



The Seven-F Method for Training Officials

Author: Gregg Gochnour

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Fun

It's a blast to be "in the game," even as an official. We get to see great play, attack and defensive strategies, teamwork by the athletes, coaches—and let's not forget the fans.

Friends

What a way to meet new friends! Officials come from all walks of life, and all demographics too. I've met farmers, doctors, teachers, nurses, students, engineers, former players, coaches and business owners, to name a few. It's fascinating to get to know these new people and their journey into the lacrosse world. It's also a pleasure to reunite with officials you have worked with in the past in a new, fresh competition.

Fitness

Running up and down the field to stay ahead of play in a competitive game is an estimated two and a half miles. What a way to enhance your speed, endurance, agility and alertness, so you can be in position to make the call. With these physical demands, it requires us to stay in shape. It may even be cheaper than a gym membership.

Fairness

Part of our job in honoring the game is to know the rules and when to apply them. Our presence and actions—whistles, signals and game control—keep the game safe, facilitate legal play and result in an objective win or loss for the teams. Remember, it's not about us. It's about the game and the players. We should be the most unnoticed people on the field.

Flow

This is officiating in its top form. We officiate a game of high action, so by knowing fair play and rewarding advantage to skilled players, we help maximize the game time played between the horns. Our challenge in game management is to keep the game moving toward its conclusion with fewest interruptions.

Finances

Getting paid for being involved in this superb game is a terrific side benefit. For some, the fee we earn helps support our kids through college. For others, it's food on the table, and still others, spending money to keep the economy growing or gas money for the next game.



Future

For our new youth lacrosse officials, this initiation can provide a delightful and potentially long career. Over time, officiating with people with multiple levels of experience and receiving ongoing training and feedback can improve an official's game confidence. Having positive supportive experiences encourages one to move up the levels—to local, district, national and even international ratings. We should always try to improve our game at whatever level.

Long-time US Lacrosse member Gregg Gochmour is a science teacher, beekeeper and women's lacrosse official in the Washington, D.C. area. He recently shared with the US Lacrosse Officials Education Program his seven-f approach for training adopted by his local board.