



# Referee Development

## What's Your Style?

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# What's Your Style?

## Situation

- You knew the game had the potential to get ugly and out of hand. You were “just the official” --- not the warden. After all, it is just a game.
- You should just let the players do what they do best — play! Hopefully, game will come and go quickly. Then, you can leave.
- After all, if things get too bad, you swore to yourself you would throw down the gauntlet, show everyone who is boss and reel everyone in.
- Often, raising your iron fist does not seem to be work — too little too late, too out of hand.

# What's Your Style?

## What type of official are you?

- Some believe “tough times” -- define who you really are. Or maybe— you define who, what you are. How you perceive action.
- Why allow things to “get tough” / out of control, when you are able to lead/ manage?
- You are in charge -- to officiate – to facilitate the game.
- Do you let every game, player/coach interaction, change you what you are as an official? Do you “dictate” the game or does it “dictate” you. Who is really in control?
- Your best management is to facilitate whole game.

# What's Your Style?

## Types of an official

- Many officials are comfortable being consistent in their style or set in their ways.
- There is no perfect officiating style that works best for everyone.
- Officials' style should evolve and grow as the sport is constantly evolving.
- Perhaps you chose to officiate because you played the game. Some enjoy enforcing rules of sports they like.
- The reason is one thing. However your personality, determines game behavior & how you treat others.
- Who are you when it comes to being an official?

# What's Your Style?

## Autocratic Officials

- **The autocratic official is a “dictator.” Basically : “My way or the highway.” That referee takes charge from at arrival to final whistle.**
- **Autocrats decide how the game is called & dictates to all involved.**
- **Players & coaches learn not to express opinions or displeasures. Autocratic officials might eject for arguing.**
- **Problem with Autocratic style is that communication among officials, coaches and players gets compromised.**
- **Autocratic style often creates conflict which can get out of hand quickly.**

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## Democratic Officials

- The democratic official reacts to the feelings/needs of coaches & players.
- Lets players & coaches know expectations.
- Allows players & coaches to dictate game flow.
- Official is only there to enforce rules of game, not to punish.
- Whenever confusion arises, the official offers polite explanations and definitions of rules/ decisions. The official clarifies. The official answers appropriate questions.
- Basically allows athletes to dictate, how a game is played even if there is foolishly 'chippie' /aggressive behavior. If rules are not violated & no one is hurt—fine.

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## Laissez-faire Officials

- The laissez-faire official (hands-off approach) is the antithesis, of the dictator type.
- Laissez-faire official welcomes the chance, to blend in. He is rarely be seen and heard. This type of officiating , has sometimes been referred to as, “allowing the inmates to run the prison.”
- This officials is often nothing more than a figure-head on the field. He rarely demonstrates enough, or any, authority. Rules & regulations seldom get enforced (the obvious blatant ones), while others, get completely overlooked.
- Often, the game get out of hand because there is an obvious lack of officiating consistency.

# What's Your Style?

## Improve Your Style

- How would other officials, athletes or coaches, describe your style? How would you describe your style?
- Efficient officials operate on premise of democratic — enforcing sport rules as good facilitator. They are good officials and they are effective communicators.
- If your style is at least somewhat autocratic or laissez-faire, you can improve by focusing on upgrading your communication skills
- Communication is the hallmark of being a successful leader who facilitate a game. An effective communicator listens to what others say and when in doubt, seeks clarification.
- A democratic official is all about seeing all sides of the game & adapting to the human side of the enterprise.