

JUNE 1, 2016

MCJA SPRING/SUMMER NEWSLETTER



News from our President

With each passing day bringing nicer weather, I get excited for summer! Gone are the regimented school year schedules, and in comes the freedom that summer brings! As we prepare for our first board meeting of the year in June, I'm very eager to get started in my new position as your MCJA President. Serving on this board is something I've loved doing, and I look forward to being able to continue to serve you now in this different role.

I'm not the only thing that is new this season, we have new board members to welcome to MCJA. Stacy Smith is newly elected to the President Elect position; meaning she will take over as President in June of 2017. Personally it is comforting to have Stacy's experience and expertise helping me.

From the west side of the state we welcome Kelli Polinsky to our board. Kelli brings 13 years of judging experience as well as 12 years of coaching experience. She looks forward to representing the west side and being more involved in bringing judging consistency state wide.

We'd also like to welcome Amy Braun, from the southeastern part of the state. Amy brings 11 years of judging experience as well as 7 years of coaching experience. She is looking forward to using her experience as a previous CCCAM president to help foster

effective relationships between coaches and officials.

We welcome back incumbent board members Susan Wood, Bonnie Koenig, and Karla Koviak. We are so thankful for the many years of service to our board these women have donated. MCJA surely wouldn't be where it is today without them and we look forward to forging ahead with them in the coming years!

In keeping with the "new" theme, we also

have a new manual this year. With that brings time to look it over with a new perspective. I encourage you to read through it with a fine toothed comb, make tabs, mark pages, take it to your local office supply and have them bind it—whatever it is to make the manual easy for you...do it!

MCJA will be offering summer training at Caledonia HS on August 21st. We will also offer fall training on October 22nd. As these dates draw closer, keep your eye on our website or face book page for more information.

Have a wonderful and restful summer and I look forward to seeing you all soon!

Juli Brown
MCJA President

“You have to fall in love with the process of becoming great ,”

What's Your Call?

A braced flyer performs an extended liberty where both hands of the flyer remain in contact with the bracer(s) no back spot is present on the bracers. Is this legal?

Yes, spotters are not required on bracers who are shoulder level or below when the braced flyer does not lose contact with the bases as stated on page 63

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 as stated on page 58

A flyer performs a forward suspended roll from a face down flatback position with the bases holding the wrists of the flyer. Is this legal?

No, an eight point penalty would be given since the flyer must maintain continuous hand to hand/ arm contact with the original bases or back spot as stated on page 53

Cheermaggedon: The Saga of a Safety Official who did Panel in a Pinch

**“Learn anything
you can from
anyone you can.
There will
always come a
time when you
will be grateful
you did!”
- Sarah Caldwell**

This quote was very true this past season. I was so grateful that I participated in judges training both in the summer the fall. Learning the panel judging process, obtaining tip sheets, and listening to panel officials' conversation with coaches regarding scores paid off one cold January night. On this particular competition night, my penalty sheets were filled out, the mats were checked, and all was ready to go. Then, one of the panel officials did not feel well and needed to leave. At that time my role in the competition switched from safety official to panel official, and my anxiety level went sky high. Self-talk was wonderful that night. I can do this, I help with round three description sheets all of the time, so I can do this. I utilized my penalty cheat sheets

and converted them to panel cheat sheets with my rows ready for check marks. I had my panel tip sheets and followed them for every round and every cheer. I looked for my reference point for jump heights, evaluated the timing on round two skills, and made my hash marks for stunting and tumbling errors in round three. I made it through the competition as a panel official and was very thankful to be back walking around the mat for the rest of the season. Had I not spent the time at training listening to and learning from the panel officials, I would not have been successful on that cold January night. I learned from everyone I could at training, and I was most certainly grateful.

Submitted by Cindy Tyzo

MCJA Elections

Thank you to all who ran for the MCJA Board of Directors! Your dedication, interest and commitment to a sport that we all love is evident. After a thorough and complete election, MCJA would like to extend a HUGE welcome and congratulations to newly elected MJCA Board members Kelli Polinskey and Amy Braun. Congratulations to the incumbent MCJA Board members Bonnie Koenig, Karla Koviak and Susan Wood as returning elected representatives. And, newly elected, president elect, Stacy Smith. The election process could not be a success without all of you...Thank you!

Believe
in yourself
and
the rest
will fall
into place.
Have faith
in your own
abilities,
work hard,
and there
is nothing you
can't accomplish.

-Brad Henry

New Season Means New Officials

As a new cheer season approaches, we welcome new people to cheer officiating. In order to have competent and confident officials MCJA does its best to train and mentor our new people, so if you are new, know someone who is new, or are recruiting someone who is new, please be aware of the services we have for training. Of course new officials must register with MHSAA, but after that we hope and encourage they will join MCJA; MCJA will then allow access to fall training and our mentoring program. Having a mentor is like having an experienced friend to show you the ropes; that mentor will share scoring sheets, let you practice scoring, inform you of how meets are run, and help with getting into the world of cheer officiating. If you are a new official, please go to the MCJA website and fill out a mentor request; if you know a new official, please urge them to request a mentor.

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 now 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.

If anyone has any questions about mentoring, please feel free to contact:

Jane Plaisted,
MCJA Mentoring Chair
jplaisted@sbcglobal.net
or 616 676 0192.

**“Kind words
can be short
and easy to
speak, but
their echoes
are endless.”
-Mother
Teresa**

Fall Conference

Save the date!
Saturday October 22, 2016
Location is TBA

Taming the Social Media Temptation

A few months ago we had an article (shown below) regarding MHSAA officials and social media posts. It seems to be a HOT topic and one that we struggle to comply with. MCJA would like to reiterate the importance of MHSAA officials steering clear of social media posting on cheer sites, period. No "likes", no congratulations, no "thumbs up", NOTHING. Even the most innocent and non biased thoughts can and will be misconstrued. The best bet is nothing at all!

We've all been there, scrolling through our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, liking various

photos, videos or comments our friends have posted. We've posted answers to questions on a coaches page and said a stunt or cheer posted was "Awesome" but have we really thought about how that could be taken by coaches or even members of the public who know that you are a cheer official?

As another cheer season approaches quickly, please remember that it is strongly recommended that MHSAA officials do not post on social media. Even a simple "like" on a post could be misconstrued as favoritism. It's always best to err on the side

of caution and not post on social media pages at all. Even specific clarification questions should be referred to the MHSAA.

While you should still enjoy watching all of the great cheer videos and pictures posted for all to see, tame the social media temptation and don't post.

Submitted by Jayne Sabaitis

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

~Denis Waitley

MCJA Summer Training

Sunday August 21, 2016
Caledonia High School
8:30 am - 4:00 pm

This training is geared to the novice and intermediate official, however, all are welcome and encouraged to attend!

Register at MCJAcheer.com

\$25 for current members

\$45 for non-members (includes a one year membership!)

Find us on @
MCJAcheer.com

Look for us on
FACEBOOK



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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 for the chance to be featured in an upcoming newsletter.

“Congratulations, you are being invited to officiate in a 2015-16 MHSAA Competitive Cheer Final Tournament”. Quite possibly, one of the best emails that I have ever received!!

I was checking my email at the end of my French 3 class. The students were quietly working on their homework assignment. All of a sudden, a squeal erupted that broke the silence. It took me about 30 seconds to realize that the noise had come from ME! I have to admit, there might have been some jumping up and down and “woo hoo”ing” for a short period of time! The kids were so curious and asked me what had happened. So, of course, I shared my awesome news – and, the story of how it all began.

When I was in high school, I cheered for my school. It wasn’t my first choice of a sport, I’ll admit. I tried out for the 9th grade volleyball team and was cut after the first day. I guess I just did not have it in me! So, when cheer tryouts rolled around, a friend and I decided to give it a go. I’ve always known how important it was to be a part of your school – not just *attend* the school, but *belong* to the school by getting involved. Fortunately, I made the team. Thus began my love of the sport.

Flash forward to 1994. I began my teaching career at L’Anse Creuse High School – the school that I had graduated from! I decided to continue what I had started when I was a student and I became involved in extra-curricular activities. I was hired as the new JV Cheer Coach! I loved my job. Cheer practices, team bonding, cheer camp, meeting kids that were not in my class – all things that just made me feel complete. I even had the opportunity to take my team to Disney World to cheer in the Christmas Parade! During that time, I got married, had a daughter, and completed my Master’s Degree, all the while coaching. When we decided to have another child, I stopped coaching. I just wanted to be able to focus on my family and not be so busy. But, after 4 years, I missed it so much that when a spot became available, I applied. Once again, I was the JV Coach. I loved this level so much – the cheerleaders came to me with previous experience and I was able to mold and shape them to move up to Varsity. What an awesome feeling!

I had been coaching again for 4 years when our school decided to launch Competitive Cheer. I knew I had to throw in the towel. As a mother to two young daughters, I just felt that I would be spreading myself too thin. I wanted my cheerleaders to have the best experience possible, the best coach possible, and I wanted my family to have my 100% attention. So, I stepped down from my position. It was so hard and I missed it greatly.

For a year or two, I felt like something was missing in my life. I honestly do not remember who it was that told me “You should judge cheer!”, but I was prompted to look in to it. I remember Googling “how to become a competitive cheer judge.” I registered with the MHSAA and attended the MCJA fall conference in Grand Rapids. I was completely lost! I had had very limited competitive cheer experience and wasn’t even sure what “Rounds” were! But, I attended those sessions with my head held high and with the will to learn as much as I possibly could. I was paired up with a mentor and walked out feeling extremely positive.

I attended a few competitions with my mentor, Laurie Bilke-Snyder. She was extremely helpful and taught me a lot. Then, at the third or fourth competition I attended, another judge fell ill and couldn’t make it to the meet. The other judges looked at me and said “Well, are you ready? You can do this!”. I was being asked to judge my first competition!! I was nervous, but super excited. I remember driving home after the event thinking “am I really getting paid to do something so fun?” Amazing!

I’ve been judging for 5 years now. I have learned so much and have so much respect for all who are involved. It really is an honor to be able to be a part of this incredible sport. Last year, I judged Districts and Regionals for the first time. This year, I got Districts, Regionals, and STATES! The feeling I had was like no other – I was nervous, proud, humbled, excited, and emotional. To me, having the opportunity to be an official at a State Competition is the equivalent of being asked to be a referee for the Super bowl. No greater gift could I have received from this sport that I love so much. I tried not to let the nerves get the best of me and ended up having the time of my life!

I thoroughly have enjoyed this experience. From watching the D1 finals with the other judges from the “Judges Box”, to meeting new people, sharing meals with new friends, rooming with my fellow judges (who are like family to me), and finally being able to judge these amazing athletes – it all is so surreal. I look forward to a long career in this sport and cannot wait for Competitive Cheer season 2016-2017. Let the games begin!

Jennifer Allen
Harrison Township, MI