

# FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY – INTRAMURAL SPORTS

## Officiating Made Fun

### Why do referees officiate sports?

We all have a sense of why we want to officiate. To stay active, the pay check, the flexible schedule, the free popcorn and candy at training, or the love of the game. These are all valid reasons. However, fun should also be a reason.

Often, the enjoyment of officiating for intramural sports can get lost or diminish in the shuffle. How can we maintain that important fun element throughout a referee's career? Below is an outline of what the officials and the supervisors can do to make officiating a more enjoyable experience.

### The Referees

- Understand that the official has an important role in the game, but be realistic enough to accept the fact that the official is not the most important part of the game. Know what your role is.
- Learn the rules, but apply a common sense approach to their application. Be good at your craft.
- Officials need to enjoy coming to do their job.
- You are encouraged to officiate as many games as you wish, but don't over work yourself to the point your job is no longer fun.
- Provide support to one another. Act as a team. **Do not criticize fellow officials.**
- Help lesser-experienced officials by acting as a mentor.
- Develop the confidence to be able to admit to mistakes, and to show empathy to the players.
- Be willing to improve and learn by seeking further education and training.
- Smile! Show your emotions. If you are enjoying yourself, let the players know.
- Join a team with some friends to play in a league or tournament.



## **Officiating**

Not only can and should officiating be fun, but there are some added bonuses that referees may develop through officiating. Important life skills can be discovered and developed in an individual once they take up and pursue the avocation of officiating;

1. Promotes diplomacy, e.g. becoming an active listener, not taking oneself too seriously.
2. Teaches individuals to take chances, which in turn develop confidence.
3. Conflict resolution.
4. Teaches how to overcome personal anguish.
5. Promotes self-confidence, and reduces shyness, often creating a more outgoing individual.
6. Appreciates an understanding of the value of teamwork.
7. Assists with problem solving, learning how to listen first, speak second.
8. Teaches how to be far more accommodating when working with participants.
9. Encourages an individual to always try to be nice and to treat people with respect.
10. Encourages a more conscious need to remain healthy and in good physical shape.
11. Promotes self-assurance which helps accept criticism better.
12. Forces individuals to become an assertive leader, and decision maker.
13. Promotes a good and healthy self-image.
14. Teaches how to be flexible and to go with the punches rather than creating conflict.

By officiating, not only are referees having fun, but they are being offered a real stimulus for personal growth and development.

