

MCJA 2013-2014

Winter Newsletter

Just like a new year, a new Competitive Cheer season begins about excitement and anticipation for what the coming months will bring. It is always exciting to see new and old teams, coaches, and skills; and we all look forward to what each team will bring to the floor. Also with a new season comes the challenge of learning and mastering the current rules changes and updates. There are a number of changes this year including the responsibility of safety officials to time each round and number of competitor requirements. It is imperative that every official not only review the rule book, but also review, print, and know the additional rules from the October 2013 update. You can find this on the MHSAA website. The updates include an explanation of the rule change and the page(s) in the manual that correlate to the change. Officials are expected to know the rules, apply them without bias, and act with the utmost professionalism in every aspect of our position. We are privileged to be a part of Michigan cheerleading while we help the sport continue to grow. As we enter the 2013-2014 season, I want to wish everyone good luck. Safe travels, and enjoy your time working with the wonderful people – judges, coaches, athletes, and fans – involved with Competitive Cheer.

Cindy Tyzo

Best wishes for the New Year!



2013 MCJA Official of the Year, Jill Lansky



YOU DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Recently I received a request to be friends with someone on Facebook and I had no idea who the person was. I then received a private message from this individual explaining who she was. This person is now a coach and explained she was a former competitive cheerleader and I had made a difference in her life. How? "She stated when I cheered I never smiled and my coach said an official had said your team needs to smile, relax and have fun because they are great cheerleaders and have good material. Well now she is a coach with a new program and she is conveying the message to her cheerleaders. So the comments you make on your judging sheet do make a difference after 10-15 years.

Candy

MHSAA Update

Candy Cox, as the MCJA/MHSAA liaison, talks with Kathy Westdorp on Monday about any cheer questions from officials or coaches received from the previous week. If she receives a call during the week and an answer is needed immediately, she can connect with Kathy the same day. Please send any rule suggestions you have to MCJA or myself. Remember to be considered for Tournament selection you must have attended a rules meeting or completed an on-line rules meeting, be a registered official and submitted your schedule to MHSAA.

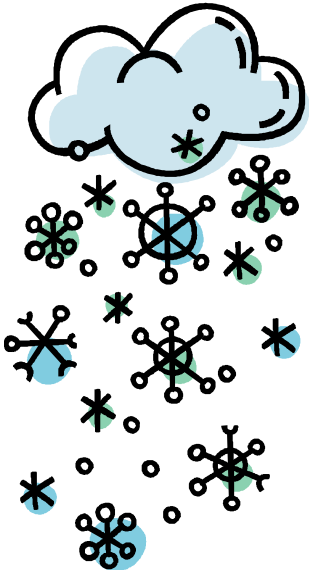


*Jill had no idea that this award was coming her direction!
Congratulations Jill – well deserved!*

There I sat at Mason High School with my phone ready to snap a picture of the 2013 Official of the Year. I'm listening to Jane intently, trying to time the picture of surprise just right. Jane mentions pizza. I lose my train of thought. Then she says my name and I'm pulled back from my pizza thoughts. Jane Plaisted is so good at keeping this award secret and surprising. At that moment trapped between thoughts of pizza, photos and surprise, I had no idea what to say. So today, I pause and say thank you. Thank you to MCJA and all the amazing people involved in competitive cheer in Michigan. Thank you to all the athletes and coaches. Thank you to all the carpools and laughter we share getting to and from competitions all over the state. Thank you to the mentors we all are to each other.

This summer at Officiate Michigan Day Jerry Markbreit (4 time Super Bowl referee) said it best: "My friends are officials." So true! I look forward to competitive cheer season. I think I laugh and definitely smile the most during this time of year! And as Buddy Elf would say, "I just like to smile, smiling's my favorite!" Thank you to MCJA and MHSAA competitive cheer for all the smiles.

Jill Lansky



2-4-6-8 How Officials Really Rate

Let's face it most officials at one time or another are talking about the MHSAA rating system for its officials. But how important are those ratings and how do they work. After each competition coaches are asked to rate officials on their performance of that event giving the official a score of 1 (highest) – 5 (lowest) in each of the following categories; professionalism, consistency, appearance and management. Those ratings are then collected by MHSAA and compiled at the end of the season to give you an overall rating score. Cheer officials should go to the MHSAA website after May 1, 2014 to check over your ratings that were submitted. If you receive a 5 rating in any of the mentioned categories you will receive an email from MHSAA letting you know. At that time you may dispute the rating and possibly have it overturned.

The MHSAA uses your rating to help determine who will be selected to judge for tournament events. Other considerations are, strength of schedule, attendance at a rules meeting and recommendations from assigners and others.

MHSAA will be the first to admit that the system is not perfect but does give everyone a pretty good idea of how officials are doing in the field. It is important to keep in mind the “big picture” and not to get caught up on one or two poor ratings that were possible given in the heat of the moment. We know everyone is doing their very best to be fair and consistent throughout the judging process.

Respectfully submitted by Sheila Brownlee



Reminders:

Judge what you see the day of the event!
Have a clear picture in your mind of what it
will take to get a 10 or a 5.

Be prepared!

Work as a team...

Try not to influence other officials with our
opinions of things have seen previously!

What's Your Call?

1. A flyer in an extension transitions to a face down flatback with two bases and one catcher. Is this legal?

No, this is illegal since a legal flatback (face up or face down) requires at least two bases and at least two catchers as stated on page 58 in the rule book with additional clarification in the October 2013 update.

2. A Division 1 JV team competes with 14 competitors in Round 1, 10 competitors in Round 2, and 15 competitors in Round 3. What penalty is given?

A 10 point penalty is assessed in round 3. The number of competitors in Round 3 does not match the number of competitors in Round 1 as stated on page 18 and 19 of the rule book. No penalty would be given for having 10 competitors in Round 2, since Sub-varsity teams may have less than the required amount without penalty (However, they may not exceed the maximum number).

3. A Junior High/Middle School team competes with 10 competitors in the first cheer and 16 in the second cheer. Is this a penalty?

No, this is not a penalty. During competition a minimum of four (4) and a maximum of 16 team members are allowed on the floor for competition in either round as stated on page 78 of the rule book.

4. A team begins a backward suspended roll at the elevator level in a braced pyramid and ends in an extension. Is this legal?

No, a braced suspended roll must end in a cradle or sponge as stated on page 74 of the rule book with additional clarification in the October 2013 update.

Submitted by Cindy Tyzo



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Say Something

*To comment or not to comment: that is the question. There are many reasons we might not make comments on the scoresheets, even though MHSAA has given us plenty of room to write. Often it feels like we barely have time to write down our numerical scores before the next team is ready to take the mat. Yes—our responsibility as officials is to award scores fairly and consistently for each meet. However, coaches often ask us to make comments and give feedback. So when we can, let's **say something**.*

Here are some things to keep in mind when making comments:

1. Be helpful: *We cannot assume that coaches understand that our comments are coming from a place of wanting to be helpful—hoping to give tips/suggestions to ultimately improve scores. Typically when I am taking notes, I write what was wrong (i.e. on a back walkover in Round 2, I might write something like: 3 flexed, all trail legs bent). However, this season so far, I have been focusing on wording my comments to reflect what a coach/team might do to improve the score. So in the case of the BWO with 3 girls with flexed feet and bent trail legs, I would change my scoresheet comments to “point toes; straighten trail legs.” While my personal notes justify or explain the score I gave (and I still need those), my scoresheet comments are intended to help a team improve.*

2. Double-judged meet = more time to comment: *When a competition only has one team of judges and many teams competing, we simply may not have time to make comments. However, when we have a couple minutes because we are judging every other team, this might be an ideal time to add some comments.*

3. Details: *Be as detailed as possible. Sometimes I am able to jot down the words that the girls said when I noticed an area to improve. So I might write something like, “Watch T motion – ‘better than the rest’” to try to help the coach really pinpoint what I meant.*

4. Positive comments: *If you see something that “wows” you, don’t keep it a secret. While most coaches request that our comments indicate areas of growth, let’s affirm teams, too! And perhaps if you’re uncomfortable making comments, this would be an easier place to start!*

What are your tips or ideas for giving feedback/comments? *Please share your ideas with your colleagues, and whenever possible...say something!*

Respectfully submitted,

Tanya Ramm
