more) athletic ability and intricate skills as any other high school sport.

The Competitive Cheer Manual does give some guidelines for stopping a meet, in the case of blood or a concussion. Your instincts must take over in a moment's notice. My theory is to always err on the caution side but allow the team the benefit of finishing as long as there is no visible blood, athlete unconscious, or on the floor in severe pain. We have often watched as bases and back spots have been kicked by flyers or flyers being dropped by their bases. Tumbling skills can be as dangerous as stunting skills, so it is the responsibility of a Safety Judge to not only



watch for everything required of that round but to be alert for any type of injury.

MHSAA has provided guidelines for concussion protocol on page 13 of the Competitive Cheer Manual.

Some type of injuries you might want to stop a competition for include acute type injuries.

- ◆ a **fracture** — a crack, break, or shattering of a bone
- ◆ a bruise, known medically as a **contusion** — caused by a direct blow, which may cause swelling and bleeding in muscles and other body tissues
- ◆ a **strain** — a stretch or tear of a muscle or tendon, the tough and narrow end of a muscle that connects it to a bone
- ◆ a **sprain** — a stretch or tear of a ligament, the tissue that supports and strengthens joints by connecting bones and cartilage
- ◆ an **abrasion** — a scrape which is bleeding
- ◆ a **laceration** — a cut in the skin that is usually deep enough to require stitches

You might not know the athlete has suffered one of these injuries (except for the obvious signs of bleeding), but a good rule of thumb would be to watch the mat for athletes down on the mat, holding a body part in obvious pain, or the team itself starting to fall apart due to an injury or lack of team ability to perform skills.

We have a huge responsibility to not only judge fairly but keeping today's athletes safe, so don't be afraid to "make the call" and get help immediately!

Submitted by Mary Kay Gavitt



Candy Cox, MCJA Executive Director was awarded Branch County Citizen of the Year. She was recognized for 35 years of service to the on many committees and boards. Candy is employed as Clinical Manager at he Branch/Hillsdale/St. Joe County Community Health Agency's Coldwater Office. This year Candy as the Chairperson for the counties' Polish Festival. She has served on that multi-county Board for several years. Candy is an amazing woman touching so many lives--- her family, friends, fellow workers, and community members. MCJA is privileged that Candy also plays a major role in our organization. Congratulations on your well-deserved award, Candy. We love you too!

Marcy Moore's youngest son, Jon Moore got married July 28, it was spectacular :-)) and her oldest son, Jason, is getting married next June 14! WooooHOOOOO!

Jordan Berry, fellow Judge and daughter of Jodi Berry from Westland, is busy making magical memories for families and children from all around the world during her fall internship at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Jordan was offered the

What's Up With Our Members?



role of a Character Performer as part of the Disney College Program and lives in Orlando. Being "Friends with Mickey, Minnie, Donald and the whole Disney gang" and working for one of the most prestigious companies in the world has been amazing. While this exciting adventure will not allow Jordan to judge Competitive Cheer this season, she is enjoying the magic of Disney.

Nancy Lapekas has a new Granddaughter!! Paige Elizabeth Beimer born June 28, 2012. Jane Ladley Beimer is proud Mom and hopes to do a little Competitive Cheer judging if schedule allows. Congrats Nancy!!

Tiffany Goliday is pregnant with her second child! 17 month old Gabrielle Goliday will have a new brother or sister!

Cynthia DePetro is humbled and honored to report that her district, Marquette Area Public Schools, chose her as "Teacher of the Year" in May. She received a cash award for her classroom, was honored in the 4th of July parade, and obtains the title until May of 2013. She teaches high school English, Publishing/Yearbook and introductory photography, for grades 10-12. She says she's equally as proud to safety judge for the MHSAA and belong to MCJA! All your MCJA friends are proud of you!!



Who Says Cheerleading Isn't a Sport?

Who says cheerleading isn't a sport? Well, unfortunately, many people do, and that often leaves officials, cheerleaders, parents, and educated fans in the position of defending their sport. The question then arises as to how best to do that. There is a clear temptation to either dismiss the charge or respond emotionally, but this really presents an opportunity to educate.

What makes an activity a sport? It requires conditioning and training. The strength and aerobic ability of cheerleaders couldn't be more obvious by the end of the third round when voices must still be strong and physical power is in play throughout the whole routine. All successful coaches make conditioning a significant part of their practices. A sport requires teamwork and trust. Is there anything more blatant than a pyramid or extension that demonstrates that? There is no such thing as an extension that does not require a flyer to put total faith in her bases; the flyer's life and limbs are in the hands. Literally.

A sport requires skill. If anybody can watch a cheer meet and not see an incredible array of skills, from gymnastics to weight-lifting, from synchronization to showmanship, clearly they are not looking. The skills are both independent and coordinated, and continue to improve as cheer teams everywhere continue to raise the bar.

So is cheerleading a sport? Of course it is, and I hope you will all use every opportunity you have to educate others to dispel the incorrect stereotype of cheer as an activity that lacks respect. Don't get mad, though – get them educated!

Submitted by Jane Plaisted

Legacy Official's Program

Leah was involved in cheerleading since she was 5 years old. She cheered in little league and volunteered to help at Catholic Youth Organization cheerleading competitions and camps. She cheered in junior high school, high school and with a World Champion All Star team.

When she was a senior, she registered with MHSAA as a legacy official. Leah was trained by the Michigan Cheer Judges Association during a fall conference offered to its members. The training from MCJA was exceptional and she learned all of the mechanics. She had a mentor who was with her at every competition during her high school year. At her first competition, she worried that she would miss something and not credit the teams properly. Those fears were short-lived as her mentor and fellow judges, provided guidance to score the teams appropriately.

Leah judged only sub-varsity competitions during her senior year and then went to college. The Michigan Cheer Judges Association was very helpful with ensuring that she had meets assigned during high school. As she entered college, she played college softball, and it was difficult to schedule meets around her practices. However, she did judge when her schedule permitted. She accepted a limited amount of meets, but she kept officiating throughout all four years at college. Last year she filled in several times for an official who had to cancel out at the last minute.

The training and support she received throughout her high school and college years has been phenomenal. Now that she has graduated from college, she intends to judge as much as possible during competitive cheer season. Her high school alma mater just recently contacted her to judge a meet in 2013. She credits Marilyn Bowker, Candy Cox, Dianne Elliott, Barb Laird, Joyce Smith, Cindy Tyzo and her mother Renee DiCristafaro for all their training, patience and support.

Submitted by Candy Cox



From Coach to Judge and Back Again—Twice!

A Worthwhile Transition!

After four years of high school cheerleading at Plainwell High School under the direction of Stacy Smith, I was asked to coach the Freshman/JV cheer teams. As a new college student who was working my way through college, I declined the offer. I didn't see any way that I could coach and cheer team, work almost full time and maintain a full time college class schedule. Yet after a few years of pleading and prodding on Stacy's part, I agreed to coach the JV team at Plainwell High School in the fall of 1996. Having never coached before, and only being a few years older than the girls I was coaching, I was nervous to enter the coaching world. I endured the trials and tribulations of the drama that occasionally surrounds young female athletes and coached at Plainwell in many facets for eight years. Very early in my coaching career Stacy encouraged me to become a registered official. As I sat in my very first rules meeting as a 21 year old, I was completely overwhelmed. There were a lot of rules and regulations to remember. (this was before the charts and bonus points and Round 3 descriptions) I started as a safety official and throughout the years learned to be a panel judge as well.

I continued coaching and judged a few competitions per year, first so that I could keep up with all of the rule changes and second because I found that it made me a better coach. I could look at my team with a completely different mindset if I was thinking as an official. As I moved on in my coaching career, I coached the Varsity team at Plainwell and continued to officiate just a few meets per year. When I retired from coaching in 2003, I used officiating as my connection to competitive cheer and the student athletes. I had always loved working with kids and found that I could still be involved by officiating even though it was from a different view point. In 2005, I became the Varsity coach at Colon High School. My officiating again took a back burner until 2010 when again I retired from coaching.

As I look back over my 16 year career in coaching and officiating there are a few things that I have realized. First, the transition from coaching to judging and back again is a seamless one. Ask a few of us who have gone back and forth between the two arenas. Second, I feel that being an official can make you a better coach, just as being a coach can make you a better official. The ability to see the team you are coaching through an official's eye helps your team immensely just as seeing the team you are judging through a coach's perspective can make you a better official. I think that it keeps the "err on the side of the kids" in the forefront of your mind if there is a questionable call.

Whether you choose to leave coaching or judging for the "other side" or maintain a presence in both arenas, it's important to remember why we participate in this sport. Competitive Cheer gives thousands of young female athletes a chance to participate in something great. Any spectator, girl, team, coach or official who has sat in the stands, stood on the mat, on the floor, or behind the table at a cheer event can tell you what an amazing sport we have and how proud we are to be a part of it.

Submitted by Jayne Sabaitis



What's In the Bag?

It's almost here...the 2012-13 cheer judging season! For the veteran judge, it's time to go through your bag and get it ready for the new season. Clean out the old score sheets and notes from last year, replenish the pencils, pens, and highlighters and secure new sheets for this year. Check your bag for the following list to be sure you have everything you need for that first meet of the season.

For new/novice judge, here are a few suggestions of what to put in your judging bag. You should have your MHSAA official badge and a black lanyard if you use one. You may need a pad of paper to keep your notes on while you are judging. You may want to look over the sheets that the veteran judges have developed to make it easier to judge each round. Those that have been shared with us are on the MCJA web site. If you are a safety judge you will want a clipboard to make it easier for taking notes. All judges will need several pens and sharp pencils and highlighters. You might want to throw in a pencil sharpener! A calculator is a must for panel judges and as safety judges sometimes need to help with round 3 sheets it wouldn't hurt for you to have one too. You will need your MHSAA rule book and I suggest you put your name and phone number on it, just in case you accidentally leave it behind.

Many of the judges have purchased a stamp with their judges ID number on it. This can make putting your ID # on all of the sheets faster and easier, especially for some of the large competitions. They can be purchased for \$10-\$15 at any print store like Office Max, Office Depot or Staples. They make them while you wait. Also if you happen to be in one of those stores, they can bind your rules book for a few dollars. The spiral bind can make it easier to keep the book open to certain pages for safety rules or scoring grids.

If you are a safety judge you should carry a stopwatch in case there are no timers or they have a problem with their stopwatch. You could also carry some colored tape to mark off an area on the floor for the extra cheerleaders not in a particular round. You can use lines on the gym floor most of the time, but not always.

In addition you should also include the following items; hand sanitizer, lotion, aspirin or Tylenol, Kleenex, cough drops, small snacks or candies (not everyone provides you with these), safety pins, make-up, hair brush/comb, lint roller and wet wipes. If you have extra MHSAA patches and lanyards you can add those in case one of the other judges on your crew



forgets. You might stash an extra pair of nylons or tights. You may also want to bring a bottle of water or soft drink. These are usually provided, but not always. You may want to carry a set of judging clothes in your car along with your bag in case you get an emergency replacement call at work, then you won't have to rush home to change. This also works in the event you are wearing your black and white to work and something is spilled on it.

Carrying contact information and directions for the school to which you are traveling is important; you may need phone numbers in case of a flat tire or traffic delay. You should also have the cell number of one or more of the other members of your judging crew for that day so you can let them know if you are running late, etc. You will want to carry a calendar with all of your scheduled contracts. At many meets the AD, other coaches or judges may be looking for judges. This will give you quick and easy access. Carrying your contracts is a good idea too, just in case you arrive and find too many judges or no meet at all. You will then have your contract to show the AD or meet manager if needed.

Feel free to include anything else you might need and have a great judging season!

Submitted by Karla Koviak



2012-2013 MCJA Board of Directors

Stacy Smith, President

616-891-1561

stacyreneesmith@netzero.net

Juli Brown, Recording Secretary

810-623-9372

jbrowncheer@gmail.com

Donna Luczak, Treasurer

989-686-1513

DJLJRL@aol.com

Cindy Tyzo, Past President-President Elect

248-539-1864

crtzyo@aol.com

Marilyn Bowker, Trustee

517-349-9233

cheersmb@aol.com

Candy Cox, Executive Director

517-278-6317

coxc@bhsj.org

Regional Representatives

Judi Holland

269-226-0962

holland.judi@yahoo.com

Karla Koviak

269-788-4443

kkoviak@yahoo.com

Jane Plaisted

616-676-0192

jplaisted@sbcglobal.net

Marti Shean

517-769-2559

mshean@att.net

Sheila Brownlee

cheeriosheila@aol.com

At-Large Representatives

Susan Wood

248-656-1053

swood@rochester.k12mi.us

Jill Lansky

jillL@KPL.gov

Jayne Sabaitis

517-404-8495

jayne@zetaone.net

Phyllis Olszewski

231-536-3142

bpolszewski@att.net

Mary Kay Gavitt

517-372-7637

lifemattersplus@comcast.net





LINKS

LMCCOA

October 23, 2012 at Grandville HS, 6:30 p.m.
November 11, 2012 at MCHIC Cheer Gym in Kentwood
December 13, 2012 at Grandville HS, 6:30 p.m.
January 8, 2013 at Grandville HS, 6:30 p.m.
January 26, 2013 at East Kentwood HS, LMCCOA Scholarship Invite
February 21, 2013 at Grandville HS, 6:30 p.m.
March 14, 2013 6:30 p.m.
End of season meeting/potluck.

For more information pertaining to LMCCOA:
stamfam@chartermi.net

Peggy Lintemuth's Blog:
peggylintemuth.blogspot.com

Officials Assigning Associations:

Great Lakes Officials (GLO)
[586-484-2491](tel:586-484-2491)
glofficials@yahoo.com

SMOCCA
smoccajudges@yahoo.com

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