



KANSAS STATE HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES JOURNAL

Spotlight on Officials

January's *Spotlight on Officials* centers on Ed Mora from Hutchinson. Mora has been officiating baseball and basketball for 19 years. This year the NFHS has tried to connect the service industry like law enforcement to the world of officiating. Given Mora's day job, as you will read below, you can really see how the intangibles needed in law enforcement tie in nicely to officiating. We thank Ed for taking the time to share his story:

What made you decide to get into officiating?

I've always loved sports, and I wanted to continue to be involved in some way. Officiating just seemed to be a great way to be involved in the sports I enjoyed playing and watching.

Is there someone who helped you get started? How did they help?

I had a lot of people who helped me get started. People I worked with in my job officiated baseball and basketball at the high school level. These people encouraged me to come watch them officiate and I did. I then officiated a lot of summer baseball and basketball with them, and I was encouraged to work JV and junior high games. I connected with JV assignors who gave me some games and I was "hooked." I subsequently registered as a high school official.



Mora works behind the plate at 4A DII State Baseball.

Explain your day job:

I'm a Special Agent with the Kansas Department of Corrections. I've worked for the Department since 1987. The Department has an Enforcement and Investigation Unit which I'm part of. My duties primarily consist of locating and arresting individuals that have active felony warrants. Most of these individuals are on state parole, but not all. A lot of the job consists of investigation and developing information on where these individuals may be; then it's out into the community to find them. A lot of the job is talking to people on both sides of the law to get the information I need. I travel all over the state of Kansas. I can be in Hutchinson, Salina, Garden City or Hays in one week. Our Unit also partners with the United States Marshal's Service Fugitive Task Force, so we are able to assist them with their fugitive cases.

What personal traits have you found beneficial between law enforcement and officiating?

I tend to have good instincts and a "feel" for the situation. I'm also a person who likes to learn and grow with the job, always wanting to get better at what I do. I'm also one who likes to be on time and to be physically prepared for the job.

Would you say the officiating profession coincides well with employment of law enforcement?

Absolutely. You have to be trusted. On the court or field of play you have to know the rules, know how to apply them, have good judgement and be able to communicate with people. It's what I do every day in my job, and it parallels with officiating.



Ed Mora (far left) with his crew ready for 5A State Baseball.

In general how does being a service man or woman lend itself beneficial to being an official?

You learn how to manage stressful situations and not take things personal on the job. I will often deal with people that are emotional and angry with me or the world. After a day at work I may have a ball game a few hours later. During the game people are yelling and emotional; and the game is close and competitive. I think I come in mentally prepared because I've already dealt with a stressful situation earlier in the day and I know I can handle the situation at hand.

What do you find fun about officiating?

The enjoyment you have with your fellow officials is really great. I like going to the different schools and enjoying the environment of each event. Postseason is really fun.

What do you believe is the most difficult part of officiating?

Well, getting home late on a weeknight makes it difficult the next day sometimes. I think once an official learns not to take things personal and to stay focused on getting better, things will fall into place for them eventually. It's also important for an official to have someone who can listen to them about their "ups and downs" of officiating.

What goals did you set for yourself as you got into officiating?

In baseball I wanted to get to the college level. I've been working primarily at the junior college level and work into the postseason. In basketball, I wanted to work into the varsity level and I've really enjoyed that over the past several years. I've found that the way to get better and advance was to attend camps in each individual sport that I officiate.

What advice would you give someone starting to officiate or thinking about it?

Come in with an open mind and the courage to put yourself out in the public to help others. I would tell them they will experience ups and downs but they will always have support from their officiating community. Officials are a great group of people, some of the best I know. I would encourage them to go to camp early in their officiating career. It may cost a few dollars initially, but they will make that up in no time.

KSHSAA Gallery of Champions

Don't forget to visit the KSHSAA Gallery of Champions website found at www.khsaachamps.org. This site recognizes all of the phenomenal accomplishments and contributions of Kansas students and educators throughout the history of the KSHSAA in a digital format that is accessible to anyone, anywhere with an internet connection.

Users going to this site can virtually tour the KSHSAA Hall of Fame, view state championship team photos and rosters, as well as find detailed results of KSHSAA postseason competition throughout the history of each sport and activity. In addition, visitors to this site can find official KSHSAA sport records, Kansas members of the NFHS Hall of Fame, Spirit of Sport and Heart of the Arts Award recipients, Governor's Award recipients and Oscar Stauffer Award recipients.

This project is ongoing as the KSHSAA staff continues to add to the digital historical archives for all activities. Please continue to check the website regularly as more information will continually be made available for search. As schools, if you find information you believe is inaccurate, please let us know so we can ensure the correct information is available. Also, if you notice missing photographs from your school's state championship teams or have additional photos, newspaper articles or other media items you would like to share, please send them to us so we can display them through this site.

Kansas kids and educators are doing tremendous things every day. The Gallery of Champions gives us all another way to recognize and reflect upon some of the tremendous people who have made such an impact in their schools and communities through the years. We hope you find this website enjoyable and useful!

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NEW UNIFORM.**



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