

CIAC OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION

STATE-WIDE MEETING SUMMARY

JUNE 19, 2014

The meeting was attended by 90+ officiating leaders representing practically all local or state boards. The main purpose of the meeting was to keep the lines of communication open, to update the members on important issues, and to share ideas for mutual benefit. It also provided CIAC with the opportunity to thank the officiating leaders for their dedication and numerous contributions to high school athletics.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

The group observed a moment of silence for the officials in Ct. that died this past year. May they rest in peace.

MEMBERSHIP TEMPLATE (2014-15) – Matt Fischer

The membership template is the same as last year. Matt reported that he and Joe T have been investigating the Arbiter registration program for possible adoption for the 2014-15 school year. Both will meet with Clark Evans in Boston at the NFHS Summer Meeting to discuss some features that we currently have in our database that we would want access to in the Arbiter system. The Arbiter system has the potential to simplify the registration process and improve the accuracy of the data. We will report our findings to the CIAC Officials Advisory Board in the fall.

OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST – Matt Fischer

Matt also addressed the following topics: 1. The email reminder he sent to all athletic directors asking them to rectify any fall sport schedule conflicts as soon as possible since assigners were beginning to schedule officials for these games; 2. Matt provided an explanation of the mechanics that should be followed by assigners relative to game sites; 3. He encouraged game officials to sign up on the public website at www.ciacsports.com to receive schedule changes for the schools where they are assigned for a particular week, especially when bad weather is predicted. By doing so, the game official will receive instant notification via email if the game is postponed; 4. Matt stressed the importance of accurate DQ reports from officials. We need the correct names of ejected players and coaches; 5. Matt informed the group of the expanded TV coverage of regular season and CIAC tournament games and expanded internet access through www.ciacsports.com to games they officiated. He explained that the games can be viewed by anyone in the country at no cost after a 72 hour time period.

2014-15 OFFICIALS MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION – Joe T and Jadwiga Brown

Joe T introduced Jadwiga Brown, the Administrative Assistant to the group as the point person for the membership database. The Boards were instructed to send additions and deletions to officialsupdates@casciac.org as per the instructions with the appropriate payment. The membership in the CIAC Officials' Association runs from July 1 to June 30 as does the NFHS membership for those boards that also join **NFHSA**. No new members should be submitted unless they have consented to a background check and provided the information required including their date of birth and middle name. Jadwiga has also sent an electronic copy of the current roster to the appropriate individuals and shared a hard copy to the rep that attended the state wide meeting.

Payment should be sent to Jadwiga Brown, CIAC Office, 30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, CT. 06410. As you know, after 9 years without an increase, the CIAC Officials Association membership fee has been increased to \$13. if your board

also chooses to join the NFHS Officials' Association that fee is \$17 per member. Submission dates were reviewed. Boards should adhere to these dates.

DAN SCAVONE, PRESIDENT OF CAAD

Dan, who is also a long time high school and college basketball referee thanked the assigners, board leaders and the officials in all sports for their excellent service to high school athletics and pledged that during his two year term he is going to stress working together with officials groups for mutual benefit and to best serve the 110,000 participants. Dan is willing to work with the CIAC Officials Advisory Board to help address issues of concern.

GRANTS PROGRAM

Hank Koritkoski, chair of the "Grants Committee" distributed the list of approved grants totaling \$11,750 and emphasized that the two standing grants for the initial use of arbiter and joining the NFHS Officials Assoc. are the only two grants that are available at this time. The 2 standing grants of \$250 and can be applied for at any time and can be in addition to any other grant previously received.

Several individuals provided positive feedback regarding the use of the grant money and the benefit to their respective boards and their officials. Arnie Mann thanked and complimented the Central Board of Baseball Umpires for using the grant money to provide a state-wide all day clinic given by MLB and 5 former major league umpires at Muzzy Field last summer. It was attended by 100 umpires. Joe T was also in attendance and attest to the fact that the clinic was truly outstanding and beneficial to everyone in attendance. Dave Leete mentioned that his lacrosse board purchased a camera to film their officials as an evaluation tool geared toward improvement. They also have purchased a software program that is designed to breakdown film. Both of these tools enhance their evaluation and observer programs. The grants program was a huge success.

NFHS ELECTRONIC EXAMS / RULE BOOK ORDERS / NFHS ONLINE INTERPRETERS MEETINGS

Electronic exams, answer keys and rule books can be obtained through CIAC by contacting Joyce Smith at 203-250-1111 or jsmith@casciac.org.

5 logins per sport are permitted for the NFHS online interpreters meetings. Joe T will notify the interpreters since he arranged for the interpreters in all sports to register individually. A schedule of all online meetings was included in the packet as well as the contact info for Joyce for rule books.

COACHES RULES INTERPRETATIONS MEETINGS

Boards were encouraged to provide this service which enhances the relationship amongst coaches, leagues, and officials' groups. Joe asked the interpreters to cover the CIAC protocol for lodging a complaint that was included in the packet as well as the new rules.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

The background checks continue to serve a positive purpose in protecting the boards, the CIAC and the schools we service. In three years, we have background checked 5500 officials, the vast majority of which we done at no additional cost to the boards or individual officials. Joe T stressed that when meeting with new candidates it is helpful to provide them with a copy of the background check policy and consent form. Use the new consent form that can be obtained on the officials' association website under downloads. The form includes a place for the middle name which is required and maiden name, if applicable. It was emphasized that boards should submit their new officials for the background check when they become candidates and not wait until they have passed all requirements. In accordance

with the background check policy, officials that get arrested for crimes that could result in jail time must report the arrest to their local board and the local board will then notify CIAC. This is important especially when the arrest occurs during the season. Many boards have a statement to this effect in their constitution, which is advisable. In most cases the CIAC would let the board handle the matter unless it was advisable to do otherwise. Joe T included a brief explanation of the arrest policy in the meeting packet and it is also posted on line.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES – Joe Tonelli

Concussion Bill (HB 5113) –Those testifying on behalf of the CIAC Officials Association at the public hearing (Ray Faustich, Bill Riccio, Jeffrey Smith and Joe Tonelli) emphasized that all boards already provide a mandatory yearly rules clinic for all officials that includes a review of the signs and symptoms of concussion. Also, when the first concussion went into effect in 2010, CIAC provided concussion cards for all refs that included the signs and symptoms of concussion and CIAC established a concussion protocol for Ct officials that boards review with refs so all officials will know their role if a head injury is suspected.

Additionally, all boards must meet the CIAC Recognition Standards to officiate high school sports. Clarifying language in recognition standard 6 was approved by the CIAC Board of Control that requires that a review of the signs and symptoms of concussion will be done on a yearly basis.

In summary, the lobbying effort on the part of CIAC, CAAD and the CIAC Officials Association worked very well and as a result all references to referees and officials has been removed from the new law, which will go into effect July 1, 2015. Basically, in addition to the requirements in the current law for education for coaches, the new law (HB 5113) mandates education for athletes and parents before a youngster can participate sports. It is an absolute must that rule interpreters cover the signs and symptoms of concussion and the concussion protocol for Ct officials each year. It is also recommended that officials avail themselves of the opportunity to take the NFHS online concussion course which is free. Step by step instructions to access the course was included in the packet and should be shared with all officials.

Assault Bill (HB 5486) – The Judiciary Committee did raise the bill and held a public hearing. Once again, the CIAC lobbying effort and testimony given by Representative Paul Davis, Dan Scavone, Arnie Mann and Joe Tonelli was well received by the Judiciary Committee. However, because the Judiciary Committee had so many critical and time sensitive bills that required immediate action, the committee chairs informed Paul Davis that there is simply not enough time to do what is necessary to act on HB 5486 in this short session which ended yesterday. The chairs were forced to prioritize the abundance of bills on their plate, and since there are current laws in place that would apply if an official was assaulted, the chairs could not justify including HB 5486 on the top priority list at this time. Paul suspected that this could be the case, but given the past history of the bill, he felt it was a good strategy to test the waters in this short session to access if there was any strong opposition from the current law makers. Paul was pleased to report that he did not receive any strong opposition about the bill.

The good news relative to HB 5486 (Assault Bill for the protection of Sports Officials) is that we avoided the bill being voted down by the Judiciary Committee, which would have made it extremely difficult to raise the bill again in a future session. Since that was not the case there is still hope for this legislation. This will be discussed with the Advisory Board and all boards were encouraged to document all assault incidences. And email them to Joe Tonelli. All in all it was a successful year for the officials at the capital.

IDEA SHARING / RAISING AWARENESS OF IMPORTANT ISSUES

Sensitivity and sexual harassment training – Donna Vavrinec / Al Vazquez

The Greater Fairfield County Softball Umpires Association held a sensitivity training session that was required of all their umpires this past season, which was well received by their members. The program was developed by Brian Marks, who is among the board leadership and an attorney and college professor. Brian was teaching a graduate class and unable to attend the state wide meeting, but Donna and Al did an excellent job in outlining the program. A one page handout was distributed to provide an overview. The goal of the program was to: 1. Inform; 2. Increase Knowledge; 3. Eliminate Inappropriate Behavior; and 4. Change Attitudes. Their complete presentation, which includes defining sexual harassment and avoidance strategies are available upon request. The topic piqued the interest of the group and generated some questions. The question was posed relative to how you would want officials to treat or speak to your own children or relatives, if they were playing a sport. This type of awareness is definitely needed in present climate that exists.

In addition, professionalism and common sense should be your guiding principles. Poor judgment by officials in this area is certain to cause problems. Al indicated that if anyone was interested in the complete program they can email him at avazquez335@comcast.net.

Interpersonal skills in dealing with players and coaches (Preventative Officiating) – Ray Faustich

What follows is only a segment of the outline and the bullet points that Ray reviewed with the group. His presentation was well received. His contact information is below if you have any interest in discussing this topic further. (Preventative Officiating)

1. A bit of History:
 - Rule # 17 *“All disputes and differences relative to the game, to be decided by the umpire, from which there is no appeal.”* (New York Knickerbocker Baseball Club-Bylaws & Rules 9/23/1845.)
 - First fine (\$1.00) imposed for cursing at an umpire-9/26/1845 by Umpire William R. Wheaton.
2. NFHS Baseball Rules Committee June 2013. 2014- UMPIRE AUTHORITY and ENFORCEMENT: *Disputing the umpire’s (judgment) calls cannot be tolerated in education based athletics.*)
3. Why do coaches and players dispute and argue Official’s decisions?
4. Can we change the “atmosphere of dispute”?
5. Teaching and learning Interpersonal skills development as well as rules, mechanics and positioning.
6. How does an understanding and implementation of *“interpersonal skills”* enable this change?
7. Examples:
 - Be assertive but not insensitive
 - Be understanding but not weak
 - Be friendly but not a friend
 - Be proactive but not arrogant
 - Be calm but not soft
 - Be competent but not overbearing
 - Be punctual but not impatient
8. Have schools, administrators, coaches and players become a part of the process.

Ray Faustich

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203-888-3788 Home

HANDOUTS

In an effort to share information the following items were included in the meeting packet: Membership counts in all sports/boards (CIAC and NFHSOA membership counts); Registration info for CIAC and NFHS; CIAC Officials Advisory Board minutes of May 8, 2014; Grants listing; Online NFHS Rule Interpreters Meetings; A 100 question answer key schedule of online interpreters meetings and how to participate; Communication protocol between member schools and officials groups; Background check, consent form and process; Interpretation of arrest policy; Some Testimony on HB 5113 and HB 5486; NFHS Free Concussion Course with step by step instructions for enrolling and taking the course; CIAC Concussion Protocol for CT Officials; 2014-2015 Officials Fee Schedules; Titles list of Board officials; One page overview of Sensitivity Training Awareness; and lastly the Outline of Presentation outline by Ray Faustich.

WRAP UP

Joe thanked the group for the excellent cooperation and support that CIAC has received from all officials groups and for their dedicated service to high school sports. Let us know how we can continue to support your efforts. It seems hard to believe that the CIAC Officials Association was resurrected in 2005-06. It has been a fast 9 years and I continue to enjoy my role in working together with you to better serve the officials groups and the member schools. The 2014-15 school year will be the 10th anniversary of YOUR reorganized CIAC Officials Association. THANK YOU!!!

Have a great summer!