

National Federation of State
High School Associations



Conflict Resolution

Dave Gannaway

NFHS Wrestling Rules Interpreters Meeting

September 23, 2009

Indianapolis, IN



Officials  Education
CONSORTIUM

www.officialseducation.org

CONFLICT RESOLUTION



Illinois High School Association



CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- RECOGNIZE THE CONFLICT
- DIFFUSING THE TIME BOMB - HOW IS IT DONE?
- SHARPEN YOUR SKILLS - WHAT SKILLS ARE NEEDED?



WHAT IS CONFLICT?

- DIRECT OPPOSITION, A CLASH OR DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN PEOPLE
- CONFLICTS ARE EXPERIENCED AT HOME, WORK, SOCIAL RECREATION AND OFFICIATING A CONTEST
- AS LONG AS YOU HAVE PEOPLE DEALING WITH PEOPLE, MAKING DECISIONS OR MEETING DEADLINES - YOU WILL HAVE CONFLICT



What Types of Conflict?

- Pre-existing (carry over from previous contest)
- Spontaneous Reaction - reaction in a critical time in the contest
- Cumulative Response - series of calls or bad breaks that do not favor one team



RESOLVING CONFLICT

- FOR YEARS PEOPLE IN AUTHORITY JUST TOLD OTHERS WHAT TO DO
- NOW, PEOPLE WANT TO BE HEARD AND HAVE A SAY IN WHAT IS HAPPENING
- THEREFORE, COMMUNICATION BECOMES VERY IMPORTANT IN RESOLVING CONFLICT



RESOLVING CONFLICT

- APPROACH THE CONFLICT COLLABORATIVELY - WORK WITH COACHES AND/OR YOUR PARTNER(S)
- SIMPLE COMMUNICATION IS AT THE HEART OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION
- WITH EVERY CONFLICT - IT'S A MATTER OF LISTENING AND SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM
- MUST BE DONE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CONTEST



LEVELS OF CONFLICT

- **INFORMAL** - MORE OFTEN HANDLED QUICKLY, LESS NOTICEABLE BY OTHERS - QUICK COMMENTS TO COACHES AND PARTICIPANTS
- **FORMAL** - NEEDS MORE ATTENTION MORE SKILLS NECESSARY TO RESOLVE OR UNDERSTAND WHAT THE COACH, PLAYER OR OFFICIAL HAS HEARD OR SEEN



KEY COMPONENTS IN RESOLVING CONFLICT

- GREAT LISTENING SKILLS
- FLEXIBILITY
- WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE
- AGREE TO DISAGREE



LISTENING SKILLS

- MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT
- DO NOT INTERRUPT - LET THEM FINISH
- GOOD POSTURE - MAINTAIN A NON-THREATENING POSITION
- MENTALLY REHEARSE SITUATIONS YOU MIGHT BECOME EMOTIONAL IN



FLEXIBILITY

- BE ABLE TO ADJUST TO ANY SITUATION
- DO NOT TRY TO HANDLE THE SITUATION ALONE - USE YOUR PARTNER(S)
- UNDERSTAND YOU ARE NOT GOING TO PLEASE EVERYONE - AGREE TO DISAGREE - THIS IS A TWO WAY STREET, BUT THE OFFICIAL HAS FINAL SAY



WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE

- GET THE CALL RIGHT - USE YOUR PARTNER(S)
- IF CHANGE IS NECESSARY - MAKE THE CHANGE
- SUPPORT YOUR PARTNER(S) - YOU ARE A **TEAM**
- UNDERSTAND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF COACHES AND WHAT MOTIVATES THEM - COMMUNICATE WITH THEM - KNOW YOUR COACH



DEFUSING THE SITUATION

INFORMAL CONFLICTS:

- **NORMAL CONTEST SITUATIONS WILL NOT BE STOPPED**
- **USE VISUAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT WITH COACH OR PARTICIPANTS**
- **DIRECT EYE CONTACT OR USE CAUTION SIGN.**



INFORMAL CONFLICT

- USE SHORT VERBAL EXPLANATION
- “I HEAR YOU, I WILL WATCH FOR THAT”
- “I SAW IT DIFFERENTLY THAN THAT”
- USE HUMOR ONLY WHEN APPROPRIATE - TIMING IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE WITH HUMOR
- MOST OF ALL - KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE



FORMAL CONFLICT

- CONTEST WILL TEMPORARILY BE STOPPED
- YOU WILL BE DIRECTLY CONFRONTED BY THE COACH. YOU MUST EVALUATE COACH'S DEGREE OF INTENSITY. LISTEN, BE FLEXIBLE, EVALUATE THE SITUATION AND MAKE CHANGE IF NECESSARY
- HELP YOUR PARTNER WITH POSITIVE INFORMATION - LET PARTNER MAKE THE CALL



FORMAL CONFLICT

- DEFUSE THE SITUATION - DO NOT ABUSE IT - GET EVERYONE CALMED DOWN IF POSSIBLE
- ESTABLISH YOUR COMFORT ZONE AND AVOID LETTING A COACH INTO YOUR ZONE OF COMFORT
- DO NOT LOSE YOUR COMPOSURE - THIS IS INEXCUSABLE



FORMAL CONFLICT

- ALWAYS DISPLAY PROPER PHYSICAL DEMEANOR
- GOOD EYE CONTACT
- PROPER POSTURE
- LISTEN RATHER THAN CHALLENGE
- GIVE QUICK PRECISE EXPLANATION AND MOVE FORWARD



FORMAL CONFLICT

- CLOSE THE SITUATION AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE
- YOU CAN USE THE FOLLOWING:
“COACH, I SAW IT DIFFERENTLY THAN THAT”
- “WE NEED TO GET BACK TO THE CONTEST”
- REMEMBER DEFUSE RATHER THAN ABUSE



FORMAL CONFLICT

- IF CONFLICT CONTINUES, GIVE THEM ONE LAST FORMAL WARNING
- IF CONFLICT CONTINUES, ADMINISTER THE APPROPRIATE PENALTY AND RESTART THE CONTEST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
- SERVE AS BUFFER FOR YOUR PARTNER



NECESSARY CHANGE

- IF THE OFFICIAL IS IN ERROR, MAKE THE NECESSARY CHANGE
- EXPLAIN TO THE OPPOSING COACH AND CAPTAIN(S) THE SITUATION AND THE CHANGE
- GET THE CONTEST STARTED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE



REVIEW

- KEEP ONE'S COMPOSURE
- EVALUATE THE CONFLICT
- ESTABLISH YOUR COMFORT ZONE
- MUST HAVE GOOD LISTENING SKILLS, BE FLEXIBLE AND A WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE IF WRONG
- USE SIMPLE COMMUNICATION TO KEEP A SITUATION FROM ESCALATING



REVIEW

- REVIEW CONCERNS TO SEE IF CHANGE IS NECESSARY
- USE YOUR PARTNER(S) AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE
- APPROACH A PROBLEM COLLABORATIVELY
- ADMINISTER PENALTY IF NECESSARY - GET CONTEST STARTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

