

Sports

Basketball fan aims to improve 'bad' officiating

By Bob Asmussen
Staff Reporter

Lack of "consistency and continuity in Big Eight basketball officiating" upset Galen Stone. Now, she's ready to do something about it.

Stone, a resident of Ames, Iowa, who calls herself an Iowa State fan, has formed F.F.B.O. (Fans For Better Officiating). She has sent petitions to all

corners of the Big Eight conference in an effort "to get the league to realize that a problem exists."

"This is a chance for the people to be heard," Stone said. "We've been sitting back and getting bad officiating year after year after year."

Stone said she didn't know whether the problem was the rules or the officials themselves. She said she thinks the Big Eight officials should be trained

so the calls will be more consistent.

"I feel when I buy a ticket, I'm paying part of the officials' salary," Stone said. "As an employer (Stone and her husband Jim own the Grove Cafe in Ames), I know that when an employee is not doing the job, you reprimand them, suspend them or you fire them."

Johnny Overby, commissioner of officials for the Big Eight and Missouri Valley conferences, said the petition drive and complaints about his officials are not unusual.

"I would like to invite those fans to pick out any 20 games and find out if the officials cost their team any game," Overby said. "My officials do not make the bad pass. My officials do not miss free throws. They do miss calls but that's because they're human. Ninety-nine percent of the time the officials

are making the right calls according to the rules."

Overby said a problem is that many coaches and fans don't know the rules. He said he thinks his officials are doing an excellent job this season.

"The coaches at the end of the season will have the right to rape the officials," Overby said. "If they fire all 30 officials, they'd have to go out and get 30 more who wouldn't be as good. If we're that bad, then how come we've had officials in the NCAA championship game the last four years? If we're that bad, then why do Big Eight officials get the big interconference games and the big independent games?"

One of the biggest critics of the officiating in the Big Eight is Iowa State Coach Johnny Orr. Stone said Orr was one of the reasons she formed F.F.B.O. "Coach Orr has said it's kind of hard

to coach players to play the officials," Stone said.

Overby said Orr complains all the time about the officiating in the Big Eight.

"We can't quiet him down," Overby said.

Overby said what most fans don't realize is the time commitment the officials have put in to reach the major college level.

"For a guy to officiate at this level he has got to have eight to ten years of experience as a high school official and four to ten years as an NAIA or junior college official," Overby said. "Everyone on the Big Eight staff is an ex-player or ex-coach."

"If the people think the game can be played without officials, let them do it," Overby said. "They can use the honor system."



Student refs cope with complaints

By Lori Griffin
Staff Reporter

A hypothetical situation: Airborne player A taps a rebound into the basket. In returning to the floor, he fouls player B, who had legal position before A was airborne. The airborne shooter rule does not apply here as player A was not in player control on a tap. True or false?

Intramural referees have to make those decisions on the spot every night. All referees are students who are hired through the Office of Campus Recreation, according to Kenda Scheele, coordinator of UNL intramurals.

"It is hard for the students to officiate with their peers," Scheele said. "They are the same age that the players are and it can be a very difficult job."

"The guys must be given the credit for taking the time to officiate," Scheele said. "They are students just like anyone else and they have homework to do just like any other student."

The officials are paid \$3.55 per hour and are responsible for being on the court 15 minutes before the games begin. They also must attend two pre-

season meetings. They officiate at least three games in a row, fill out a sportsmanship rating card on their game and attend one staff meeting per week. These meetings feature a weekly examination consisting of 15 true or false questions dealing with various basketball-related situations. Officials must score a 65 percent on the test the first week to continue. The percentage increases five percent until it reaches the maximum level, which is set at 80 percent. The students also are evaluated by the supervisors (students who are former officials) while they are at work.

This year's intramural league consists of 329 men's, women's and faculty/staff teams. Campus Recreation employs 40 to 50 officials, although 65 to 70 are usually needed.

Scheele said a common problem has been complaints about the general officiating at the games.

"We get the complaints because we ask the teams to do evaluations after each game," Scheele said. "But nine out of ten times, the losing teams are

the ones that fill out the evaluations. They are usually sore because they lost."

"I'm not saying that we have a good group who never make mistakes, but then again nobody's perfect," Scheele said.

Scheele said most of the officials who start out at UNL go on to do city recreation officiating for more pay. Others are lost to graduation and still more simply quit working. This, according to Scheele, creates problems because new officials are constantly having to be trained for the job.

"We encourage our officials to become a registered official in order to maintain activity for the rest of their lives," Scheele said. "We encourage people to be active for the rest of their lives and to remain active in the sport either as a coach or as an official."

"It must be remembered that these people are students," Scheele said. "I have never seen a player play a perfect game and I have never seen anyone officiate a perfect game. I truly believe that the officials do know more than the players, though."

Swimmers, divers treading water

Both the men's and women's swimming and diving teams will have had nearly three weeks without competition by the time they participate in the Big Eight Championships at the Devaney Sports Center March 7 through 9.

Men's swimming coach Cal Bents said the break gives his swimmers an opportunity to rest.

"We need the opportunity not to feel rushed and not to be worried about competing," Bents said. It's a time

when we can concentrate on details and gather mental strength."

The men's team has an 8-3 dual record.

Men's and women's diving coach Jeff Huber said his divers are also using the time to prepare mentally and think positively.

"We've worked harder than anyone else in the conference," Huber said, "and we've been pleased with our accomplishments. But now it's time to be relaxed and have fun."

Ray Huppert, women's swimming

coach agreed.

"I'm usually a very excitable coach," he said, "but I'm going to sit back and enjoy this meet."

He said his team is healthy and using the three week break to rest and prepare.

"It's going to be a great spectator meet with top quality performances and some great match-ups," Huppert said. "We will swim fast and dive well."

The women's Big Eight Championship meet is scheduled to run this Thursday through Saturday.

HUSKER



David Creamer/Daily Nebraskan

Debra Powell • East St. Louis, Ill.

DEBRA POWELL

"My role on the team is a leader both mentally and physically," Nebraska women's basketball player Debra Powell said. "I'm supposed to be the scoring threat on the team, and if I don't score, we are usually behind in the game. When I am not on the court I try and give the team as much encouragement as possible."

College Powell, a 6-9 senior, has started at forward for the Huskers for four years. Against Iowa State earlier this season, Powell broke Kathy Hagorstrom's all-time Nebraska women's scoring record of 1,778 points. Powell has averaged 15.7 points and 7.1 rebounds a game this season.

After finishing her basketball career, Powell plans to compete in the 100 hurdles for Nebraska's outdoor track team this spring. She ran a leg on the Husker 4x400 relay team last spring and carried all-American honors.

High School: At Lincoln High School in East St. Louis, Ill., Powell and teammates Jackie Jager (now at UCLA), former Husker standout Crystal Coleman and Kansas State's Barbara Gilmore got a state record 68 consecutive wins. Powell averaged 21 points a game in leading Lincoln to the Illinois state championship in 1981.

Personal: During her free time, Powell enjoys roller skating and dancing.

Powell said she has attained one of her most important goals off the basketball court.

"A lot of people say black people rarely get their college degrees," Powell said. "I am happy to say I will be receiving my degree in speech communication at the end of the year."

Rich Creamer
Staff Reporter

Iba metaphor misunderstood

I have never seen a Chinese Fire Drill. No doubt Moe Iba has never seen one either. However vaguely in the back of our minds, the notion of a Chinese Fire Drill somehow connotes disorganization. It is not a slam against the Chinese, but simply a metaphor used occasionally.

Thus, Nick H. P. Ng, who was displeased with Iba's remarks about his (Iba's) defense resembling a "Chinese Fire Drill," should understand that the remark was not meant to belittle the Chinese. If Iba were to say, "I wouldn't want a Chinese player on my team because Chinese players are disorganized," Ng would have a darn good reason to complain. In that case, I would complain too.

Forgive us dumb Americans. Once in a while we say something that someone will somehow find offensive. I'm sure Iba would be pleased to have a Chinese player on his team who has talent, even if he is a member of the Chinese Fire Drill.

Tom Shelton
senior
economics