

# MCJA

## News from our President



Yay! The new manual is here! I've seen the excitement all over social media that coaches and officials alike were really looking forward to receiving their new manuals. It also means that the 2016-17 season is approaching. I can tell you that our board has been working hard to put together one of the best fall training conferences we've ever had; and you won't want to miss it!

We have a morning opening session that is sure to get everyone laughing and

ready for the day. As well as Round Robin sessions in the afternoon with topics like "What is a 10?" and "Tools that Judges use" and a session on why it's important to judge out of your "area". Let me not forget a wonderful session entitled "3 Billion Things NOT in the Manual". Of course we're having fun with the title but there are many, many things one doesn't think about that are not necessarily printed in the manual, but you know them, and they affect your

judging. How about a veteran session answering your most common questions? You got it! When you register you'll be given an index card to write your question on and we'll be answering them in one of our sessions. All of this as well as Official of the Year

announcement, our membership meeting and a live MHSAA rules meeting!

Registration is open so please register early!

[www.mcjacheer.com](http://www.mcjacheer.com)

Juli Brown  
MCJA President

"whether you think you can,  
or whether you think  
you can't, you're right"

Henry Ford

## What's Your Call?

**A Junior High team** fails to jump in round three. **Is a penalty given?** Yes, a 22 point penalty is given since the required jump was not performed by all team members. See page 97 penalty 24.

**A Junior High team** performs the required jump in unison after the first stunt sequence. **Is this a penalty?** Yes it is a penalty since the required jump must be the first skill performed and should

be the first listed skill on the round 3 description form as described on Page 73 and Page 97 penalty number 22.

**In Round 2**, all team members are to perform a back walkover, however one competitor stops in the backbend or bridge position. **Is this a penalty?** Yes it is a 22 point penalty which will be assessed as one of the required skills was not attempted by all competitors.

See page 69.

**A flyer** in a double base elevator dismounts to a single base cradle with a separate head and shoulders spotter. **Is this a penalty?** Yes since a flyer dismounting from a multi-base to a cradle must be caught by at least two catchers and a head and shoulder spotter. See page 46.

## Honor Your Contract

It is December 3, 2016 and you just received a call or an email from a school to officiate for December 14, 2016 what do you do? First look at your signed contracts, date book / planner or how you keep track of your scheduled events. If you already have a contract for December 14<sup>th</sup> you need to honor the contract and let the school know you are already contracted. Thank the school for contacting you and keep you in mind for other available dates. Do not break contracts for a larger meet, more money or closer to home. If you are ill notify the school and ask if they would like you to find a replacement.

Some schools contract officials at least a year in advance so make sure you know when you are contracted. Emergencies do occur and MCJA is willing to help you find replacements in an emergency.

Honoring your contract means arriving at least an hour prior to the start of the meet and staying for the 10 minutes after scores are announced. Make sure you are prepared to officiate – proper clothing, MHSAA badge, paper, pencils, manual, etc. The school is not responsible for providing your supplies, copies or food. Some schools provide food and beverages, but they are not required.

Remember we are a respected and professional group so Honor Your Contract!



QuotesBlog.net

## Getting Outside of your Comfort Zone

Many officials judge with the same crew every week. Have you thought about leaving your comfort zone and judging with officials you may not know? It is a great experience, you make new friends, see new teams and material. Plus you may pick up some tips from the officials. I try and travel out of my comfort zone at least 4 times during the season.

Ask an official who you normally judge with if they would like to travel with you. Traveling to different sites will increase your knowledge as well as let

coaches know who you are. If you are chosen for post season play you are probably going to be with officials from other regions. Why not take a chance and travel this season?

Submitted by Candy Cox

Celebrate the happiness that friends are always giving, make every day a holiday and celebrate just living.

--Amanda Bradley

## Mentoring: The Way to Go!

As with many other sports, there is a lack of young people entering the officials' ranks and so special efforts are being made to recruit. Through MHSAA, free registration is being offered to those entering officiating, and the OK Conference is providing \$50 toward new officials' equipment and they will direct that new person to an official's organization. At that point, we should be able to provide that person with a mentor. Our sport can only get better as we make sure that our officials are well-trained. This not only helps the sport in general but it means we all get to help ourselves as we officiate with others who have been trained and tutored in the officiating of competitive cheer.

Mentoring can not take place without good mentors, so I urge you to let me know if you are willing and able to help with this very rewarding task. If you have experience, a willingness to share your expertise, and empathy, then please send me the following information:

Your name  
Address  
City  
Email  
Phone  
Safety or Panel

Mentoring takes a little time, a lot of communication, a love of competitive cheer, experience, and a strong desire to help others love the sport as you do. Please share your expertise.

Jane Plaisted,  
MCJA Mentoring Chair at  
[jplaisted@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jplaisted@sbcglobal.net)  
or 616 676 0192.

The excitement  
of learning  
separates  
youth from  
old age.  
As long as  
you're  
learning  
you're not old.

--Rosalyn S. Yalow

## Fall Conference

Saturday October 22, 2016

Lansing Catholic Central

8:30am to 4:00pm

Lunch and Membership Meeting 11:45 am - 12:45 pm

Official of the Year!

LIVE Rules Meeting 3:00 - 4:00 pm

Cost of conference:

Membership \$20 (1 year)

\*Early bird Special\* If registered by October 15th - Conference \$25 - includes lunch

(After October 15th - \$35)

## MCJA Fall Conference, cont'd

### Classes Offered:

Novice Panel

Novice Safety

Various sessions and classes for veteran Safety/Panel

A special session provided by Susan Wood

Round Robin Mini-sessions, too!

**Register at [www.mcjacheer.com](http://www.mcjacheer.com)**

*Above all, challenge yourself. You may well surprise yourself  
at what strengths you have, what you can accomplish.*

*--Cecile M. Springer*

## Explain Yourself!

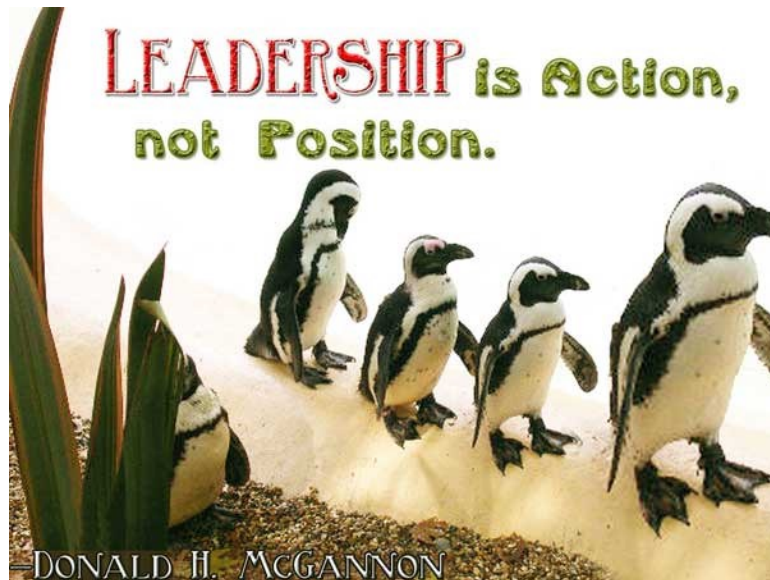
One of the most common questions MCJA gets from officials at training sessions is “How do you handle coaches who want an explanation, or justification if you will, for the scores you’ve given their team?” Scoring cheer is subjective, no matter how much we try to make it completely objective it simply never will be. That having been said, how do we give the input the coaches are asking for, once we’ve scored or evaluated their teams? Let’s face it sometimes you see a skill, and because of the cheer officiating experience you have, and the numerous times you’ve seen that skill, you just know it’s a 7; end of discussion...self-explanatory! Or is it? As trained officials you’ve had training that the coach possibly has not, so as the authority on the subject you should work to provide an explanation, when asked, for the scores that you gave. Granted this can be a difficult thing to do; perhaps you’ve seen 20 other teams, before having to explain your score. Hopefully, we can provide some guidance that will help you answer the tough question from the coach when it comes.

First of all, sometimes coaches are emotionally charged after a competition. This emotional charge can be positive or negative. For a coach who is upset or angry regarding their scores, it is definitely OK and even recommended to say “I would love to continue this conversation with you tomorrow via email or telephone when we’ve both had time to reflect on what has happened today”. A 24 hour rule is sometimes a good tool to use in a situation that you feel may not be productive.

Second, stand behind your score. While ideally you would love to be able to explain to a coach that “the third girl from the left in the second row of the fourth formation has bent wrists and flexed toes and that you took a .3 deduction”, that is not always possible. However, if you are able to make yourself a little note on the skill or jump where you took the deduction, or note things such as “wrists” or “toes” it may be beneficial when speaking with a coach.

Lastly, ask your team of judges for assistance. A situation may occur where a coach approaches a newer official who may not be comfortable explaining scores. Please ask other officials for assistance. Sometimes getting another judges perspective can be helpful to both the coach asking and the official explanation.

Submitted collaboratively from Juli Brown and Jayne Sabaitis



Find us on @  
MCJAcheer.com

---

Look for us on  
FACEBOOK

“It's not what you are that holds you back:  
it's what you think you are not.”

~Denis Waitley

**Executive Board**

Juli Brown, President  
810-623-9372  
jbrowncheer@gmail.com

Stacy Smith, President-Elect  
269-806-0427  
stacyreeneasmith@netzero.net

Jill Lansky, Secretary  
269-806-0476  
jilll@KPL.gov

Jayne Sabaitis, Treasurer  
517-404-8495  
jayne@zetaone.net

Cindy Tyzo, Past-President  
248-539-1864  
crtyzo@aol.com

Candy Cox, Executive Director  
517-617-1278  
coxc@bhsj.org

Marilyn Bowker, Trustee  
517-349-9233  
cheersmb@aol.com

**Representatives**

Amy Braun  
amyful@umich.edu  
248-305-0191

Laurie Bilke-Snyder  
313-433-1434  
lkbsnyder@gmail.com

April Hooker  
269-430-1125  
happyhooker13@mailcity.com

Karla Koviak  
269-788-4443  
krkoviak@gmail.com

Bonnie Koenig  
bbkoenig@gmail.com

Phyllis Olszewski  
231-536-3146  
bpolszewski@att.net

Jane Plaisted  
616-676-0192  
jplaisted@sbcglobal.net

Kelli Polinskey  
616-889-9104  
kellipolinskey@gmail.com

Susan Wood  
248-656-1053  
swood@rochester.k12.mi.us



Have something to share with MCJA?

MCJA welcomes submissions (opinions, training tools, helpful hints, cheer inspiration, family news and more) from all members for the quarterly newsletters. Send yours to [mcja.info@gmail.com](mailto:mcja.info@gmail.com) for the chance to be featured in an upcoming newsletter.

**“Let’s get it started”**

- 1) Register with MHSAA (Michigan High School Athletics Association)  
Pay small fee for membership (Yearly)  
Open book generic officials test (first time registration only)  
Receive emblem and Competitive Cheer Manual, and permanent ID number  
Take the MHSAA online or live rules meeting yearly
  
- 2) Judging is something you no doubt decided to do because you enjoy it, so be sure you are preparing yourself to be great at your trade.  
Get involved; join a local association  
Get training (MCJA, LMCCOA, CJAMM, MMCO and others)  
Be mentored  
Familiarize yourself with the MHSAA Officials Guidebook
  
- 3) How to get assignments:  
Use your mentor for referrals  
Contact Athletic Directors via email  
Be sure you are a member of MCJA (and a local association/assignors group) in order to receive email notifications of officials needed
  
- 4) You’ve gotten your first assignment, now what?  
Did you get a contract via mail or email? Be sure to fill out completely and return timely  
Honor your contract, if you can’t then do your best to find a replacement for yourself  
Read page 3-4 of the Cheer Manual, Code for Athletic Officials
  
- 5) Preparing for your first meet:  
Be sure to have the contact information for the AD or meet manager, just in case!  
Whenever possible have the contact information for at least 1 other official you are judging with, just in case!  
When the weather is bad it is good practice to contact the AD or AD secretary (by phone or email) giving them your cell phone number and the time you’ll be leaving for the competition so that they can contact you in case of cancellation  
Dress in the approved uniform for competitive cheer officials only. Do not deviate from the required uniform (described on page 15 of manual) as this is a reflection of not only you, but MHSAA and everyone else that officiates in your sport.  
Arrive 1 hour or more before competition begins or at the time specified by the tournament director.  
Take judging materials to competition.  
Judging emblem appropriately attached or properly suspended by a black lanyard around the neck  
Manual, including any inserts or clarifications (check MHSAA website regularly for any updates/clarifications throughout the season)  
Highlighters, pens, pencils  
Calculator  
“Cheat sheets” or extra paper  
Timer (Safety)  
Clipboard (Safety)

**“Being an Ace”**  
**Act in a professional manner at all times**

- 1) Do not officiate teams whom you have any type of affiliation.  
Conflict of interest, page 7, MHSAA Officials Guidebook.
- 2) Avoid demonstrative greetings with competitors and coaches on the day of the competition. This may give an impression of bias to anyone who sees you.
- 3) Introduce yourself in the judging room to your crew.  
Share if this is your first meet, do not be afraid to share that as most officials are happy to help and guide you!!  
It's not a sign of weakness to be new
- 4) Keep your eyes on the performing team at all times during their performance.  
Important so that you don't miss something while judging  
Also by giving each team your undivided attention you're showing that you understand they've worked hard and deserve to be there
- 5) Resist reaction to distractions  
Falls or errors in the team's performance  
Noises in the arena  
People approaching the judging area
- 6) Do not talk about any teams, either in the judging room or at judging table; positively or negatively perception is everything and it could be perceived incorrectly
- 7) Refrain from conversation during or between the performances of teams unless absolutely necessary
- 8) Avoid negative comments on score sheets; this is an opportunity to communicate with the coach/competitors on what (in your opinion) could improve their scores in that category. Stay away from “personal preference” comments
- 9) Don't criticize the competition for any reason  
Consider yourself an employee for that period of time and employees should be loyal to the employer (competition director). Say “Thank you” for any food, drink or other creature comforts you are offered as this is not required and is something above and beyond  
Bring snacks in your judging bag in case there aren't creature comforts
- 10) STAY for the allotted amount of time required by MHSAA after the competition end. Page 15 of manual  
10 minutes from competition end until announcement of scores  
Additional 10 minutes once scores are announced for any questions from tournament director or coaches  
It does not say one representative official stays – all are required to stay
- 11) Admit any mistakes and correct if necessary  
Doesn't mean you don't know your trade; only means that you are constantly learning - which is a strength not a weakness

## **“I’m really doing it”**

(Officiating that is...)

1) Avoid any biases or prejudices for teams, whether negative or positive.

Do not score based on a team’s reputation.

Do not score based on a team’s style

Be sure to score using the criteria in the Competitive Cheer Manual, it is the link between judges and coaches.

2) Social Media Reminder:

The use of social media has undoubtedly changed the lives of so many people in so many ways. Social media is one of the reasons why the world has become smaller. Your reputation as a cheer official matters, maintaining professionalism in social media is a must. If you are using social media sites such as the ever-popular Facebook, be sure to set the privacy settings accordingly. If you think you can contain yourself all the time and remain professional in all your posts, stay public. You must always be careful about your comments. Perception is reality. Comments meant to be kind or flattering may be construed as bias. Clicking the ‘Like’ button can also be seen as bias. People turn to social media to express their feelings towards what they see. As the saying goes, less talk, less mistakes.

3) Judge what you are assigned to judge

Do not influence or be involved with penalties/panel discussion unless this is a part of your assignment.

4) Be sure to be consistent in scoring

Consistency doesn’t mean all judges have same score; it means being consistent yourself from team to team throughout the day

Determine your judging scale (done by practicing a lot!) and don’t be swayed by those judges on either side of you. On the other hand, do not be an official who sways/comments to the official whose score are different than yours.

It may be more appropriate to discuss/evaluate these things after the competition in the official’s room. Take notes during performance, keeping eyes on the team, knowing you will not remember all facets of the performance for scoring categories and overall impression. Some judges use special sheets to help them take notes; there are many of these available on our website and here at the workshop.

5) When consulting with a coach

Talk to them in the judge’s room after the competition

Offer to call or email them at a later time

Do not discuss your scores for any team with anyone other than the coach

Only offer comments regarding improvement if asked by that coach

