



NAIA End of Season Reminders: Focus on Sportsmanship

November 2015

NAIA Officials –

As we move into the final games of the season and onto post-season games, please reflect back on a major focus for NAIA: Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is a point of emphasis for the NAIA. As officials, we play a major role in facilitating desired behavior of all participants.

As an official, our job is to enforce the rules of the game by maintaining a safe and fair environment for competition. Here are a few areas of focus as we move into the last few weeks of competition:

1) Communication

- Excellent communication with fellow officials means communicating before arriving at the game as well as before and during the game.
- Prior to arriving at the game site, be sure to verify all details of assignments with your partners. This is particularly important at the end of the season when assignments may be made only a few days prior to the next game.
- Communication amongst the entire crew throughout the game is critical, the game speeds up, coaches become more strategic, players become better trained and more skilled, and spectators become more knowledgeable.
- If you are the lead official, make sure to have a thorough pre-game with your crew. It is important that you have great communication with everyone involved in the game.

2) Addressing Sportsmanship

- It is imperative to address behavior concerns before they become a problem.
- You should be aware of coaches concerns but do not allow a coach to disrupt the flow of the game,
- Use preventative officiating techniques. If there is a controversial or close call, expect that the coach may question the decision. Be prepared to respond to questions. You do not need to provide an explanation when the coach makes a statement – unless the conduct needs to be addressed. Work with your other crew members to help them communicate as needed.
- Failure of coaches or team members to exhibit good sportsmanship may lead to the need to penalize.

3) Strive for Excellence

- Now is the time for us to be at our best. Teams are entering the critical time of the season. Officials must strive to meet the challenges of the intense games late in the regular season and beyond.
- To be your best, focus on healthy habits. Make sure you are well-rested before each game. Eat nutritious meals. Take some time to relax and focus on other activities. Spend some time with family and friends.

Let's all focus on being our best and strive for excellence as we finish out the season.

Good luck to teams and officials as we move into the final phases of the season!