



## MCJA WINTER NEWSLETTER

January 2016

### News from the President

Just like a new year, a new Competitive Cheer season begins with excitement and anticipation for what the coming months will bring. It is always exciting to see what teams bring to the mat. However, with the new season also comes the challenge of learning and mastering the current rules changes and updates. There are a number of changes this year for the panel judges as well as the safety judges. Some of these changes are the new choreography OLE bonus definition, the suspended roll update and the forward roll from a flat back position addition.

Please remember to check the MHSAA web

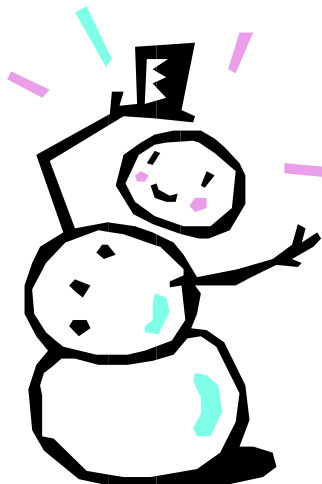
site frequently throughout the season for any additional updates and clarifications.

As every cheer official knows, many competitions are still looking for officials. Cheer officials are in high demand since many competitions

occur on the same days - Wednesdays and Saturdays. We all need to do our part to positively impact this cheer official shortage by recruiting, mentoring and making all officials feel welcomed when working an event. Not only do we need more officials, the officials currently working need to want to continue to officiate.

It is a privilege to be a part of Michigan competitive cheer and to work with a wonderful group of officials. I wish everyone a successful officiating season and a wonderful new year.

Cheers,  
Cindy Tyzo



Good Luck this Officiating Season!

### MCJA Mentoring

Have you mentored or have you been mentored this season? Please take a moment to visit the MCJA mentoring page at:

<http://www.mcjacheer.com/mentoring>

MCJA wants to hear from you about how your experience has been and if you have suggestions, concerns or ideas to help improve the process! Please take a moment to fill the survey, consider sending in a mentoring testimonial and don't forget to email Jane Plaisted to complete the process. [jplaisted@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jplaisted@sbcglobal.net)

#### Special points of interest:

- *Consistency*
- *Social Media Protocol*
- *MCJA Breakout Session*
- *What's Your Call?*
- *MHSAA Update*
- *Mentoring*

In an Mlive article from Jack Roberts:

"Officiating is a fantastic vocation," he said. "When people get into it and stay in it, they develop lifelong friends that I don't have, that I envy. When I see the relationships that officials have built with their crew, I'm envious of how wonderful that is. Officiating has so much emotional give back to the officials that I really think if we can get them in and keep them in, get them through the first five years, then they're going to stay and have a wonderful experience."

The article link (in case you would like to read in whole): <http://highschoolsports.mlive.com/news/article/-5491204025692264507/referees-age-inexperience-among-mhsaas-top-concerns/>

## **Consistency**

**Submitted by Juli Brown**

How important is consistency? Whether you are a panel official or a safety official you are asked to make “judgement calls” when officiating, and it is vital to be consistent with the scores/penalties given, otherwise you’ll be seen as unfair, bias, or partial toward one team or another. Coaches want to know that you are scoring/penalizing every team consistently throughout the competition that day, as well as throughout the season.

As a panel official, we use a 1-10 point scale for most categories on our score sheets. This scale is not to be taken lightly, as it is our consistency scale, and it is imperative this scale is the same from season to season, from competition to competition, and from team to team. The best way to determine your scale and to keep it consistent is to practice as much as possible, get yourself in front of teams from all levels, locations, and divisions, whether in person or via video. If you’ve never seen a 10 performed, it’s hard to know what it looks like (or feels like) when you see it. On the flip side if you’ve never judged a team who scores mostly 5’s it’s hard to know what that looks like (or feels like) as well.

Here are a few examples of thought that could get you in trouble with consistency... it’s sometimes said by panel officials “I can’t give a 10 in December.” Those of you that have been through my novice panel training have no doubt heard me ask “When do you give a 10?” My answer is EACH and EVERY time it is deserved! The thought that you cannot give 10’s at a certain time of the season, skews your scale! If the team’s performance deserves a 10 then it MUST be given no matter when it is. You cannot decide to give the team a 9 because it’s December but feel it would be a 10 if it was late January; that is inconsistent.

Another example is the official that feels the middle school teams are younger and less experienced so we need to adjust the scale to make the median (average) a 6 and not a 5. Making an adjustment like this makes your scale inconsistent, and unfair to the teams competing that day; most of all the middle school team you are scoring. First, that same middle school will not get that adjusted scale at the next competition they attend therefore receiving inflated and untrue scores that day. Second, not every other non-middle school team competing that day is scored with that adjusted scale, so you quickly see how that puts them at a clear disadvantage, which is completely out of their control. It is simply unfair (and therefore inconsistent) to inflate a teams’ scores because you feel badly for them.

It is difficult for some officials to score a team at 5 even when it is deserved because they see it as a bad score and one that coaches/teams do not want. Here’s the problem that creates; let’s say that you score the team 7’s when they really deserve 5’s; do you then adjust 2 points up for every other team that day to insure that the 7 level teams receive 9’s? Moreover, how do you then score those 9 level teams at 11? You can see how this completely distorts your consistency scale.

As a safety official, if you penalize an illegal stunt/skill, then coaches must know that you are going to penalize every other team that performs that same illegal stunt/skill that day; AND all season long. You cannot decide that you are only going to warn a certain team when you have penalized another; that is inconsistent. It is sometimes said by safety officials “It’s early in the season and the coach is new, so I’ll just give a warning”. Be careful here, because you will no doubt come across many new coaches, early in the year, which may perform that stunt, or a similar stunt, illegally and unknowingly. So the question of consistency comes into play; 1) Will you always warn any new and unknowing coach early in

the season? 2) Will you only warn those new and unknowing coaches doing that same illegal stunt? You can already see how the consistency scale is being tested. Do not misunderstand, I am not saying that it is wrong, or will automatically be inconsistent for a safety official to “warn” a team; as it is many times necessary, but be certain about what you are warning so that you can be consistent toward all teams.



Also, be sure that what you are choosing to warn is preventable. For example, the mandated numbers rule is new this season for all sub varsity high school teams. Choosing to give a warning early in the season to a team who is under the mandated number may not be wise. If the team does not have enough girls to fulfill the required number, then it is something that cannot be changed and unfortunately, they will receive this penalty all season. So choosing to give the warning to this team rather than penalizing them was inconsistent toward them. It was also unfair to the other teams competing against them, as they were expecting that team to receive a penalty for not following the rules, which they followed.

## Thank You!

As Mentoring Director I would like to take the time to tell all of our wonderful MCJA mentors how much they are appreciated. As you all may have noticed, there seems to be a shortage of trained officials this year; it is only with the help, enthusiasm, and competence of our corps of mentors that we can make an attempt to change this. A mentor takes the time to make an initial contact with the new official, synchs schedules to allow the mentee to observe in a variety of situations, and answers questions, fills in the inevitable blanks, and eventually helps to “launch” that new official when she is ready.

It takes a listening ear and a helping hand to be that mentor that allows a new official to leave the relationship with an air of confidence and a background of experiences. Thank you for your part in this.

If you are NOT yet a mentor but would like to be considered when someone in your area is in search of someone to help, please send an email with your name, address, safety or panel, and email address to: [jplaisted@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jplaisted@sbcglobal.net)

2015 Official of the Year



**Tanya Ramm**

*55 years*

*...how long the character building benefits of high school sports can last, according to a recent report published in Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies.*

## **All Star and other queues from MHSAA**

**Submitted by Candy Cox**

The following are from the 2015-16 MHSAA Officials Guidebook.

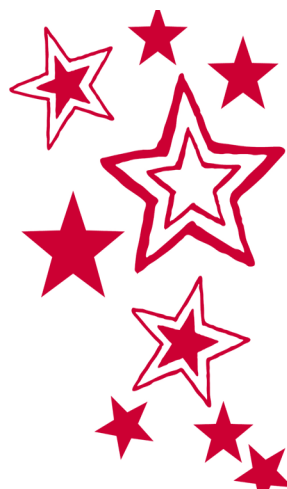
Note under "ALL Star" no athletic official registered with the Michigan High School Athletic Association, shall at any time, during the school year, assist either directly or indirectly with the coaching, management, direction, selection or transportation of players, promotion, or officiating of any "all-star" exhibition or similar contest, or of any contest that is or purports to be a national high school championship event or the qualification thereto in any MHSAAA sponsored sport if one or more of the participants is currently enrolled in a high school at the time of the event (MHSAA Regulation II, Section 13).

Under Conflict of Interest:

An example would be a competitive cheer official who is hired by a school or coach to provide a training session or clinic by which the official prepares the rounds of competition or provides judging/coaching/skill assessment to a school coach or athletes. If this occurs, it is considered a conflict of interest for that official to officiate any contests at any level for the school(s) involved for the next 12 calendar months during both regular season and MHSAA tournament competition.

This policy is not intended to discourage officials from participating in preseason sportsmanship programs which may involve coaches, students or parents or from officiating preseason scrimmages (intersquad and intrasquad).

Officials should not be going in to schools except for scrimmages. It is fine to write comments or suggestions on judging sheets.



*The best inspiration is not to out do others —  
But to out do ourselves*



**“Officials need to walk a straight line when engaging in social media, refraining from espousing opinions on the coaches, players and contests they have officiated. We are hired to present impartiality and to do so in as “quiet” a manner as possible. Twitter away, Facebook away, blog away within the confines of that mandate.”**

Barry Mano, Publisher, *Referee* magazine

## **What's Your Call**

**Submitted by Cindy Tyzo**

### **What's Your Call**

A team completes a braced suspended backward roll starting from a face down flat back position and ending in a sponge.

**Illegal.** Starting in the face down flat back position, the flyer rotates more than one rotation in the above transition, which would make it illegal. Page 39 states: a flip/salto must not involve more than one head over heels rotation. A suspended roll is a head over heels rotation to which this rule would apply.

A high school cheer team (freshman, JV or Varsity teams) performs round 2 below the divisional mandated number of competitors. This is a 10 point penalty. An additional 22 point penalty would be given on the round 2 score sheet if the number in round 1 was greater than the number in round 2. If the number in round 3 is greater than the number in round 2 and the mandated number was not met, the round would be a void. The panel judges would still score the round, however no points will be recorded on the final tally sheet. For example:

An easy way to remember the mandate number rule is: if the mandated number of competitors is not met in round 2 then round 1 and 3 numbers of competitors may not exceed the number in round 2.



Mandated number is 10 in round 2 and the team competes with 9 in round 2 (a 10 point penalty).

In round 1 16 competitors competed (a 22 point penalty on the round 2 score sheet).

In round 3 16 competitors competed (this is a void round on the round 3 score sheet).



**We are what we do  
Repeatedly.  
Excellence then  
is not an act but a habit.**



And the 2015 MCJA Official of the Year is....

**Tanya Ramm**

## 2016 MCJA Breakout Session Webinar Sunday January 17 @ 7 pm Register at:

Please register for 2016 MCJA Breakout Session on Jan 17, 2016 7:00 PM EST at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7362734851416131585>

Please join us to dialogue concerns, issues, ideas and topics of interest for the 2015-2016 Competitive Cheer season.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

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### Executive Board

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

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

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

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

Stacy Smith, Past-President  
269-806-0427  
stacyreeneesmith@netzero.net

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

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

### Representatives

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

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

Sheila Brownlee  
586-321-5401  
cheeriosheila@aol.com

Bonnie Koenig  
bbkoenig@gmail.com

Laurel Kobe  
248-794-9562  
laurelkobe@hotmail.com

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

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

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

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



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.

## **DO NOT LET STRESS AND ANXIETY AFFECT YOUR REFEREEING**

by Stan Popovich

Sometimes, stress and anxiety can become a problem for referees. The key is to know how to manage that fear and anxiety. As a result, here is a brief list of techniques that a referee can use to help manage their stresses and anxieties as they do their job.

Occasionally, you may become stressed when we have to referee in an important game. When this happens, visualize yourself doing the task in your mind. For instance, you have to referee in the championship game in front of a large group of people in the next few days. Before the big day comes, imagine yourself refereeing the game in your mind. By doing this, you will be better prepared to perform for real when the time comes. Self-Visualization is a great way to reduce the fear and stress of a coming situation.

Sometimes we get stressed out when everything happens all at once during a game. When this happens, a person should take a deep breath and try to take things step by step. Do not get overwhelmed by the stress and focus on the present situation.

Another technique that is very helpful is to have a small notebook of positive statements that you can carry around with you. Whenever you come across an affirmation that makes you feel good, write it down in a small notebook that you can carry around with you. Whenever you feel stressed, open up your small notebook and read those statements at half time. This will help to manage your negative thinking.

In every anxiety-related situation you experience, begin to learn what works, what doesn't work, and what you need to improve on in managing your fears and anxieties. For instance, you have a lot of anxiety and you decide to take a small walk before your game to help you feel better. The next time you feel anxious you can remind yourself that you got through it the last time by taking a walk. This will give you the confidence to manage your anxiety the next time around.

Take advantage of the help that is available around you. If possible, talk to a professional who can help you manage your fears and anxieties. They will be able to provide you with additional advice and insights on how to deal with your current problem. By talking to a professional, a person will be helping themselves in the long run because they will become better able to deal with their problems in the future. Remember that it never hurts to ask for help.

Remember that patience, persistence, and education will go a long way in preventing fear from becoming a factor in your refereeing.

### **BIOGRAPHY:**

Stan Popovich is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear Using Psychology, Christianity and Non Resistant Methods" – an easy to read book that presents a general overview of techniques which is located at [www.managingfear.com](http://www.managingfear.com)

## **NASO's Board of Directors adopted the following social media guidelines for use by officials and organizations:**

- ✦ Consider social media communications as public at all times — even if created with private intentions. If you are going to use social media in any form, consider your communication may be read by anyone at anytime.
- ✦ You represent the officiating industry, your associations, your assigners and your partners. Act accordingly.
- ✦ Promote officiating in a positive light and with a general feeling of pride and professionalism. You are an ambassador for officiating.
- ✦ You have a unique access to information. The same ethical restrictions that apply to any form of public speech also apply to social media. It is inappropriate to communicate specifics about your assignments, other officials, conferences/schools, coaches, players or any related personnel.
- ✦ Do not engage in specific play and or ruling evaluation/commentary, whether it be of a game you worked, one that you witnessed or in general about the impact of officials in any sporting event.
- ✦ Communications among officials for learning purposes should be done privately and not through the use of social media. Be mindful that email and other forms of direct communication can be made public.
- ✦ Be very sparing in the sharing of your personal information, including photos. Adjust security settings accordingly. Report fake profiles or posts to the appropriate authorities/governing bodies in a timely fashion. Follow specific conference, school and/or governing body social media policies.