

SPORTORIALS

For All IAABO Members, Coaches, Players and Fans



OFFICIALS

vs. Cancer

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2016 IAABO Spring Meeting

The 2016 IAABO Spring Meeting will be held at the Wyndham Lake Buena Vista Resort located in beautiful Lake Buena Vista, Florida, April 21-24, 2016. The meeting will be hosted by members of the IAABO Executive Committee. They have put together a well-planned program including golf at the Disney Palms course, the annual Life Membership Luncheon, spouse's breakfast and a visit by Disney characters (only kidding, just testing to see if you read this).

Hotel accommodations are first rate at the Wyndham Lake Buena Vista Resort, 1850 Hotel Plaza Blvd, Lake Buena Vista Blvd, Lake Buena Vista, FL 32830. The rate is \$129 per room plus resort fees and taxes. This rate may be extended for 3 days before and after the meetings. Reservations can be made by calling 800-624-4109; mention IAABO spring meeting 2016, or visit the link on the IAABO website. Please make your reservations early as the hotel will be full, cut off date is March 15, 2016.

There will be much to do at this year's meeting, starting with the primary purpose, which is to have delegates from all IAABO



Boards elect a President, President-Elect, and a Vice President to serve the organization for the upcoming year of 2016-2017. In addition, four of the 12 executive committee positions are open to serve three year terms; these positions are for regions: 1-NY, 2-MA, 6-DC, and 11-NH. You must be a delegate or former delegate to the IAABO Spring meeting to run for an executive committee position as stated in Article IX, section 1. The elections will be conducted on Sunday morning, see page 7 for a complete agenda and schedule of activities.

All of the standing committees will meet over the course of the conference, many of which have agendas where input from its members is extremely important. These include constitutional changes, legal issues, audit and budget, official's education and development updates, Board Relations and Polices, which are being updated, and the Women's Coordinating Committee.

The Secretary's Roundtable will again be an important meeting, with topics such as the database, membership, communication, the IAABO Handbook, Sportorials opt out, *(continued on page 15)*

I Gotta Go....

During a recent Executive Board meeting for my local board, the topic turned to money. It seems like a good portion of their meetings are focused on money, and rightfully so. The rank and file expect that they act in their best interests, and keeping the cost of the annual dues down is high on their list of concerns. Even at the national IAABO level, Mr. Lopes is proud of the fact that he has been able to keep the national dues constant during his tenor as Executive Director.

Well, at my local board, the costs attributed to the Interpreter are beginning to creep up. I admit, I do spend some of the board's money on items that I feel are in the best interests of the membership. Tom, Donnie Eppley and Peter Webb provide outstanding tools which I use all the time -- "You Make the Ruling" videos, plays of the week, refresher tests, new applicant teaching aids and study guides, and I could go on and on.

But occasionally I do see books, DVDs and other items from sources outside of IAABO that the E-Board purchases based upon my request. We all agree that they provide value and I am grateful for that. I come from a small board, so any money they spend to



support me and help my efforts in providing interesting and insightful interpretations makes my job easier and hopefully beneficial to the entire board.

On this night, one of the items up for discussion was the cost of sending me to the annual National IAABO Interpretation meeting in the fall. Like my E-Board, I'm also concerned about the cost impact on our budget as well. The percentage of each board

member's dues needed to cover this item becomes larger the smaller the board gets. That is why I've agreed to cover some of the expenses out of my own pocket. All I ask for is to get reimbursed for the cost of the hotel. I pay for travel, food, vacation time from work, etc.

So the President made the suggestion that I only get reimbursed once every three years. It sounds frugal, and with his duty to the rest of the board, I understand his position. But I believe that when you look at the entire cost benefit analysis, it ends up not being in their best interests.

First of all, interpreters like me are not doing this job because of the money. Just with the new applicant class alone, I'm spending over 50 hours a year preparing and teaching the class. *(continued on page 3)*

From Rookie to Veteran: The Effort, Goal-Oriented Official

I recently read a book titled *The Double-Goal Coach* by Jim Thompson who is the founder of Positive Coaching Alliance (<https://www.positivecoach.org/>). At the core of the book is a philosophy that reinforces the following: although winning is often the primary focus of coaching, more importantly coaching should be about teaching life lessons that transfer into other fields of life such as one's profession, citizenship responsibilities, family dynamics, etc.



a-half time span, whereas an effort goal would be to hustle on dead balls to efficiently get the ball back into play. When we shift our focus to effort goals, often over time the intended outcome goal we wanted to achieve occurs. In the mentioned above examples, by having reasonable explanations on all your calls, you are better equipped to respond to challenges by coaches and players - hence less likely to resort to giving technical fouls, and by dead ball hustling you are more likely to be efficient as a crew and finish the game within a shorter time span.

The Double Goal Coach suggests that this shift in philosophy of coaching can occur by redefining what a winner is - shifting the focus from emphasizing exclusively outcomes such as the final score of the game to the processes that contribute to the outcome, such as the individual and team efforts in various categories, such as recovering loose balls, the number of times the team gets to the free throw line, boxing out on every play, etc. Interestingly, "the greatest athletes often don't focus on beating their opponent but on improving their own performance" (p. xx). When this philosophy is internalized and executed with maximum effort, winning often follows.

The number one reason why youth stop playing sports is because it is no longer fun. I find that many officials walk away from officiating or drastically reduce their commitment to the game due to negative on-court experiences such as altercations with players, coaches, and fans. By sharing some of the insights I have learned from reading the *Double-Goal Coach* and applying it to the craft of officiating, I hope many officials will feel better equipped to process and reflect on their negative experiences, and use it as a learning opportunity to become better officials. What is essential to this process is a passion for the game of basketball, an eagerness to constantly learn and strive to improve, and a positive attitude.

Elm Tree of Mastery - The *Double Goal Coach* emphasizes that "whereas the scoreboard orientation focuses on results, comparisons with others, and avoiding mistakes, the concept of mastery is concerned with effort, learning and improvement, and how we respond to mistakes" (p. 26). The elm tree of mastery can easily be applied to the art of officiating as a blueprint for officials to improve their craft.

E is for Effort - Hustling is one of the key attributes that an official has complete control over. Players, coaches, and fans can gauge your effort by how you hustle on the court and the way you conduct yourself in dynamic, pressurized situations. It is essential that you strive, physically and psychologically, to give 110 percent effort in every game you officiate whether it is an elementary game or a high level university game. As the *Double Goal Coach* points out, "when effort results in winning on the scoreboard, coaches and fans tend to reinforce it, but a great effort that fails is often ignored" (p. 27). As an official, when you put in 110 percent effort, you can reflect on the game without regrets even if you had unpleasant and unexpected situations that arose. You can feel good about trying your best, while looking for alternative avenues to better equip yourself to handle specific situations in order to become a better official, such as greater rules knowledge and game management strategies.

Effort Goals vs. Outcome Goals

One of the key things that helps me improve my officiating is switching from focusing on outcome goals to effort goals. Most individuals set outcome goals which are highly dependent on external uncontrollable factors. On the other hand, effort goals are largely under your control regardless of external or situational factors.

For example, whereas an outcome goal for an official would be to avoid giving technical fouls in a game, an effort goal would be to have an explanation for every call you make by officiating the defense. Another example of an outcome goal is to finish the game within an hour-and-

L is for Learning: Continuing to Learn and Improve

Your passion for learning and improving is expressed by the effort you put into tasks as well as your attitude. Whether you are a rookie or a veteran official, there is always room for improvement. The game of basketball changes over time and so do the rules and mechanisms to better officiate it. We must keep up to date on these new changes and be willing to adapt our approach to officiating in order to be the best official we can be, such as reading the rule book on a yearly basis, looking up unusual game situations in the case book, having a mentor to talk to about unexpected situations that we experience as officials, and access to educational materials through IAABO or your association's educational officer and/or interpreter.

By focusing on effort goals every game, you develop good habits, leading to improvement in your officiating. There is no magical "on" and "off" button that applies to how you officiate in relation to the level of ball you are assigned. Similar to a player who strives to develop muscle memory through repetition of drills at game speed and under pressurized situations, we as officials must strive to develop good decision-making capabilities by constantly being alert and focused in the game by treating every game as a learning opportunity to become better officials.

M is for Mistakes

The path towards avoiding mistakes begins by being prepared physically and mentally. As officials we must learn to listen to our inner voice when it tells us we need to get rest or attend to a developing injury. Mentally, like Olympic athletes, we must find psychological strategies that can help us focus and remain calm in pressurized situations. This includes strategies such as visualization, self-talk, humming, and having a visual ritual for flushing your mistakes.

Yet, regardless of how well you prepare for a game, there are always uncontrollable external factors that can cause unexpected, unpleasant situations to arise such as a fist fight, ejection of a coach or a player, and/or having to throw out a parent from the gym who is verbally abusing you. Constant exposure to negative, unpleasant scenarios greatly contributes to officials beginning to dislike officiating. When unexpected, negative situations arise it will be your attitude that determines the value of the experience. Whether an experience is positive or negative, you can always learn from it. As a coach, you often learn more from losing than winning. Similarly, as an official you often learn a lot from negative, unpleasant experiences compared to games that are blowouts and go very smoothly.

After a negative, unpleasant game, ask yourself:

- What sequence of plays and/or call selections lead to the incident? Could I have been pro-active in doing certain thing differently to avoid the incident and/or the mitigate it?
- What was my first reaction and response when the incident occurred?
- What decision did I make to diffuse the challenging situation and/or the incident? Could I have tried an alternative approach? What could have been the alternative results if I had tried something different?
- Did I make the correct ruling? If unsure, *(continued next page)*

Rookie to Veteran

who can I talk to in order to get an expert opinion on the incident and how best it could have been handled?

- What can I learn from this experience? What will I do differently next time when I find myself in a similar pressurized situation?

Reflecting on your negative, unpleasant experience by asking yourself the above mentioned questions, you begin to shift your vantage point towards viewing the incident as a learning opportunity that can make you a better official. By processing the negative event using this reflective approach, next time you find yourself in a similar situation you will be more confident and equipped to handle the situation. By avoiding making the same mistakes twice, you will have more enjoyable experiences as an official and you will decrease your exposure to negative incidents. Remember, you will probably never have a complete season with zero unexpected incidents, but the goal is to reduce the number of unpleasant incidents by being prepared, constantly looking for opportunities to improve, and having a positive attitude that will assist you in constructively processing negative incidents and taking away learning lessons from it.

Thanks for taking the time to read what I have shared with you. Remember, focus on the components that you have complete control over, such as your effort and attitude, and over time, through commitment to such factors, the intended outcomes will follow as you develop better habits. Even if the intended outcomes do not occur, you will have no regrets, knowing you gave it your best.

This article was written by and published courtesy of FIBA member, Ardavan Eizadirad.

Answers to Questions

(From Page 6)

1. Are your team members' uniforms, apparel and equipment legal and will be worn properly? Will all participants exhibit proper sporting behavior throughout the contest? Rule Reference: 2.4.5

2. The point of interruption is where the ball was located when the double foul occurred. Award the designated spot throw-in at the spot out-of-bounds nearest to where the ball was located when the fouls occurred. Rule Reference: 4.36 & 7.5.3b

3. Any Team B player shall be awarded two free throws with the free throw lane spaces cleared. Any Team A player is then awarded two free throws with the free throw lane spaces cleared. Team A will then be awarded a designated spot throw-in at the division line opposite to the scorer's table. The fouls are penalized in the order which they occurred. The fouls are also charged indirectly to the head coaches. Rule Reference: 4.9; 10.4.1i & Penalty

4. All players are wearing legal apparel. The rule does not require all players to wear the same length sleeves on their undershirts, each individual player must have sleeves the same length on his/her undershirt when worn. A visible manufacturer's logo is not permitted on the undershirt. Rule Reference: 3.5.6

5. Legal in both situations. The dribble does not begin until A-1 has gained control of the ball. Rule Reference: 4.15

The Post Game: A Sportorials Roundup Interview

(Editor's note: "Post-Game" is a new feature in each edition of Sportorials that will spotlight an IAABO official. The interviews will be short, with personal and officiating questions, helping IAABO members get to know other officials from IAABO. If you'd like to submit a name for an interview, please contact Donnie Eppley at eppleyd@comcast.net.)

Sportorials: How did you get your start officiating basketball and find out about IAABO?

Langton: I was 23-years-old and a friend of mine was taking the rules test and he invited me and four other friends along. You think you know the game, but we quickly learned we didn't. That was back in 1978 and IAABO administered the test.

I began officiating youth and CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) games, and did that for 8 years, before getting married and having kids. I stopped officiating for 10 years, and in 1997 started again. It's been a lot of fun.

IAABO gave the 6-week course and exam through our local board. Growing up, all the games I played in were officiated by IAABO members.

Sportorials: Describe your biggest game. What happened?

Langton: It was a Massachusetts High School Divisional Final at the Tsongas Center in Lowell, MA. The winner went on to the 2013 state final. It was a boys' game and a three-man crew. The teams were from a conference I officiated, so I knew both of them.

The arena had a jumbotron, and there were about 2,000-2,500 fans. It had the aura of a big-time game, like officiating the pros. The game was a blowout, but just being there and experiencing the atmosphere was amazing – the game was on TV.

Sportorials: What tips do you have for beginning officials?

Langton: Be prepared mentally and physically for each game. Work



Brian Langton

each game like it's a state final. Pay attention. Officiate so the coaches and players know you gave it your all. Never stop learning the rules and about new situations.

Sportorials: What are your top officiating goals?

Langton: Initially, I wanted to learn how to be an official, and start working JV and Freshmen games. After having kids, and returning, I wanted to get a full varsity high school schedule. I also have goals to know the rules inside-out and have fun. When you stop having fun, it's time to get out.

Sportorials: Who is your hero?

Langton: When it comes to officiating, I don't have a specific hero. Overall, though it sounds corny, my parents are my heroes. They are part of the Greatest Generation.

There are a lot of officials I respect. You can learn from people older and younger, from those better or worse than you. Even in life, you can learn from anyone because of different styles. I pick up a lot just by watching officials and how they handle specific situations.

Sportorials: Who's on your dream officiating crew?

Langton: Rich Antonellie and Fran Foley. I grew up with Rich in the same city and we played ball together. He's a former college official and a comedian. He's fun to work with and a good official.

Fran is a former DI official and lifetime IAABO member. He would bring respect to our crew that we might not otherwise receive. He's also a mentor for me, though now he is retired.

Sportorials: What's your toughest call?

Langton: The block-charge. You blow the whistle and sometimes have to hold your ruling for a second. You need to look through the play for the defender's positioning. You must determine if the defender established legal guarding position before the offensive player makes contact.