

(For Use in REGULAR-SEASON PROGRAMS Only)

Let The Games Begin!

We all know that nothing compares to the values taught through education-based high school sports programs. And recent events tell us that we need these games now more than ever.

From a health pandemic unseen in our lifetimes, the lesson taught here is to persevere - to be able to get back up after being knocked down. And from a human relations standpoint, a renewed effort to build bridges across society - to promote unity and equality - an effort that must succeed.

This is the time for schools, administrators, and teacher-coaches to listen to kids and the community. To learn, to understand and respect our diversity - and then turn that positive energy through competition out to our communities - our game opponents - and into the world - to make it a better place to live.

Our challenges in this school year are to bring our young people back to some sense of normalcy, and to have everyone rally around common decency to promote equality. And coaches can be the strongest link with their leadership.

We ask everyone to come together and join us - walk with us - in this quest. Enjoy the game.



— Mark Uyl
MHSAA Executive Director

(For Use in DISTRICT PROGRAMS Only)

Let The Games Begin!

As we move from the regular season into tournaments, one of the things that we've learned is that there are people on the front lines working hard for you and worthy of your respect.

At this event, the front liners are school administrators creating a safe environment, coaches teaching your kids about the game, and officials applying the rules impartially for fair competition.

Let's remember and be thankful for the efforts of these people and many others behind the scenes for making today's game possible.



— Mark Uyl
MHSAA Executive Director

(For Use in REGIONAL TOURNAMENT PROGRAMS Only)

Let The Games Begin!

As we move down the tournament trail, we need to appreciate the opportunity to play these games even more and not make winning and losing a life and death proposition. Because the sun comes up for both teams the next morning. Life goes on. The outcome the game is not life defining.

All too often, this kind of pressure is brought to bear on kids and coaches – and it's not fair. There's no doubt we all want to win, but in sports – just like in life – you can't win all the time.

But you can learn. And that's what's more important. That's what's life defining.

Enjoy the game today and remember what's really most important about school sports.

*— Mark Uyl
MHSAA Executive Director*



(For Use in QUARTERFINAL/SEMIFINAL TOURNAMENT PROGRAMS)

Let The Games Begin!

Deep tournament runs are the stuff memories are made of. Congratulations on reaching the final round of this MHSAA Tournament.

We like to talk about the 99 percent factor in high school sports. That for most the participants, this is the biggest athletic stage they'll ever perform on, and the memories made are what they'll revisit in reunions for years to come.

For that minute group that are blessed enough to continue playing competitive athletics beyond high school, the day will come in spite of their achievements beyond their prep careers when they're asked what part of their athletic endeavors they remember most fondly, many will point back to this week – this team – playing with their friends from the neighborhood – the overwhelming community support.

That doesn't happen anywhere but in high school sports. Good luck today and cherish the good memories.

*— Mark Uyl
MHSAA Executive Director*



Parents and Adult Fans: The Biggest Challenge Facing High School Sports Today

Inappropriate adult behavior at high school athletic events in Michigan has reached epidemic proportion.

When more than 2,000 high school athletic directors were asked in a recent national survey what they like least about their job, 62.3% said it was “dealing with aggressive parents and adult fans.”

And the men and women who wear the black and white stripes agree. In fact, almost 80% of officials quit after the first two years on the job, and unruly parents are cited as the reason why. As a result, there is a growing shortage of high school officials here in Michigan, and in some sports like wrestling, swimming, and track and field, the shortage is severe. No officials means no more games.

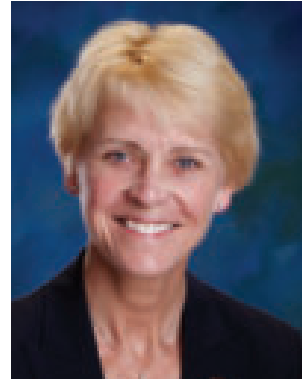
If you are a parent attending a high school athletic event this fall, you can help by following these six guidelines:



1. **Act Your Age.** You are, after all, an adult. Act in a way that makes your family and school proud.
2. **Don't Live Your Life Vicariously Through Your Children.** High school sports are for them, not you. Your family's reputation is not determined by how well your children perform on the field of play.
3. **Let Your Children Talk to the Coach Instead of You Doing It for Them.** High school athletes learn how to become more confident, independent and capable—but only when their parents don't jump in and solve their problems for them.



MARK UYL



KARISSA NIEHOFF

4. **Stay in Your Own Lane.** No coaching or officiating from the sidelines. Your role is to be a responsible, supportive parent—not a coach or official.
5. **Remember, Participating in a High School Sport Is Not About Getting a College Scholarship.** According to the NCAA, only about 2% of all high school athletes are awarded a sports scholarship, and the total value of the scholarship is only about \$18,000.
6. **Make Sure Your Children Know You Love Watching Them Play.** Do not critique your child's performance on the car ride home. Participating in high school sports is about character development, learning and having fun—not winning and losing.



Purchasing a ticket to a high school athletic event does not give you the right to be rude, disrespectful or verbally abusive. Cheer loud and be proud, but be responsible and respectful. The future of high school sports in Michigan is dependent on you.

— Karissa Niehoff, NFHS Executive Director and Mark Uyl, MHSAA Executive Director

Scholar-Athlete Award in 33rd Year Awarding Scholarships to Students

Thousands of students voluntarily extend their classroom day by taking part in extracurricular activities, often improving their academic achievements in the process. The value that such programs play in the total education of a high school student is highlighted through the MHSAA/Farm Bureau Insurance Scholar-Athlete Award, which will award \$1,000 scholarships to 32 top student-athletes and recognize over 2,000 other outstanding individuals in 2021-22.

Underwritten by Farm Bureau Insurance, the Scholar-Athlete Award is now in its 33rd year, and presents scholarships to students in every MHSAA enrollment classification. The scholarships may be used at any institution of higher learning.

“It is amazing to see the number of young people who are proven achievers in academics and activities,” said Mark Uyl, executive director of the MHSAA. “At a time when our educational system is coming under fire, the Scholar-Athlete

Award is something that proves how important athletics are to the development of a well-rounded person.”

Students applying for the Scholar-Athlete Award must be graduating during the 2021-22 school year, carry a 3.5



Michigan's Insurance Company



grade-point average, and have previously won a letter in a varsity sport that the MHSAA sponsors postseason competition.

Applicants will also be required to show involvement in other school-community activities and submit an essay on the importance of sportsmanship in educational athletics.

Application materials can be found at MHSAA.com/Schools/Students/Scholar-Athlete-Award

Each MHSAA member school is allowed to nominate a number of student-athletes based on the size of the school. Class A schools can nominate six boys and six girls, Class B four boys and four girls, Class C three boys and three girls and Class D two boys and two girls. The first 30 scholarships will be awarded based on this graduated scale, with two additional scholarships intended for minority applicants.

A committee composed of school administrators from across the state will select regional and statewide winners.

Farm Bureau Insurance, a long-time supporter of MHSAA activities, also sponsors other educationally oriented programs. Chief Executive Officer Don Simon notes the company's pleasure with the awards program.

The 32 scholarship recipients will be recognized at the MHSAA Boys Basketball Finals at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing in March.



More Info?
Scan Here



The annual scholar-athlete ceremony is one of the highlights of the winter season. More information about the awards may be obtained by contacting your local school principal, athletic director or guidance counselor. The online application form can be found at MHSAA.com/scholarship.

Student Advisory Council Aids MHSAA

Eight student-athletes who will be juniors at their schools during the 2021-22 academic year have been selected to serve two-year terms on the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Student Advisory Council.

The Student Advisory Council is a 16-member group which provides feedback on issues impacting educational athletics from a student's perspective, and also is involved in the operation of Association championship events and other programming. Members of the Student Advisory Council serve for two years, beginning as juniors. Eight new members are selected annually to serve on the SAC, with nominations made by MHSAA member schools. The incoming juniors will join the group of eight seniors-to-be appointed a year ago.

Selected to begin serving on the Student Advisory Council in 2021-22 are: **Sam Gibson**, Plainwell; **Brady Leistra**, East Grand Rapids; **Caroline Li**, Okemos; **Sam Matias**, Lansing Catholic; **Zar'ria Mitchell**, Saginaw Heritage; **Carney Salo**, Escanaba; **Brandon Thompson**, Petersburg Summerfield; and **Keira Tolmie**, Clarkston.

Those eight new members were selected from 114 applicants. That applicant total was 40 percent more than the total number of applicants who generally apply for SAC positions every year.

The first Student Advisory Council was formed for the 2006-07 school year.

The new additions to the SAC will join the Class of 2022 members who were selected a year ago: **Brinlee Barry**, Caledonia; **Faith Breinager**, Frankenmuth; **Amina Ferris**, Dearborn; **Nico Johnson**, Britton Deerfield; **Brenna Kosal**, Peck; **Ashton McNabb**, Three Oaks River Valley; **Brock Porter**, Orchard Lake St. Mary's; and **Melik Williams**, Ypsilanti Lincoln.



Brinlee Barry



Pierre Brooks II



Faith Breinager



Macy Brown



Lydia Davenport



Amina Ferris



Nico Johnson



Freddy Kopplow



Brenna Kosal



Colin McAuliffe



Ashton McNabb



Avery Peters



Abby Pheiffer



Brock Porter



Landen Thompson



Melik Williams

Student Advisory Council Belief Statement

As the voice of Michigan's student-athletes, the Student Advisory Council's role is to convey the message of how high school sports are supposed to be played. We are responsible for helping the MHSAA maintain a positive and healthy atmosphere in which interscholastic athletes can thrive.

*We believe **athletes** should be competitive, sportsmanlike and excel academically. We believe **students** in the stands should have fun, but not take the focus away from the game. We believe **coaches** should act as teachers, helping student-athletes develop while still keeping high school sports in perspective. We believe that **parents** should always be positive role models and be supportive of their child's decisions. We believe **officials** commit their own time to high school sports and respect should always be shown and given to them.*

The most important goal for student-athletes is to enjoy high school sports while keeping a high level of respect between all those involved in the games.

Get in the Game. We Need You!

They don't make the headlines, their names are not in the box scores and they don't make the all-star teams. But perhaps the most important individuals in high school sports are the contest officials.

These individuals are so important that, in fact, there would be no organized competitive sports at the high school level without the men and women who officiate these contests every day across the country. Subtract the dedicated men and women who officiate high school sports, and competitive sports would no longer be organized; they would be chaotic.

In some areas of our country, high school officials are retiring faster than new ones are being added. And junior varsity, freshmen and middle school games are being postponed – or even cancelled – because there are not enough men and women to officiate them.

Anyone looking for a unique way to contribute to the local community should consider becoming a registered high school official. For individuals who played sports in high school, officiating is a great way to stay close to the sport after their playing days have ended. Officiating helps people stay in shape, expands their social and professional networks and offers part-time work that is flexible, yet pays. In fact, officiating is a form of community service, but with compensation.

Another benefit of officiating is that individuals become role models so that teenagers in the community can learn the life lessons that high school sports teach. Students learn to respect their opponents and the rules of the game and the importance of practicing good sportsmanship thanks, in part, to those men and women who officiate. And the objectivity and integrity that high



school officials display is an example that every young person needs to observe firsthand. In short, communities around the country will be stronger because of the life lessons that high school officials help teach the next generation.

Officiating is a great way to stay connected to sports and to give back to the local high school and community. We need dedicated men and women to become involved so that high school sports can continue to prosper for years to come.

Individuals interested in learning more about becoming a high school official, and beginning the application process, can do so at <https://www.mhsaa.com/Officials/REGISTER-NOW>, or scan this code.



Legacy Program Attracts Officials

During the 2020-21 school year, 83 high school students participated as MHSAA Legacy officials. That class brings the total to 2,132 students who have become registered and active officials through the Legacy program.

Since the 2019-20 school year, high school freshman and sophomores have been allowed to participate in the "Legacy" Student Officials Program by serving as officials for middle school/junior varsity contests only.

The program was conceived by officials, teachers of officiating classes and staff members of the MHSAA and first implemented in 1992.

Basic to the program is the belief that properly and adequately coached from the outset, young people with an interest in officiating can develop as capable officials so that in the future they will be prepared to follow in the footsteps of their adult guide. It is a goal of the program that student officials learn the correct way to perform as an official.

Each student official must be prepared to dedicate time to study, practice and learn officiating skills, as well as officiate 7th and 8th-grade contests. Student officials must understand the need for time commitment before they embark on this experience.

The student's guide is a veteran official who will chart the course, help arrange contests and introduce the student to the practices and procedures of officiating. Assistance with tests and clinic experiences is a part of this responsibility. The teaching guide accompanies the student official to MHSAA rules meetings.

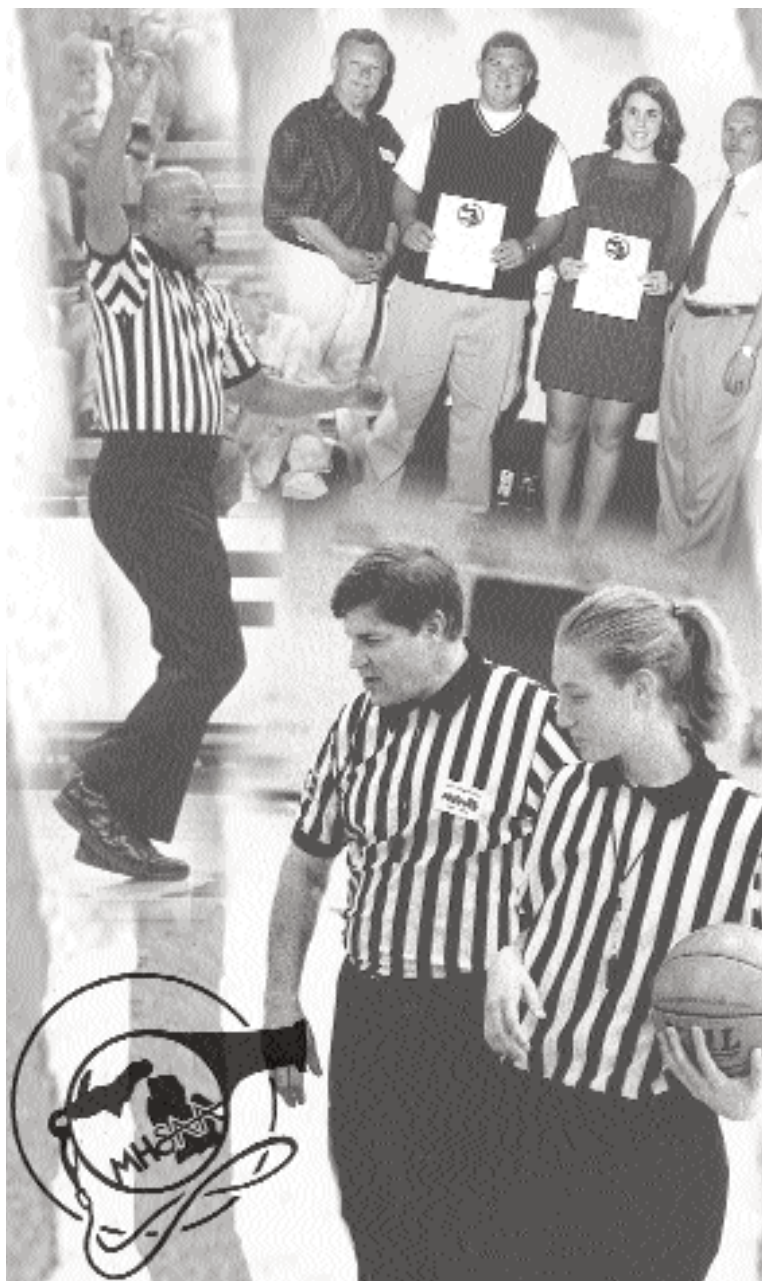
Former athletes remain one of the basic populations from which MHSAA contests officials are devel-

oped. They enjoy athletics, have an understanding of the games and a love of the competition. In addition, athletes have an understanding and appreciation of the sportsmanship that is important to competition.

Becoming a member of the officiating "team" through the Legacy program allows students to remain con-

nected to the sport which was enjoyed so much as a player.

For more information regarding the Legacy Program, please contact the MHSAA, 1661 Ramblewood Dr., East Lansing, MI, 48823, 517-332-5046, or visit the Officials page of the MHSAA Website at mhsaa.com.



Five Concussion Myths Debunked

Awareness about the dangers of concussions is at an all-time high. In response, athletic organizations — from Pop Warner football (a nonprofit program for kids 5 to 16) to USA Hockey — have safe-play protocols in place. But misconceptions about injury — prevention, management and return to play — are still all too common.

"It's great that parents, coaches and athletes are focused on the potential for concussions, but they also need to be aware of the complexities involved in evaluating, diagnosing and managing concussion," says Jeffrey Kutcher, M.D., a sports neurologist who treats athletes at the Henry Ford Kutcher Clinic for Concussion and Sports Neurology.

The best way to get the knowledge you need? Learn how to separate fact from fiction.

Concussion Fact From Fiction

Here's the truth behind five common concussion myths:

Myth #1: Concussions are only caused by blows to the head.

Concussions happen in response to force. While they often result from a blow to the head, they can also occur after a hit to the neck, shoulders or anywhere else on the body. To cause brain injury, the force of the impact only needs to cause the head to move rapidly back and forth (think whiplash from a car crash or a spill down the stairs).

Myth #2: Concussions always involve a loss of consciousness.

A very small percentage of all concussions, 10 percent or less, result in a loss of consciousness. For the remaining injuries, parents, coaches and medical providers should watch for additional symptoms such as:

- Confusion
- Balance problems
- Slurred speech
- Physical complaints including headache, nausea and vomiting.

Myth #3: You should keep a person awake overnight after a concussion has occurred.

It's important to observe and interact with a recently concussed person for the first few hours to recognize the potential signs of a more serious injury. However, if they are interacting normally after four hours, it's okay to let them sleep. If you have any doubts or questions, always err



on the side of caution and seek medical attention.

Myth #4: After a concussion, kids should avoid digital media until they feel better.

Unless digital activities or screen time significantly worsen symptoms, there's no reason to avoid them. "You shouldn't force people who have suffered a concussion to rest too much — or deprive them of sensory input — if they are comfortable engaging in activity," Dr. Kutcher says. What's more, taking away activities that bring a person joy or keep them socially connected could end up prolonging their recovery by creating additional symptoms.

Myth #5: All physical activity should be avoided after a concussion.

It's important to rest for the first two to three days after a concussion. However, you need to be careful not to rest too much or avoid all activity for too long.

Engaging in physical, mental and social activities can be beneficial. But knowing how much to do and when to take it easy can be difficult. If you have any questions, consult a sports neurologist for specific recommendations.

Ground Rules for Concussion Prevention and Management

When it comes to preventing concussion, common sense offers the greatest impact, Dr. Kutcher notes. He recommends starting with these four tenets:

- Whenever possible, limit the amount of contact in practices and games.

- Wear proper fitting and certified helmets or other head protection whenever appropriate.
- Spread contact drills out over time as much as possible.
- Practice good technique and play by the rules.

Athletes — especially those who play contact sports — should undergo an annual neurological evaluation that includes a comprehensive, focused neurological history and examination. This information provides a critical point of reference for medical professionals.

Knowing the truth about concussions — including what to watch for and what to do if one occurs — is really the best game plan.

— Dr. Jeffrey Kutcher

Dr. Kutcher is a sports neurologist at the Henry Ford Concussion and Sports Neurology Clinic and the global director of the Kutcher Clinic.

Henry Ford Health System sports medicine experts are treating the whole athlete. From nutrition to neurology, and from injury prevention to treatment of sports-related conditions, they can give your athlete a unique game plan. Visit henryford.com/sports or call (313) 972-4216 for an appointment within 24 business hours.

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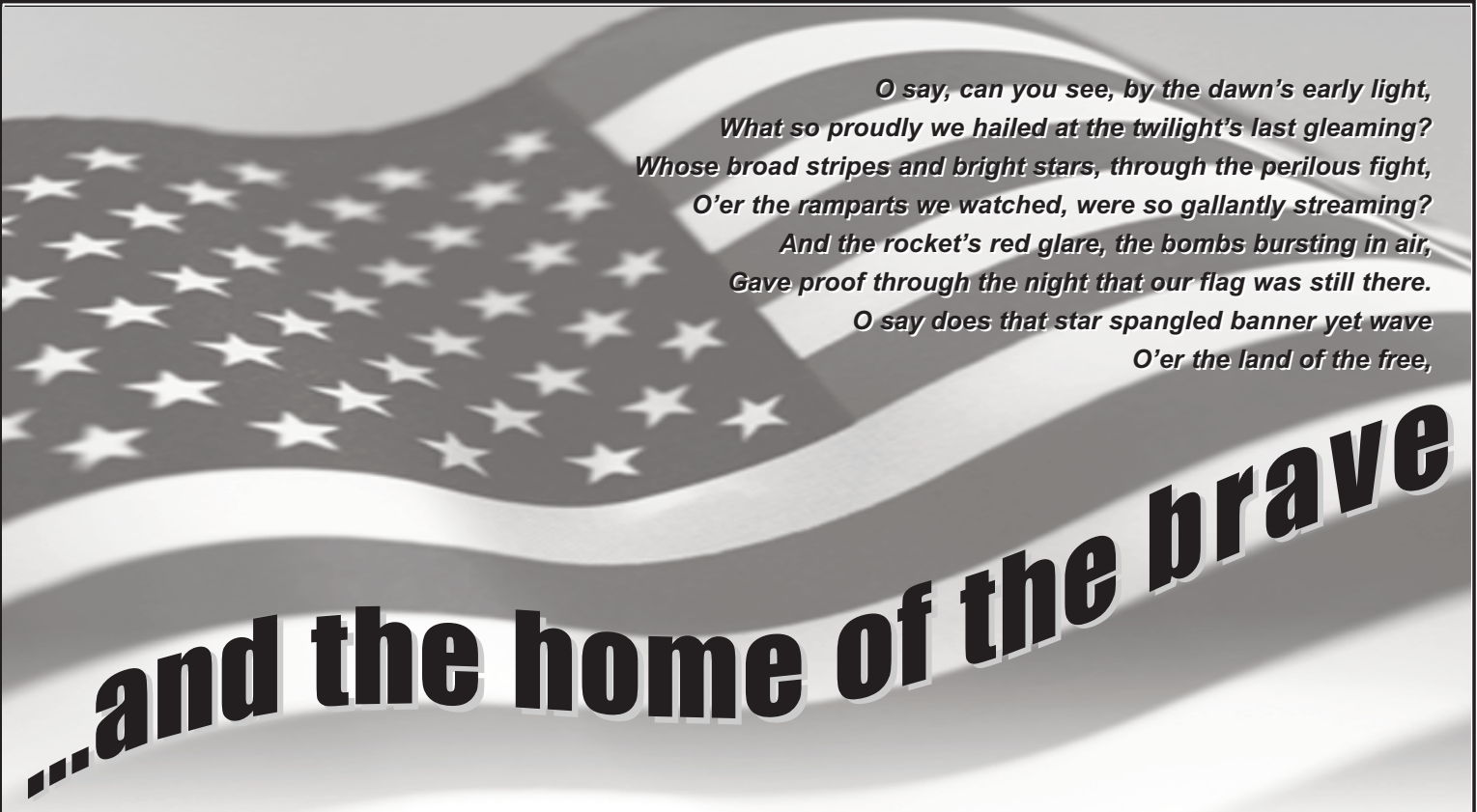
Somewhere along the winding road in the long history of interscholastic athletics, gradual change has brought our product to a crossroads. We, in this business of developing the minds, character and bodies of student-athletes, still understand the far-reaching benefits of school-based sports, and the mission of our programs. We understand their importance to community; the incomparable entertainment value for spectators; the bonds built between teacher and student that an hour a day in the classroom usually can't match; the memories and lessons that last a lifetime.

Somewhere along the way, however, some of the allure seems to have faded in the eyes and minds of others.

- Perhaps it's the many options available to today's young people, both in and out of athletics. Where once school sports and a letter jacket were THE thing, now it's just another thing, with travel programs, virtual reality games, nonstop cable sports coverage and social media competing to fill free time.
- Maybe it's parents, chasing the misguided dream of athletic scholarships for their children and in the process dotting on the promises of untrained coaches intent on building their pocket books and reputations over building fundamentals and teamwork in kids.
- It could be that sensational stories from professional and collegiate levels warning of long-range effects of concussions and other sports injuries are causing fear in many parents who are making athletic participation decisions for their children.
- It's possible that those once relied upon to spread the good word of our good work – our friends in the media – are all gone. Administrators and coaches alike were once on a first-name basis with sportswriters in every community across Michigan. When a feel-good story took place, we knew whom to call to trumpet the news, and when the big game took place, they were sure to be there. The collapse and contraction of newspapers and the rise of faceless bloggers has delivered a blow.
- And, what of respect for authority? We are losing the keepers of our games – the contest officials – in bunches each year. People see the assaults, both verbal and physical, on these special men and women who give far more of their time than they are compensated for and figure it can't be worth it to become an official, or to continue.

Ultimately, how we got here no longer matters. It's what we do next. The focus for each school year is to define and defend educational athletics. We *know* that educational athletics is the best option. We *are certain* specialization is becoming a real health and safety issue, as real as concussions. We *emphasize safety* and risk management through or rules and regulations. We *will utilize* current media to tell our story. In doing so, maybe we can *increase* our pool of officials as well.

That is the game plan.



*O say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
O say does that star spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free,*

...and the home of the brave

A recent Harris poll found that two out of three American adults don't know all of the words to "The Star-Spangled Banner" - and many don't even know which song is our National Anthem or why it was written.

The song of our nation was penned by Washington attorney Francis Scott Key at a dramatic moment during the War of 1812. On the night of September 13, 1814, Key watched as our country was attacked by the British navy at Fort McHenry. After watching the rockets' red glare and bombs bursting in air throughout the night, dawn broke. Key was expecting to find Baltimore firmly under British control, but was stunned to see a battered but still flying American flag waving in the sunrise. So inspired was Key that he wrote the poem, "The Star-Spangled Banner." Set to a tune attributed to John Stafford Smith, "To Anacreon in Heaven," it became America's national anthem in 1931.

There has been a noticeable decrease in the respect given the National Anthem presentation over the last few years. Whether it is team members joining hands and swinging them back and forth during the anthem or a student body screaming for the start of a competition over the last few notes of the song, or the prevalent wearing of hats and talking on cell phones during the anthem, school sports provide us with the vehicle to remind

everyone of the manner in which we pay respect to the flag, our nation, and the competition that it precedes.

Students, participants and spectators are reminded that when the National Anthem is played, they should remove

their hats, stand at attention, face the flag, and place their right hand over their heart from the first note of the music until the last note.

Learn more about the National Anthem Program on the web at: nationalanthemproject.org



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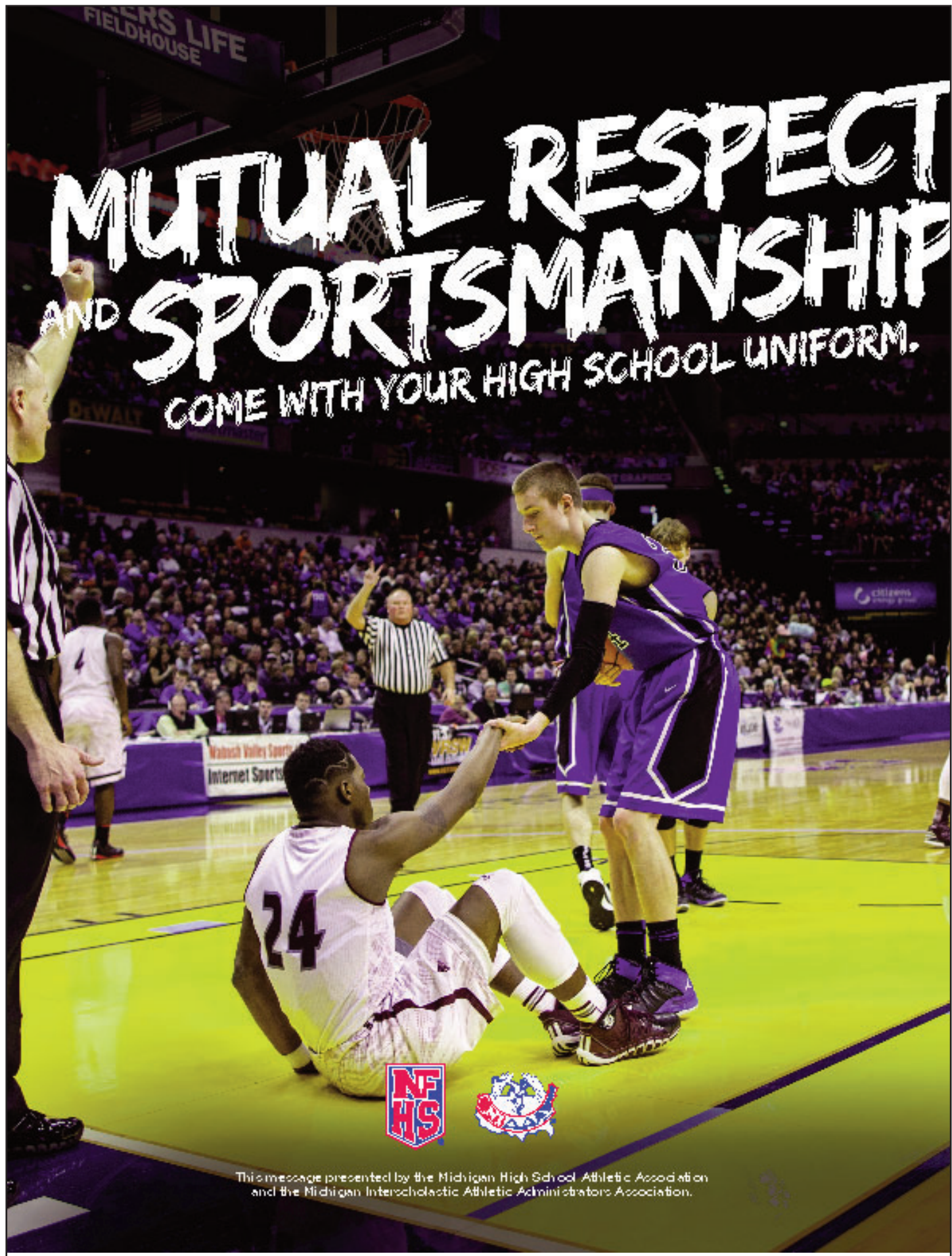
In non-school sports, you can make the team.
But in high school sports, you can make history.

Wearing the uniform of your high school comes with a big responsibility. Your community cheers for you. Your teammates count on you. And you have the opportunity to make history by competing for a state championship. Do you have what it takes?



This message presented by the Michigan High School Athletic Association and the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

MUTUAL RESPECT AND SPORTSMANSHIP COME WITH YOUR HIGH SCHOOL UNIFORM.



This message presented by the Michigan High School Athletic Association
and the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

In non-school sports, nobody's cheering for you.
In high school sports, everybody is.

Nothing brings communities together like high school sports. Whether it's playing a Friday night game in a sold-out gym or making a run at a conference championship, nothing compares to the thrill of wearing the uniform of your high school.



This message presented by the Michigan High School Athletic Association and the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

ACHIEVEMENT AND SATISFACTION COME WITH YOUR HIGH SCHOOL UNIFORM.



This message presented by the Michigan High School Athletic Association
and the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.



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MHSAA

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**Excellence
Without Excess**



Officials For Kids Helping Area Hospitals

When some MHSAA officials throughout the state say they officiate “for the kids,” they mean it.

Several MHSAA Approved Officials Associations have taken on leading roles in “Officials for Kids,” donating time and money to statewide Children’s Miracle Network hospitals to help support a variety of worthwhile programs, all geared toward helping children when they most need it.

Officials for Kids came to fruition in Lansing in 2003 to support local fundraising efforts at Sparrow Regional Children’s Hospital; specifically organized to construct and maintain a dedicated pediatric emergency room and waiting room.

Successes in mid-Michigan soon led to other areas around the state expressing interest in the program. In recent years, Officials for Kids has expanded statewide to assist the four Children’s Miracle Network hospitals in Michigan on a variety of projects.

The MHSAA proudly serves the program and its supporters from an administrative standpoint – helping to facilitate and coordinate statewide objectives with the officials and hospitals that care most

about Officials for Kids. CMN hospitals receive 100 percent of all Officials for Kids donations and contributions.

The Children’s Miracle Network is a non-profit organization which raises funds for 174 children’s hospitals across North America. The four CMN hospitals in Michigan are William Beaumont Hospital in Detroit, Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital in Grand Rapids, Hurley Medical Center in Flint, and Sparrow Regional Children’s Center in Lansing.

The Officials for Kids program has three primary objectives for the children’s hospitals in Michigan. First, to promote healthy habits and lifestyle choices for Michigan youth. Second, to support outstanding health care for Michigan children. And third, to enhance the public image of sports officials across the state.

“Sports officials work with young people every day,” said MHSAA Executive Director John E. “Jack” Roberts. “I can’t think of any better way to help kids than to support this worthwhile effort in our own communities.”

Among fundraising efforts, one of the most popular and effective campaigns is the Give-A-Game program in which officials pledge to donate a game check or

certain dollar amount for contests worked.

Most recently, the **West Michigan Officials Association**, sponsored a Visually Impaired Sports and Activity Day for kids in East Grand Rapids as part of its work with the **Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital**. The sponsorship dollars were raised in part through a Give-A-Game program.

Other CMN hospitals benefitting from the OFK effort are **Sparrow Hospital** in Lansing, where funds raised are going toward the construction of a new pediatric emergency room, in large part due to the efforts of the **Capital Area Officials Association**; **Hurley Medical Center** in Flint, where officials are helping that hospital in its efforts to fight childhood obesity; and **Beaumont Hospital in Detroit**, where a Referees For Reading program has been launched to provide books for pediatric unit patients, and where **Metro Detroit Officials Association** members spend time reading to patients.

More information about Officials For Kids can be found on the Officials page of MHSAA.com.



What Is Sportsmanship?

Sportsmanship is . . .



Sportsmanship is the practice of playing fair, of taking defeat without complaint or victory without gloating and treating opponents with respect, generosity, courtesy, etc.

- Sportsmanship is a demonstration of generosity and genuine concern for others. It is a concrete measure of the understanding and commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity.
- Sportsmanship is a blending of cheers for “your team” and applause for the “opponents,” observing the letter and spirit of the rules and showing consideration for others.
- Sportsmanship is respect. Respect for others and for one's self.
- Sportsmanship is all this and much more.
- For a coach, sportsmanship may be accepting a “questionable” call without protest.
- For an athlete, it may be extending a helping hand to an opponent who is down.
- For a spectator, it may be cheering for his team when it loses, and applauding the opponent when it wins.
- For an official, it may be showing restraint when verbally assaulted by coaches, athletes and spectators.
- Sportsmanship encompasses all that which is good in human nature.
- Sportsmanship is citizenship in action.

Good Sports Are Winners!



A Letter From An Official To Parents:

This is something that I wanted to do for a long time. I want to talk to the guy that is up in the stands and as usual is yelling at the officials.

Sir,

I want to make a statement about the noise you make. At every game you do your best to spoil it for every one. When you are not at a basketball game, you are a perfect gentleman. Today it is appropriate to tell you what most athletic directors and coaches would like to tell you. Before we start, it might be better to share a story that happened to me recently.

The time was last year at a tournament in Grand Rapids. One of the teams involved was called the Spartans, which had an outstanding player who was quite a treat to officiate and watch play. The game itself was not too exciting. The Spartans were winning easily and tension was low. This was my fourth game in less than 24 hours, my knees were hurting and I just wanted to finish the game.

As the game progressed, a voice from the stands could be heard. This person was making one comment after another. The targets of course were the officials. I was really focused on the game and it didn't bother me. He presented nothing new so I made moving the game along a priority and tried to ignore it.

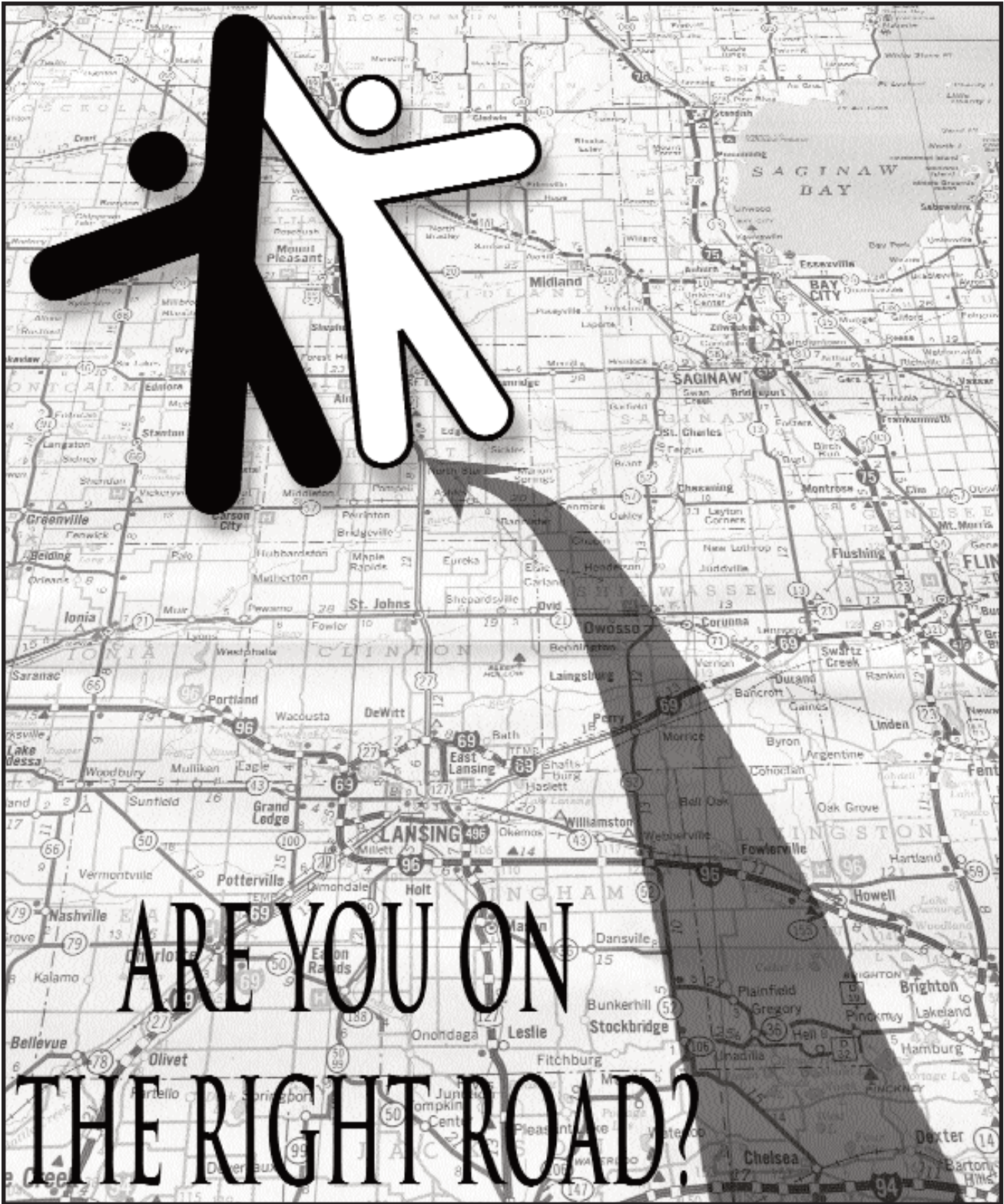
Later in the game I called a routine foul and the girls lined up for the shot. As they did so a voice came from the stands with another criticism. Again I ignored the voice. The girls on both teams made comments about who that was up in the stands. You see, he was spoiling the game for everyone.

One girl looked up and said to no one in particular, "That's my dad, I wish he would just go home." Her eye caught mine for just a brief second. She dropped her head quickly and her hands went to both knees. The hurt in her eyes told the story.

I don't know what you're thinking or what you are trying to achieve, but all it does is distract the players. You are an embarrassment to your school and your team. The hurt you cause to your son or daughter cannot be measured. I am speaking to you for their sake. Relax, enjoy the game, cheer wildly for your team. If you want to make a criticism, do so quickly and then let it drop. The players want to play and not listen to you the entire game. The game belongs to them. This is *their* time. Let them play.

Good Sports Are Winners!

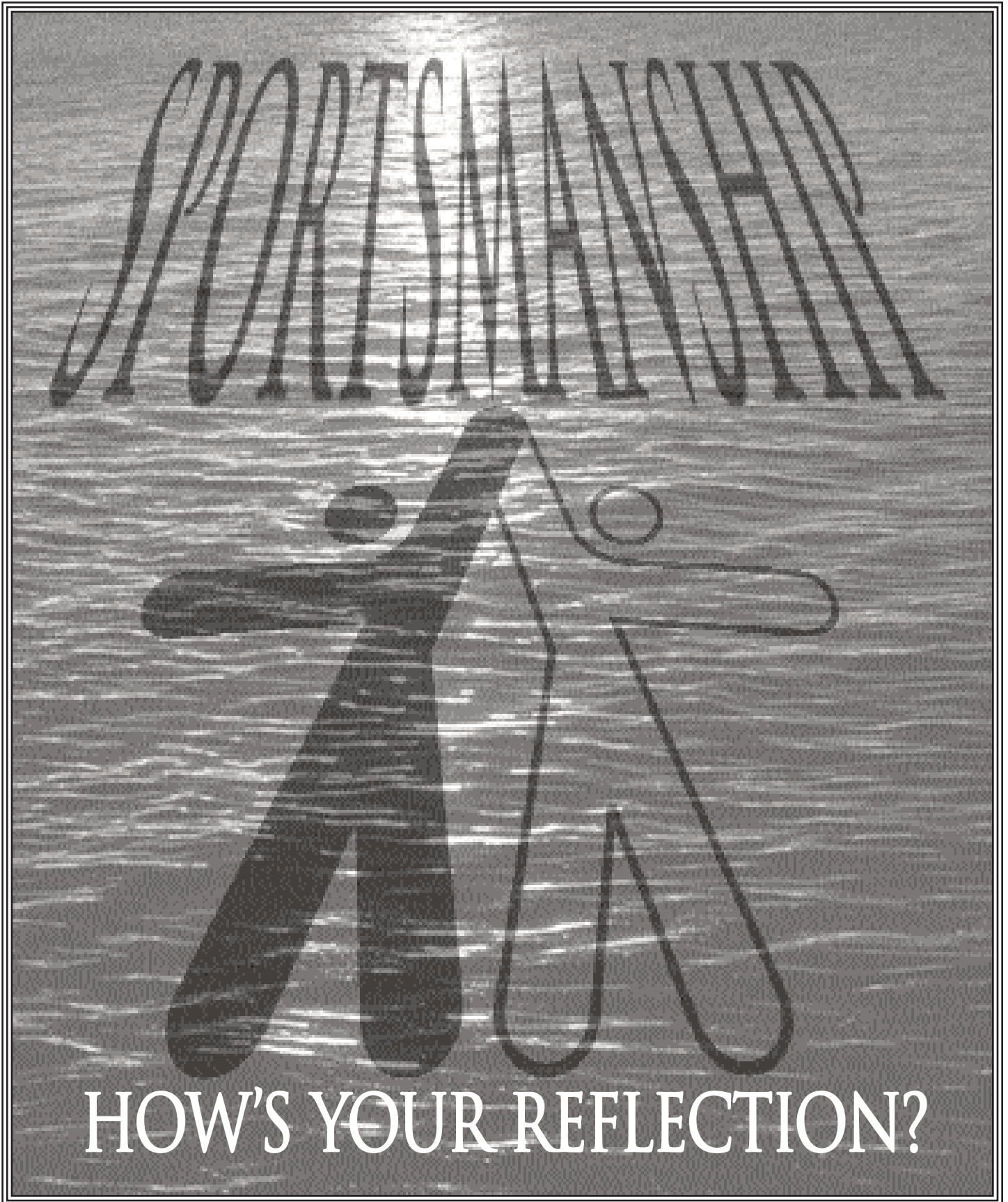




SPORTSMANSHIP: NO ALTERNATE ROUTES!

Good Sports Are Winners!





HOW'S YOUR REFLECTION?

Good Sports Are Winners!

