



## *You say Potaaato, I say Potahhto*

### **“... York-Gettysburg Controversy” or Officials Administration Win?**

There has been some recent discussion about a situation that occurred in a Division 3 Women’s Regional game. Who doesn’t love a good bit of post-season drama. The game in question was Gettysburg versus York. It has been suggested that York won the game on a “controversial finish” and in turn upset the higher seeded Gettysburg

The controversy seems to be that Gettysburg scored the tying goal with less than 7 seconds in the game and multiple players dropped their sticks. This led to the officials having a lengthy conversation and disallowing the goal because it negated the post goal stick check. The words that jump out to me are “controversy”, “officials”, and “disallow the goal”. Is it possible to consider this scenario as “Failure of the players to follow the rules of a post-goal stick check resulted in the goal not counting.”? Not very controversial or newsworthy, but this illustrates how our view of rule administration and officials are often painted. Many see the officials as controversy-stirring power players of tough calls, which was most certainly not the case in this instance, since the rule was applied and it was pretty clear a violation had occurred.

Rather than controversy or a game decided by a tenuous decision by unsure officials, I view this outcome as a great example of officials getting it right, not being controversial. The officials took the time as a team, to assess the situation and get the call right. If anyone clearly understood the weight of this decision, it was the officials.

Having been a part of many NCAA post season games, I have been involved in many pre-game discussions about the importance of our team “getting it right”. . Often you will hear in our locker room, “Have each other’s back, if something is being done incorrectly step in and administer the call correctly” In addition, none of us want to show up on a video clip in next year’s rule interpretation video in the section on “what not to do.” Trust me; it is not a great way to promote your officiating career.



Another commonly heard comment out of fans is, “Well that is a stupid rule”. Unknown to most, the officials do not create the rules. Officials implement the rules that have been presented to them in the rulebook. In this case, the NCAA Women’s Lacrosse rules are written by the NCAA Women’s Lacrosse Rules Committee, made up entirely of college coaches and administrators, and the rules editor, who is not an active or former official.

One of the challenges facing the fast growth of lacrosse in our country is increasing the number of trained, certified officials to cover the ever-growing number of games.. The job of the official is not glamorous. . Who in their right mind would put on a less than attractive outfit, to work in all kinds of weather only to be yelled at after every call, mainly by people who think that the call was wrong? I will tell you who. People who take on this role because they love the sport, they love being a part of a game and strive to make each game their best game yet.

So what many fans, parents, coaches and players see as a controversy, officials may view the same situation as a win for the officiating crew that services game in the interest of fairness and quality competition.

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