

MENTOR OVERVIEW

It is the goal of the mentor program that new officials will learn the correct way to perform as an official. Mentor training will better train new officials. Adequately mentored from the outset, people with an interest in officiating can develop as capable and well-rounded officials.

The mentor will be a teacher providing learning opportunities for the new official. It will be the mentor who will answer the tough questions, support the new official in tight situations and encourage the new official in times of distress.

The mentor will be responsible for critiquing the new official. Improvement rather than perfection will be the goal. Positive rather than negative evaluations will be critical to reinforcing the accomplishment of the new official.

Discuss With the New Official:

1. ***What does it take to become a good official?*** It takes a thorough knowledge of the rules of your sport, a love of athletics and kids, physical ability, self-confidence, the dedication and determination necessary to work hard, and above all, personal integrity. The athletes and coaches look upon each contest as being the most important thing happening in their lives at that moment, and the official must look upon each contest the same way and react accordingly. If you have the interest and the attributes described, you may find this to be some of the most rewarding work you will ever be involved in.
2. ***What expectations will officiating have on the young official?*** To become a respected official one must invest time to learn, time to practice and time to develop. Although the time devoted will vary from person to person, there are some requirements that must be observed. Rules meetings, clinics, jamborees and region officials meetings are necessary. Officials improve according to their efforts!
3. ***What is the biggest adjustment new officials may need to make?*** It is important to understand that the basic ingredient of officiating is that of being a decision maker, and sometimes people do not like decisions that don't go their way. Once you realize that people will criticize you because you make necessary decisions, rather than you are a bad person, and you can accept this fact, you are on your way. It is not easy. Don not get discouraged!
4. ***Training Materials*** – The new official will read the SDHSAA Officials Handbook, Directory of Sports Officials, Rules Book and Officials Manual. The new official will also study the proper mechanics and terminology of the sport.

The New Official and Mentor Will:

1. Attend contests to observe and study the new official.
2. Discuss and practice development of an impartial attitude.
3. Develop a professional style for an official when developing relationships with coaches.
4. Discuss entering and leaving a meet at a group.
5. Promote and practice common sense decisions and the courage to make decisions.
6. Explain the need to rely on partners.
7. Discuss "over-officiating," what it is and how to avoid it.
8. Identify and practice techniques to maintain emotional control and to deal with specific pressure packed situations.
9. Encourage the new official to observe, talk and "be around" veteran officials.
10. Critique the new official during every contest.
11. Accentuate the positive...always.
12. Encourage the new official to keep a log into which game notes and scores are entered.