

Wrestling Officiating Tips – Fred Feeney

Feeney-isms (Tips to help you Be A Duck!)

1. Be a Duck. If you look like a ref and act like a ref, people will see that you are a ref!
2. Get a mentor!
3. Learn to... "Let it burn."
4. Never stop officiating after a pin or end of match, etc....until they have left the mat.
5. Always look at where they are headed...not where they are.
6. Keep the whistle out of your mouth until its needed.
7. "Go Slow, Go Slow, Go Slower." It is a mental thing, more than physical. We hurry, but do not rush.
8. Mental focus officiate the situation.
9. Know when to stop something and when not to. Huge difference.
10. Dedication. Don't have it.... stop officiating.
11. Call only what you see, not what you think you saw.
12. When officiating a match, anticipating a penalty and be ready to stop it but don't get too involved in that one thing...there are other things going on as well... The coach, wrestlers and crowd will all see what you dint see.
13. See the whole situation, before and after.
14. Be positive it was a penalty, if in doubt let it be. Don't be in hurry to blow your whistle.
15. Get a "diary" and write something that you take away from every match. There is not one match I didn't learn something from in my career. Also, do as many matched as you can to get much needed mat time. Don't worry about the money or the travel...mat time is valuable. Watch the good...senior officials. Those that have great mechanics.
16. Don't have a match? Go with a senior ref and either watch or assist...don't worry about not getting paid...put in your time!
17. If you've made a mistake and the Coach is helping you learn from it ... "own it". Apologize and tell him it won't happen again and move on. Write it down in your notebook!
18. Read your notebook before every match!! It has saved my butt may a time by.... remembering what NOT to do.

19. You are expected to know the rules...period. If you don't...either learn them backwards and forwards or stop officiating. Know your mechanics just as well. One cannot make the correct call if one is not in the proper position.
20. Work on mechanics first and foremost, be in the right position so you can officiate slowly and smoothly. The best penalty is the one you didn't have to call because you talked about it in the pre-meet.
21. Control your corners or team bench. Do not be a bully...but make sure they understand the line and if crossed...penalize.
22. Working with a 2nd.... let them be part of the match...listen and encourage them to help you when needed.
23. If you are the 2nd....act like it...be involved but not too involved.
24. Learn the value of and the importance of a good pre-meet. It can save you!
25. Know the rules. No coach can intimidate you if you are prepared.
26. Before a match, pee because you can, not because you have to.
27. Look the part when you step on the mat. It is the first step in the right direction.
28. Get the wrecks per se...not the little fender benders.... know when to penalize and when not to.
29. I think newer officials tend to really want to penalize a lot more then experienced officials tend to. Learn why they do not as much...uh...it comes with mat time btw.
30. Read Rule 5, then read it again. Understand the definitions and you'll get the rules!
31. Read the case book.... over and over and over.
32. Don't work with the whistle in your mouth.
33. Don't over officiate.
34. You'd rather blow a whistle too late than too early.
35. Don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand a rule. The day you quit asking is the day you gave up being the best official you can be.
36. Near fall....know what a second is...practice it over and over. It's a simple thing but often overlooked. Give them what they earned. No more no less.
37. 45 degrees is 45 degrees anytime, anywhere...understand it. It's NOT going into 45...it is 45.

38. See the fall. So simple, yet so true.
39. Know the difference between illegal hold and technical violations.
40. Proper signals make you look great!
41. Don't get too close and don't be too far away. As young officials, we all want to get too close. It not only reduces your field of vision, but it will also hurt you.
42. Be prepared. Establish routines.
43. Forget your mistakes, keep officiating!
44. Focus on safety, fair play.
45. See everything you call, don't call everything you see!
46. Relax/slow down/Stay still when needed.
47. Alertness - Be aware that the safety of each wrestler is paramount.
48. Appreciation – Kid hits a great move, savor it. He worked hard to master it.
49. Approachability – Get the reputation of allowing a coach to argue within the rules.
50. Aspiration - Reach for the stars, you will get there.
51. Cheerfulness - Leave your own troubles matside.
52. Communication - Learn to do this effectively with coaches. They will appreciate it.
53. Confidence – Reek of it without being cocky.
54. Curiosity - Don't know something? Find it out. Ask questions.
55. Decisiveness – Be firm. Be quick. All based on a knowledge of the rules.
56. Excellence - Strive to be the best you can be.
57. Ethics – Don't have them? Hang up the whistle, quickly.
58. Fairness – Do the right thing.
59. Family – Don't forget this. Without family, you are a lonely person.
60. Forgiveness - Don't hold grudges. Let things go.
61. Humility – It's truly not about you out there.

62. Loyalty - Don't degrade your fellow refs in public.
63. Perseverance - It really will get easier to remember which arm is green or red.
64. Positive Attitude - Why have any other type?
65. Preparation - This is the key. Read. Study. Mat time Mat time and more Mat time.
66. Punctuality - Always an hour ahead of start time.
67. Resilience - You will mess up. Get over it.
68. Values - Don't have any? Get some...quickly.
69. Wisdom - Of all the gifts, this will take the longest. With this gift, all others will come.
70. Have fun...if it isn't fun...stop.