



June 2010

The next MCJA meeting is Monday June 14 @ 6:00 pm

A Terrific Year in Review

MCJA Worked To Make Communication It's Point Of Emphasis For 2009-2010

We will continue to share information in a quick, efficient manner. We will carry forward this mission by sharing information with other associations to share with their members. The MCJA Board will forge ahead by updating our website as often as possible. We will also uphold our emphasis on training and mentoring.

As I look back on this year and reflect...I realize how fast our lives move!

It has been a great year!

As an association, we made communication a point of emphasis. We updated our website, made it our goal to have one point of contact as an MHSAA liaison and collaborated with local and regional associations around the state on communication. We worked VERY hard to share as much information as possible as quickly as we acquired it.

This coming year looks to be another journey towards success! This year we will see a new two year manual. We will see a few updates and changes to our sport. We will watch our membership grow! We will see the MCJA Fall Conference adapt while working closely with the Competitive Cheer Coaches Association of Michigan. Our trainings will also adapt with suggestions from our members!

How did it go?

I look forward to serving in 2010-2011...

As an association we feel that it went well, but it can still be BETTER! We will continue our mission to communicate effectively and efficiently with ALL officials around the state of Michigan. If you have ideas or suggestions that you feel would help our endeavor, please email them to mcja.info@gmail.com.

Cheers to ALL of YOU!

Stacy

What's Your Call? A team performs six skills in round two, should a penalty be given? Yes, a 22 point penalty (number 23 on the safety judge's penalty sheet) is given since an extra skill can not be performed in this round. A coach makes changes to a round three description sheet and during round one gives the safety judges the updated description sheet. Is this a penalty? Yes, this is a ten point penalty assessed on the Round 1 penalty sheet. A coach is allowed to make changes on the description sheet as well as any score sheet up to a half an hour before the meet. A coach is yelling the cheer and the counts from the coaches box. Is this a penalty? No, coaches area violations only deal with the number of coaches in the area. Cont'd pg 2



2010 Cheer Final Photos...page 3

Look to page 10 for the results from the MCJA Elections....

In round three, a cheerleader completes a tumbling pass but trips and falls to the mat when moving to the next formation. Is a penalty given?

What's Your Call...cont'd from page 1

No penalty would be given since the fall was not part of the tumbling pass.

Two competitors step off the back of the mat, at the same time, prior to a tumbling pass. Is this a two point or four point penalty?

It is a two point penalty since the infraction occurred at the same time. If the competitors stepped off the mat at different times, then it would be a four point penalty.

Ethical Officiating...The MHSAA Policy

In all cases, officials must be neutral and may not officiate in any contest involving relatives or other similar close relationships. It is the official's responsibility to notify tournament management as soon as possible of a conflict of interest, so that a possible switch may occur.

- a. *Official's son/ daughter attends or is a recent graduates (1-5 years) of a participating school.*
- b. *Official (or an immediate family member) is a current or former staff member (teacher, coach or employee) at a participating school.*
- c. *Official has a close connection or relationship to the coach of a participating school.*
- d. *Official is a recent graduate (1-5 years) or connected alumni of a participating school.*

It is preferred that an official who is also a coach in the sport he/she officiates decline a tournament invitation in the sport in any class. Depending on the sport, a qualified official who also has coached that sport in that season and who works a full regular-season schedule, may be considered for tournament assignment or replacement by MHSAA staff.

"ALL – STAR" CONTESTS/NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

According to the MHSAA Handbook, no athletic director, coach, teacher, or administrator of a Michigan High School, and 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 MHSAA 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).

Cheer Finals 2010



The
Judges....

Thank You to Karla Koviak for the photos from Cheer Finals!

*2010 MCJA Summer Workshop
Saturday August 21st
Mason High School*

We're so excited to be back at Mason High School for the 2010 MCJA Summer Workshop. This year's workshop will be held on Saturday, August 21st, from 9:00-4:00. We will be keeping the same format as last summer, while incorporating a few tweaks from your suggestions. We will again be dividing into groups for the novice official safety/panel; and veteran official safety/panel.

If you are a panel official who has been judging for less than 5 years or hasn't had an extremely full schedule as of yet, then you may be interested in attending the novice classes where we will walk through from beginning to end the process of officiating, including everything from professionalism to understanding round 3 description sheets.

For the novice safety official you can look forward to a thorough walk thru of the manual and penalty sheets, as well as seeing first hand some of the stunts/skills performed by one of our live demo teams.

For those of you who have "been there done that" in officiating, the veteran classes are for you. In both the safety and panel veteran classes we will go through any changes in the new 2010-2012 manual as well as have an open forum discussion regarding issues that you have experienced throughout the previous year so that you are able to get the opinions of other seasoned officials.

All training classes are free to MCJA members however there is a \$20.00 fee to cover food and beverages for the day. If you are interested in staying overnight at the conference we will post a list of local hotels on the website, for your convenience. Please know that you will be responsible for your own reservations.

Registration forms will be available on our website in July and confirmations will be sent via e-mail. A schedule containing rooms for each class will be available upon checking in.

Hope to see you all this summer!

No matter what you've done lately, you must firmly believe that you can become an even better official.

Better Officiating Tips adapted from Referee Magazine

*2010 MCJA Fall Conference
DeVos Place
Grand Rapids, Michigan
November 6, 2010*



Mother/Daughter Judging Crews

Submitted by Sandy Collins

This year's Cheer Finals was quite the family affair! Two sets of Mother/Daughter Cheer Officials hit the arena...all in Division II!



Barb Laird and her daughter Diana Dildine judged Division II Panel and even sat next to each other. Judi Holland officiated on the Division II Panel, while daughter Janelle Holland officiated with the Safety crew for Division II.

Judi Holland coached Cheer at Mattawan High School for 7.5 years, coaching daughter Janelle for three of those years. Both teach dance at Ballet Arts in Kalamazoo, Judi for 34 years and Janelle for 3 years. Janelle is teaching a Kindergarten wrap around program at Richland Elementary. Both have officiated at Cheer Finals before, Judi for 12 years and Janelle for 5 years. Judi and Janelle are members of LMCCOA and MCJA. Judi is an MCJA Board member.

What is the best part of officiating together? "When the announcer announces the officials and two Holland's are announced together!" states Janelle.

Barb Laird coached at Henry Ford II, Chippewa Valley, and Dakota High Schools. She coached her daughter Diana while at Henry Ford. Barb has also coached softball and basketball and Diana was on the dance team. Diana is currently a Physics and Earth Science teacher at Berkley while Barb is a retired school secretary. Barb has 25 years of judging experience and both are MCJA members.

What is the best part of officiating together? "Sitting next to my daughter at State Finals this year was the highlight of my judging career! It doesn't get any better than that!" quoted Barb Laird.

Execution Deductions: What is Your Opinion?

Submitted by Juli Brown

A team is doing an extension. On the prep you notice that the legs of the bases are not the same and when the flyer jumps in her feet come apart and push her bases out to the sides, the extension goes right up, but the flyers feet are much wider than shoulder width when she reaches full height. They cradle dismount and the flyers arms are not tight and seem free flying, her toes are not pointed, the bases catch her very low and the flyer bends her knees before finally being set out onto the mat. Well, it seems like a lot of things going on in one single stunt but I bet most of us have seen this many times. So, what do you take of in execution?

Legs of the bases are not the same (deduction of .1 - .2) flyers feet apart and push bases (.2 - .4), once in stunt flyers feet much further than shoulder width apart (.1 - .2), free flying arms (.1-.4 depending on how extreme), unpointed toes (.1-.2) low catch (.2-.4 again depending on how extreme), flyers bent knees when being set onto the mat. (.1-.2) Total deduction for this stunt alone could be between 0.9 - 2.0 off. Again, this would depend on the severity of the execution errors and how much they affected the look of the stunt as a whole.

What is up with our members..

Many of you might remember that **Heidi Hopper** was taking her PLS (Advanced Certification for Legal Professionals) Exam on the same day as State Finals. Well we're happy to report that SHE PASSED! Good work, Heidi....but we are not surprised you smarty!

Laurie Bilkie-Snyder and her husband Ilya are expecting a baby in early September. They don't know the sex of the baby; they like the surprise! So far all is going well with the pregnancy and they're half way there! We're sure you're looking soooo cute and pregnant by now!! Congratulations Laurie!

Julie Everlove got engaged to her boyfriend, Jason Sinning, on April 9, 2010 and is planning a June 2011 wedding. Congratulations and good luck Julie and Jason!

Sarah Johnson wanted to let us all know that they BOUGHT A HOUSE!!! They we're hopeful to have been moved by the end of April so we hope she's reading this in her "New Pad" located in the sweet little town of Plainwell.

Congratulations to **Tanya Ramm** who gave birth to Brayden Joseph Ramm on February 7th (Superbowl Sunday!). This is son #2 for them. Wishing you lots of sleep Tonya!

Jane Beimer would like us all to know that she will be graduating from Wayne State University School of Medicine this spring. She will then be moving to Ann Arbor where she will start residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at the University of Michigan! WOW! DR. JANE that's a great accomplishment!!

Mary Kuk-Wieber and her husband Chad are expecting their first child this June....it's a GIRL...another "Cheerleader" in the house!

Jan Pickard has quite a biggie to share with us....her *twins daughters* are graduating from college in May 2010 - whoop whoop!!! Courtney from MSU and Chelsey from Wayne State! Way to go Mom you survived!

Proud Momma **Julie Goodwin** wants to let us know that her daughter Kelcey Goodwin graduated from Madonna University with a Bachelor's in Nursing! Congratulations to both!

Danielle Burnham is very excited to share that after 7 1/2 years of dating, its time to make it official... she's getting married on July 31, 2010! She says she's very excited and can not wait to start this new chapter in her life! We are so happy for you Danielle!

Keegan Joshua Toth was born to **Nicole Toth** and her husband on November 30, 2009. His big brother Tyler loves his new playmate! That's great news Nicole, thanks so much for sharing!

It is my pleasure to write this article about Marilyn Bowker. Marilyn has been an important part of Michigan cheerleading for many years. She was one of the founding members of MCCA, a cheerleading coach at Okemos High School (she was the coach with the stop watch around her neck to time her teams cheer), then became the judge whose scores were always respected. When MCJA was first a sub-committee of MCCA, Marilyn was instrumental in the committee's work. She then became the MCJA executive director when the judges association became independent of the coaches association. This is a position Marilyn has held until this spring, when she retired from the executive director position.

It would be very difficult to find someone connected with cheerleading in Michigan who has not been touched by Marilyn. She has trained, mentored, and advised many officials and coaches. As one of the MCJA board members stated, "I would not be who I am without Marilyn." A cheer coach

Marilyn Bowker: *Myth?...No...Legend!*

said, "Marilyn has a fine eye for detail and her scores reflect that." For anyone

who was trained by Marilyn know the hash mark or grading system she uses. As a coach, if you ever called Marilyn about the scores she gave your team, she could look at her notes and hash marks to provide specific details about the cheer and where the problems were.

My first experience with Marilyn was when she called to request that my team demo at the spring coaches clinic. Since that time I've worked with Marilyn on numerous cheerleading projects and events. That is the way Marilyn has always been, if something cheerleading related needed to be done she was there to lend her support.

MCJA would like to thank Marilyn for all the years she has guided the organization and her service as its executive director!!

Submitted by Cindy Tyzo

Ever deal with officials that appear to always find the "glass half-empty" or not want to fulfill their full obligation for the meet? Here are a few comebacks that I've found helpful through the years:

"How much is your check? They never pay me what I feel I should be making." Response - Is your check different from the contract you agreed to and signed?

Dealing with Difficult Officials

submitted by Phyllis Olszewski

"I feel that I should be entitled to mileage and expenses for making this trip - how about you?" Response - Did you request mileage when they called you? If you agreed to it on the phone and it isn't printed on your contract did you write it in when you returned the contract with a note politely stating that mileage was agreed to and it appears that it was inadvertently omitted on the contract.

"I wish they didn't allow coaches access to the area we're working in." Response - As long as the coaches are appropriate I don't mind that they're in and out and asking questions - I feel it makes much more approachable and avoids some issues on the floor.

"They should treat us the same as they do basketball officials." Response - Our "game" is as unique as theirs is to them. I'm glad they don't treat us the same - at our school I know they don't provide any of the other sports officials with food and hospitality that we tend to receive in competitive cheer. I appreciate our host management and the extra attention we are given.

"I don't do round three sheets." Response - I believe it is our responsibility to go over each sheet even if we are safety judges, besides I wouldn't want my "team" to have to work harder because I was the "slacker".

"I think we should give that team a penalty for never figuring their round three points correctly - I have to correct her sheet every time I have her." Response - As long as they attempt to do it correctly and points are listed it's not a penalty. Maybe the next time we have her we could have her come in and sit with us while we do her sheet so that she understands how time consuming it is and she'll get the master corrected in her computer - how about if we talk to her directly about it and ask her to come early to her next meet to sit in with the judges for a few minutes? Sometimes the description sheets aren't given back and when they are maybe she doesn't understand the corrections that are being made on it.

"I hope you don't mind but I'll be leaving the minute the last team is off the floor as I have other plans." Response - I'm sure you realize that we're supposed to stay a minimum of ten minutes but that's fine - just leave me your cell number so that if coaches have questions regarding your scoring that I can give them your number.

These are just a few comebacks that may redirect the "negative" attitude back to the person that initiated it. I've also found that sometimes no matter what you try - people that always see the "glass as half empty" will never be able to see the "glass as have full". When that happens just do the right thing - for the kids, the coaches and your fellow "teammates". Be a positive force on those around you.

Dear Marilyn...

Make learning your primary goal and never become complacent

- There is always something to learn.
- You can learn continuously and sharpen your skills

-Better Officiating Tips adapted from Referee Magazine

Ask questions of other officials and try to incorporate their judging techniques you believe will work for you.

Just when you think you know it all...study the rulebook there may be more rules you did not know!

... I got the “eagle eye” from others on my judging panel. One of the judges asked me if I were going to change before the competition. I explained that I left work and did not realize that I did not have my black pants in the car. I did have on a white top and felt as though the tan pants would not show—after all I was serving as a panel judge and the pants should not be a distraction. I felt like I received the cold shoulder from the other panel members.

Sincerely,
Dr. Este Rong

Dear Este:

It is easy to forget the necessities for an assignment. HOWEVER, the rules are in place. They are listed on page 13 of the 2009-2010 Cheer Manual. Would you go to your job as a teacher in shorts? Obviously, totally unacceptable. Would you drive 100 mph to get to your contest? Obviously, totally unacceptable. Would you evaluate a team’s Choreography based on what you believe it should be. Obviously, totally unacceptable. Wearing tan pants as a MHSAA cheer official at a Cheer meet. Obviously, totally unacceptable. Black skirt or dress pants is the rule. The Cheer Manual states: “Judges of Competitive Cheer are required to wear a white blouse/ short or top and black skirt or dress slacks. Any additional garments such as a blazer shall be black.”

My personal experience might exemplify the issue: I was on my way to a contest. In the dark of the early morning, I grabbed a black skirt instead of a blue. (That was when we wore blue.) I stopped into a Meijer's store on the way and purchased a blue skirt so that I would be following the rules. As an official, it might be good to have a Competition Check-Off list to make sure an official has all of the necessities. With busy schedules, it is often easy to miss one of the requisites of our job.

Cheers!
Marilyn

MCJA Cheer Official - Bag

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Front compartment with pockets for PDA, cell phone, water bottle and multiple accessories.
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Communications Committee Report 2009-2010 Season

Submitted by Bobbe Johnson (retiring)

For the third year in a row, most of the “information sheets” that were returned to the MCJA Communication Committee (from Coaches and Tournament Directors) were positive. In fact, 97% of the specific judges (Panel & Safety) listed were given “Appropriate” by the coaches who chose to return our information sheets.

It is not mandatory to return these sheets (unlike the MHSAA Evaluation Forms), so it is heartening to see coaches and Tournament Directors taking the time to give us feedback. The Communications Committee has always shared the results of the feedback with the MCJA Board of Directors and this has often led to some lively discussions about how to communicate to the MHSAA and to coaches and judges the concerns that were voiced. MCJA has been responsive to the Coaches and Tournament Directors concerns by adapting training, writing newsletter articles and exchanging information with the MHSAA via our official liaison. All of this helps to fulfill one of goals of MCJA—educating coaches and officials.

In addition to the positive statements about individual officials on the information sheets, the coaches expressed several “general concerns” about cheer judging. Here are their concerns along with some of the discussion points from the last MCJA Board meeting:

CONCERN #1—What about officials judging a team from a school where they have a connection...of any kind? This brought about a “very lively” discussion. Evidently most of the Board has either been in that situation, or has questioned “others” about this. In the end, our MHSAA Liaison (Candy Cox) read the stated MHSAA policy on this subject. **Note: I was promised that the policy would be printed in it’s entirety in another article in this newsletter. So, please check for the MHSAA “official word” in another article.** There will still be concerns about this issue since the policy gives very general parameters. As a result, I would advise/caution officials to understand that it “might” still be a concern with coaches even if you don’t think so. Avoiding such situations (IF possible) makes sense.

CONCERN #2—We need more specific qualifications for a collapsed skill...especially tucks. Do hands count?..knees??.etc.?? This is a difficult one. Since many judges (including me) are not trained in gymnastics, it is often hard to know what is important to count or not. The MHSAA really doesn’t want (at this time) to get any more specific about how to judge many skills, etc.; so the best advice I have is to get some additional training on tumbling skills and how they are to be judged. MCJA and other organizations have training for this. Unfortunately, this leads to many different views (different experts) on what skills should look like and how they should be judged. But, at least a trained judge should be consistent within their own scores.

CONCERN #3—I am concerned about judges selecting one official to do the “Execution” category and then duplicating that score on the other sheets. This concern was echoed by most of the MCJA Board. This shouldn’t be happening! It **IS** difficult to do all of the score sheet, and things move very fast so that it is hard to catch everything especially for new judges; but as things now stand it is the responsibility of **each** panel judge to record their own execution. I know that there seems to be additional pressure for this score to be similar between all judges on a panel (especially with the “Bonus”), but it doesn’t have to be. In fact, I am often surprised that the “Execution” scores are anywhere close to the same between panel judges because there is such variation on what each judge can see and how many points taken away for each infraction. Maybe someday the MHSAA will incorporate an Execution Judge into their regulations; but until then, each judge should do execution. By the way, this is one area where I like to check with other judges. This is **not to change my score**, but to check what the consistency of what I’m seeing is compared to others.

There is actually another similar issue with a slightly different recommendation that I want to address with the above concern. During the Board’s discussion it was pointed out that some of us do divide up the different skills (to count) in the “Choreography” section of the score sheet. It was pointed out that this was an entirely different situation. All we are doing in the choreography section is “counting” to a number that has been given to us by the coaches. We are not creating the number needed or evaluating it (except for completion). This can be a help to the panel and shouldn’t be an issue with the coaches or MHSAA. (If you disagree with this, please let me know. I would like to hear your view).

Once again, I write like I talk (just ask my former American History students). I’m sorry if I take too many words to get my point across, but I try to be really clear about what to put here. This upcoming Competitive Cheer season, the MCJA Judges Information Form for Coaches and the Tournament Director Judges Information Form for MCJA will be also (in addition to being sent to schools) available on our MCJA website and from MCJA Board members at competitions. Please use these sheets to communicate your issues and concerns to MCJA so that we can get information out to our membership and others. It is important to keep the lines of communication open between coaches, officials and MHSAA. This is important to the growth and development of the sport of Competitive Cheer in Michigan.

MCJA Board of Directors

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616-678-7577

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Newly Elected: Laurie Bilke-Snyder

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dy Cox
517-

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Marilyn Bowker
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MCJA Election Results

President Stacy Smith

President Elect Cindy Tyzo

Secretary Juli Brown

Newly Elected Board Members:

Laurie Bilkie-Snyder

Judi Holland

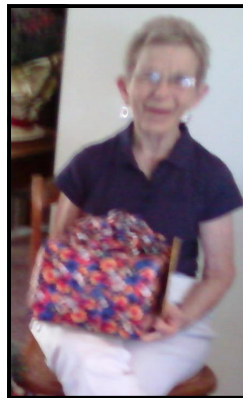
Karla Koviak

Jill Lansky

Marty Shean

Jann Stahr

Susan Wood



Thank You Marilyn!!!



Questions or input?

mcja.info@gmail.com