

**EMSOA ASSOCIATION 2020-2021**

**Taken from the "Game Officials' Newsletter"**

**FIVE IMPORTANT RULES OF OFFICIATING**

**Most important is knowledge of the rules.** This is also the most demanding of the jobs to be learned. There is nothing worse than to be placed in a situation when you know that the official next to you does not know the rules. This can mean a disaster situation for the other officials. As the contest moves along, knowledge of the rules can be tremendously important, and can effect the outcome.

A **second** matter of importance is knowing when you'll have to communicate in a persuasive manner. From the moment you step on the deck, you're in charge of what goes on. Being in the right place, making the right calls, and using convincing signals remain the second most important trait that you possess. You'll come to recognize when a conversation with a player or a coach has gone too far. You'll need to let your judgment develop, and that will take time.

A **third** major area you'll be expected to advance is the spirit of the game you are working. Be patient; observe what is going on around you. At the competitive level you attempt to frame the game so that it mirrors your own ideal. You serve not just as an enforcer, but also as a defender of its spirit and tradition. If you understand that, there will be hope for you as a top-notch official.

A **fourth** element will be judged on how you look and give correct calls. Nothing is simpler than “looking the part”, but that is something that takes time and can help you to make a positive impression. Clean your shoes, walk as if you are important, and keep your shirt tucked in.

**Finally,** join an association in your area. Make yourself available so that other people see you as an experienced official. In many areas, high school games are assigned informally. You'll find the contacts you make will bring rewards, not just in the quality of the games, but even in officiating friendships. Understand the association. This association will introduce rule changes, and some will introduce updates on rules interpretations.

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