Campus Recreation Officials Put in the Work to Keep Intramurals Running Smooth

By Ross Bentley
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The SUNY Oswego Campus Recreation Official are assigned the difficult task of not only enforcing the rules and policies of each individual intramural sport, but also to maintain order and keep the activities fun for intramural participants. This is not a skill that can be learned overnight. Sports Officials put in days of training before they are sent onto the field to officiate intramurals.

Intramural participants may not realize the time and effort that gets put in to preparing to officiate the different intramural sports. However, officials must go through a specific training process before they are ready to be put into the action.

For each individual sport, Officials research the intramural rules and take a quiz in which they must pass in order to be accepted as officials for that sport. Following that, the Sports Officials have trainings for each sport, which include a classroom learning session which explain and go over all the rules, and a live practice officiating session, where the officials rotate in a scrimmage game for that sport.

Only after they have completed the training can the officials feel comfortable taking control during competitive intramural games.

Second year official Adam Rupsyczk appreciates the effect that the training sessions have on the Campus Rec employees. “I think they are crucial. The intramural sports get competitive, and in order for them to be fun they have to be organized, and that’s what we do as campus rec officials, we organize them. The training sessions get everyone ready and brushed up on the rules they don’t know, and what to do and not to do, so that way they feel more confident going into that first game.”

Training sessions are also not limited to new sports officials. Returners as well must go through the trainings each semester so that they remain fresh on all of the specific intramural rules and regulations. “It’s real difficult because sometimes you don’t have the expertise, and sometimes it’s quite obvious from the way you ref the game or the jargon you don’t use,” said official Ethan Mack. “The trainings definitely help you get more prepared, some of it is review but even that helps.”

Even though many of the sports officials are former athletes, many of the rules in intramurals vary greatly from the rules of sports at the high school or even collegiate level. Also, with all of the different intramural sports that can be participated in, sports officials may need to learn about the rules of an entirely new sport that they are not
familiar with. “Volleyball for me was difficult,” said Rupsyczk. “I kind of got behind a little bit because I had never played organized volleyball. Things like the out of bounds are self-explanatory, but things like running into the net were rules that I was never aware of. So going to the training, I learned about it and then I knew to look for that during the game.”

Intramural sports are impossible without sports officials who know the games inside and out. Along with knowing all of the rules and how to officiate games, officials serve the purpose of keeping the games organized and regulated.

Although officials often catch a lot of flak from the players, without the hard work that they put in, intramural sports would not exist as we know them today.