

NASO

Sports Officials Code of Ethics

INTRODUCTION

The National Association of Sports Officials believes the duty of sports officials is to act as impartial judges of sport competitions. We believe this duty carries with it an obligation to perform with accuracy, fairness and objectivity through an overriding sense of integrity.

Although the vast majority of sports officials work contests played by amateur athletes, it is vital every official approach each assignment in a professional manner. Because of their authority and autonomy, officials must have a high degree of commitment and expertise. NASO believes these facts impose on sports officials the higher ethical standard by which true professionals are judged.

Officials who are "professionals" voluntarily observe a high level of conduct, not because of fear of penalty, but rather out of personal character. They accept responsibility for their actions. This conduct has as its foundation a deep sense of moral values and use of reason which substantiate the belief a given conduct is proper simply because it is.

THE CODE

The purposes of the National Association of Sports Officials Code of Ethics are briefly summarized through the following three provisions:

First, to provide our members a meaningful set of guidelines for their professional conduct and to provide them with agreed-upon standards of practice;

Second, to provide to other sports officials these same guidelines and standards of practice for their consideration;

Third, to provide to others (i.e. players, coaches, administrators, fans, media) criteria by which to judge our actions as "professionals."

NASO has adopted this Code and strongly urges its members and officials in general to adhere to its principles. By doing so, notice is given that we recognize the need to preserve and encourage confidence in the professionalism of officiating. This confidence must first be fostered within the "community" of officials and then within the public generally.

NASO believes the integrity of officiating rests on the integrity and ethical conduct of each individual official. This integrity and conduct are the very basis of the future and well-being of organized sports and the effectiveness of this Association. The Association shall, by programs of education and other means, encourage acceptance and implementation of these Articles.

To these ends NASO declares acceptance of this Code:

ARTICLE I

Sports officials must be free of obligation to any interest other than the impartial and fair judging of sports competitions. Without equivocation, game decisions which are slanted by personal bias are dishonest and unacceptable.

ARTICLE II

Sports officials recognize that anything which may lead to a conflict of interest, either real or apparent, must be avoided. Gifts, favors, special treatment, privileges, employment or a personal relationship with a school or team which can compromise the perceived impartiality of officiating must be avoided.

ARTICLE III

Sports officials have an obligation to treat other officials with professional dignity and courtesy and recognize that it is inappropriate to criticize other officials publicly.

ARTICLE IV

Sports officials have a responsibility to continuously seek self-improvement through study of the game, rules, mechanics and the techniques of game management. They have a responsibility to accurately represent their qualifications and abilities when requesting or accepting officiating assignments.

ARTICLE V

Sports officials shall protect the public (fans, administrators, coaches, players, et al.) from inappropriate conduct and shall attempt to eliminate from the officiating avocation/profession all practices which bring discredit to it.

ARTICLE VI

Sports officials shall not be party to actions designed to unfairly limit or restrain access to officiating, officiating assignments or association membership. This includes selection for positions of leadership based upon economic factors, race, creed, color, age, sex, physical handicap, country or national origin.