

# The Officials Code Of Conduct

## *MGAA Informational Series Topic #3*

### Let's talk about the *Officials Code of Conduct*

This section can be found in the online copy of the MGAA addendum on page 10 and subsequent page of the printed copy. Below I have transcribed the three rules in this section for your convenience.

Link to the MGAA 2018 addendum

[http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/4ed536\\_02b45789e1c3423fa4bcbede032363d0.pdf](http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/4ed536_02b45789e1c3423fa4bcbede032363d0.pdf)

Referees and Assistant Referees both fall under this umbrella and are held to this code of conduct. When you fill the role of referee or assistant referee you are judging the competition. This puts you in a serious position to affect the outcome of the competition.

Referees and assistant referees should always take their job seriously and do all they can to assure a fair competition. Remember that phones are not allowed in the arena, you must give the competition your full attention.

*The riders are depending on you.*

When you are a rider, you want fair and equal calls and your referee and assistant referees to be paying attention and doing their best job. So when it is your turn to fill these roles for other riders, know that they expect the same from you.

If you are ever asked to be an assistant referee and you are not familiar with the rules and addendum and/or are unable to remain impartial and follow the code of conduct for whatever reason, you should let your referee know this and ask to be assigned a different job.

Doing this is always ok, and you will never be penalized for this. It is much more honorable to know your limitations and speak them, rather than fill a role to which you are unable to give 100%.

*MGAA AO16.1 No official will offer "coaching" of any riders competing during their shift as an official. Referees and Assistant Referees should be impartial and focused on all riders equally. No cheering, suggesting corrections, or announcing errors is permitted.*

This means if you are a referee or an assistant referee, you cannot yell instructions or words of support to your friends. You cannot yell, "IT'S OUT! You missed your dunk!"

You also cannot yell "GOOD JOB!" to riders on the field.

We all find this difficult. We all want to cheer our friends on. But while you fill these roles you are a judge. You need to be impartial. There is no way to be impartial if you are "coaching" and encouraging your friends.

Yelling "IT'S OUT" is actually cheating. You are giving that rider an advantage over other riders.

Referees and assistant referees should be watching *all* teams, not just their favorites or their friends. While a race is running their full attention should be on the field.

*MGAA AO16.2 Officials will not take suggestions or assistance from spectators or others while doing their official job.*

If you hear the spectator or a ring crew worker behind you say "oh that rider was over the line!" but YOU did not see it, you cannot call it. YOU are the official, the spectator or ring crew worker is not.

Do not accept goading, "what you didn't see that?!" or "you have got to be kidding me, that horse was a whole length over the line!" Report this behavior to your referee after the race. The referee may choose to move that assistant referee position forward and away from spectators/ring crew, or they may choose to speak to or move that spectator, or even penalize their team.

Spectators cannot be a "second set of eyes" for you.

YOU have to see any infractions yourself.

If, in an extreme case, you feel you need a "second set of eyes" you should speak to your referee and he/she will decide on a course of action.

Assistant referees should generally remain quiet, not discussing any calls, infractions or judgements with anyone other than the referee and other assistant referees during their work session.

If you are the Line A assistant referee, you may *not* take instruction from the scribe or tablet operator. You may not use them as a second set of eyes unless given specific permission from the referee in advance.

*MGAA AO16.3 Riders should always be given the benefit of the doubt if an official, on consultation with the Chief Referee, is unsure if an infraction took place.*

If you think you saw something, but are not 100% sure, you should report it to the referee and let them know what you saw, and how sure or not you are.

The referee should choose to discuss this with other assistant referees to see if they saw anything as well.

No rider should be penalized unless the referee or assistant referees are sure something took place.

As a general reminder, assistant referees should always take situations they see to the referee. It is the referee's job to make the decision if a call should be made. Assistant referees should never make the decision "well they are a new team, I'll let it slide". Remember that doing this cheats the other teams. It also cheats the team you are "helping" because they do not learn from their infraction.

*Again, if you feel you are unable to follow the code of conduct and remain impartial when asked to be an assistant referee, you must let the referee know and ask to be assigned a different job.*