



swimming metro

SOUTH WEST

10 POINTS OF SELF EVALUATION

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Background

- How many times after working a meet do you drive home thinking your work as an official is done?
- Maybe you spent a few moments thinking back on your performance. Perhaps you came out with the vague notion that you had a good meet or a bad meet.
- How often do you expand on those notions and ask yourself why?
- How often do you actually sit down shortly after a meet and ask yourself the tough questions?


Background


- When it comes to self-evaluation, honesty is crucial. Keeping your self-esteem high can be healthy, but when you really want to get serious about improving your officiating, embellishing the truth is a false start.


I am not alone...

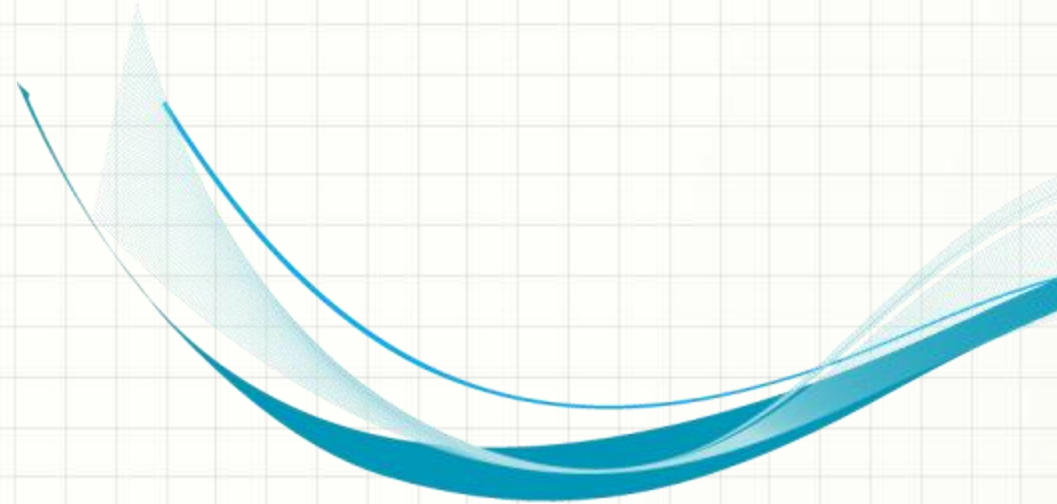
Acknowledgment:

- Prepared by Joel Black
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- Joel Black has been an Official of North Carolina Swimming and a football official for the North Carolina High School Athletic Association for more than 20 years. He is the current Officials Chair for North Carolina Swimming and is Vice Chair of USA Swimming Officials Committee.

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- In reviewing the manuals for officials of various sports and listening to the training suggestions of instructional chairmen of different organizations, one thing appears almost conspicuous by its absence: Recommendations for any kind of post game self-evaluation.

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- Indeed, it seems to be the practice of many groups to dissuade officials from ever looking back. It is not uncommon to hear or read such maxims as, "Forget the bad games" or, "Never second-guess yourself," or, "Leave the game on the court or field." Those are unfortunate practices.
 - A great deal can be learned by officials who review recently completed work. Only by recognizing past errors, and the situations in which they occurred, can officials take the necessary steps to avoid them from that point on.

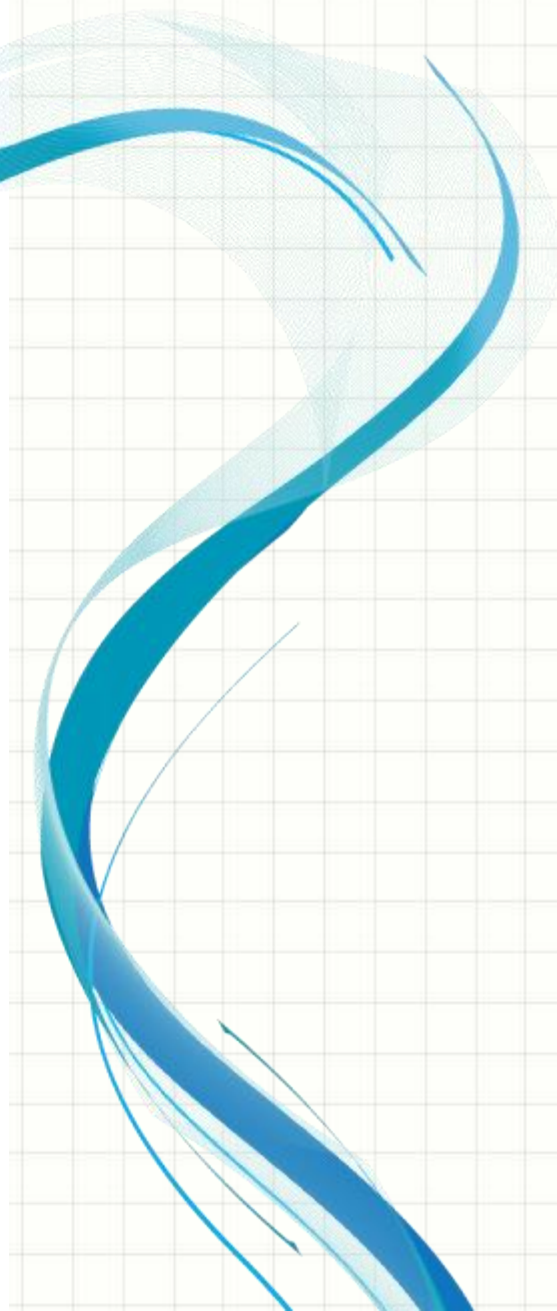
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- Keep in mind that the purpose of the questions is to alert you to any undesirable tendencies in your work or situations that are particularly troublesome to you.
 - As a result, any question answered "Yes" should be followed by the companion questions "Why?" and "In what situations?"



1. DID I BLOW ANY CALLS?

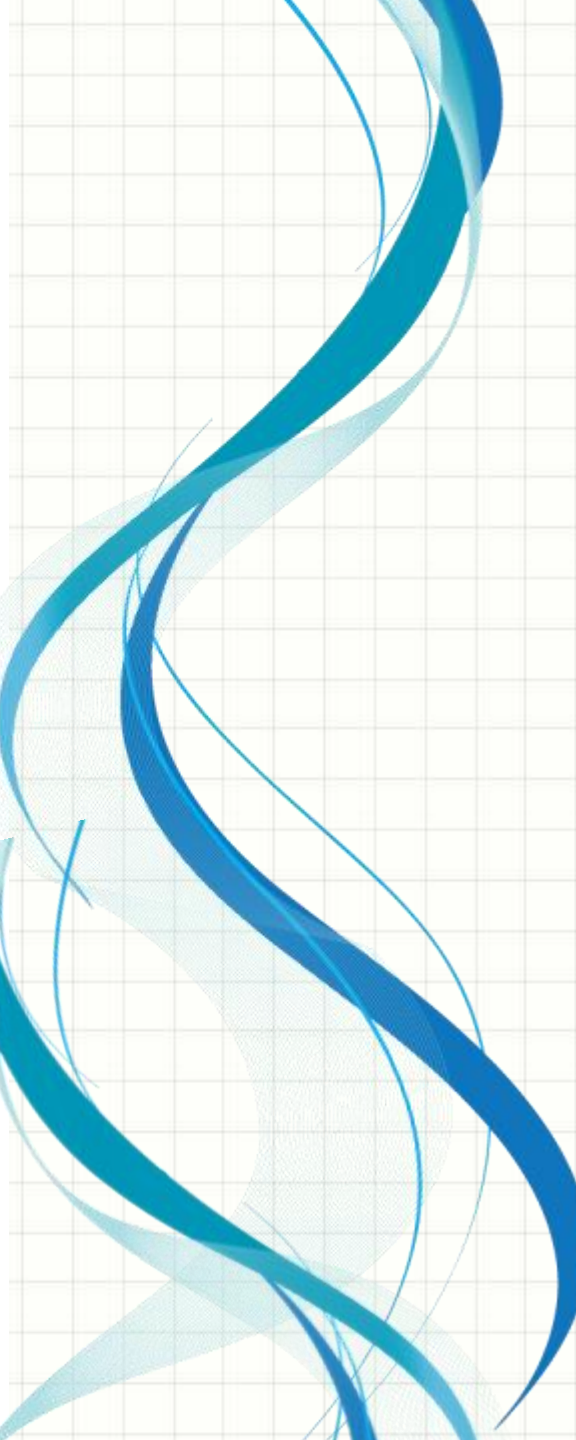
Blowing calls will always occur regardless of an official's experience and expertise. Officiating is simply not a perfectible craft.

The purpose of self- evaluation is to eliminate certain kinds of errors and to reduce their overall frequency.



2. WERE THERE ANY TIMES WHEN IT WAS FORTUNATE THAT I DIDN'T HAVE TO MAKE A CALL?

In almost every contest there are situations (or potential ones) which could cause officials embarrassment if they were required to make a ruling.



3. DID I DO EVERYTHING I COULD TO ENSURE A JUST OUTCOME?

In every sport there is a great deal of latitude available for officials in the sanctioning of play.

In other words, do not become a part of the competition.



4. WERE MY CALLS/DECISIONS CONSISTENT?

Want to drive coaches crazy and keep the spectators buzzing? Inconsistency will do it every time.



5. DID I FAIL TO MAINTAIN PROPER CONTROL AT ANY TIME?

An important part of any official's job is to control the behavior of athlete, coaches and spectators so the meet can proceed in an orderly fashion.

Anyone can be surprised and confused by new experiences, but each such situation should be used as a learning experience for future incidents.



6. WHEN DID I FEEL MOST VULNERABLE TO OUTSIDE INFLUENCES?

All officials experience situations in which their confidence and independence waxes and wanes.

It is important, however, for you to know when you are most vulnerable so that necessary steps can be taken to keep those influences in a proper perspective.



7. WERE THERE ANY SITUATIONS WHERE I AVOIDED OR USURPED RESPONSIBILITY FOR A RULING AT THE EXPENSE OF ANOTHER OFFICIAL?

It is a human tendency to avoid potentially threatening situations while seeking those that are likely to be rewarding.

Whether you allowed your co-worker to take responsibility for a ruling you should have made or you stepped in and overruled your partner, you should be certain it is done in the interest of the meet rather than for any personal motive.



8. WAS THERE ANYTHING ABOUT MY SIGNALS, GESTURES OR STYLE THAT EVOKED AN UNEXPECTED OR UNWANTED RESPONSE?

An official is often unaware of how his work appears to others. As a result, his work may be seen as inappropriate or incompetent.

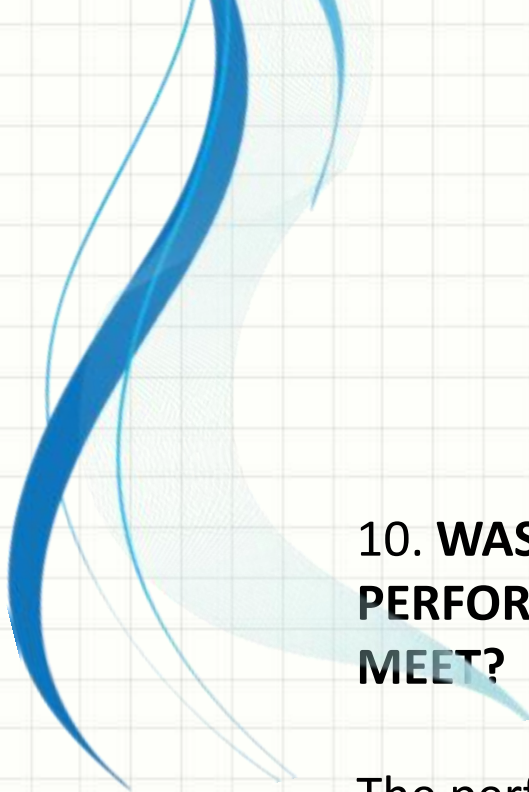
Good officials, on each occasion, should know something about the character of their audiences and adjust their performances to produce the best possible results.



9. DID I UPHOLD, DEFEND OR RATIONALIZE ANY IMPROPER RULINGS?

Many officials live by the old adage that to change a decision is to provoke criticism and undermine credibility. It should be kept in mind that the purpose for which an official is appointed is to "call em right."

When a mistake is made, you should accept the responsibility rather than penalize the participants by insisting upon its correctness.



10. WAS THERE A PARTICULAR ASPECT OF MY PERFORMANCE THAT I COULD WORK ON AT THE NEXT MEET?

The perfect game or meet has yet to be worked. If you ever answer "No" to this question, you are either deceiving yourself or not interested in perfecting your craft.

You should always work under the assumption that you are only as good as your next call and should make every effort to ensure a good one.

Summary

- By understanding yourself and identifying your strengths and weaknesses as an official, you open the door for improvement every meet.
- If you're committed to improvement and have a desire to succeed in your work, memorize the 10 questions and commit to answering them in detail shortly after every meet.