



Why is Everyone Yelling at Me?

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People yell at you because you are wearing stripes. Most don't know who you are. They just know you called off a legitimate goal for a non-existent crease violation and they'd rather be mad at you for calling the violation than at the player for stepping in the crease.

There is a quote in Mike Liner's book [It's Not All Black and White](#) that perfectly explains where fans are coming from:

"One great thing about being an official is that it's possible to make every single fan mad, unintentionally or otherwise, by the time you leave. What I try to remember about fans and what makes them humorous to me is that I appreciate the fact each fan is 100 percent partisan. Fans see things one way and only one way... If you understand that from an officiating point of view - That those people are not personally attacking you because they do not know you personally - you can appreciate the humor of the situation, whatever it might be."

As officials we are the neutral party that day and we are only interested in the players' safety and the fairness of the game despite sideline comments indicating the opposite. Here are a few ways you can focus on the game and less on those comments.

1. Know there is always one

There will be at least one loudmouth at every game you work. Understand and expect that so that when they open their mouth it isn't a surprise to you.

2. You and your partner are the only ones wearing stripes

Compared to both teams and the general attire of fans you and your partner are the most recognizable people at the game from a distance. Your appearance alone puts you in the crosshairs of anyone with a grudge against the officials from the last game, or officiating in general. Whether you view your stripes as a burden or as armor against insulting comments is entirely up to you.



3. Live for the “boos”

You make a great call. You know it's a great call. Your partner knows it. Both teams know it. Everyone knows it except that one guy leaning over the fence 80 yards away who starts berating you the moment you make the call. So what? If you are confident in your call then all of the boos in the world won't affect you and you can focus on the next play knowing you got that call right.*

*Note: Do not show your confidence by smiling or laughing at the distant commenter. That outward display can take a lot of meanings other than what you really feel. It is better to keep your true feelings inside where they cannot be misperceived.

4. Want the big call or no call

When you are officiating do you want the players coming into your area at the critical moment? Are you secretly praying that the play will move over to your partner's area? Or are you hoping that the play comes to you so you'll have the chance to make the big call or no-call?

If you are in the latter category no amount of fan noise will bother you because you are focused. If you are in the former you will have a difficult time deciding what call to make if you have to make one. You can train yourself to want the big call or no call in every game with some positive mental dialogue: *"Come to me. I've got this. Bring the ball my way."* You will never get the big call or no-call at the critical moment if you shy away from it.

The yelling never stops. It only grows louder the higher up you go as an official, but as you improve you learn how to turn down the noise and focus on the game.