

Briefly Speaking...

NFL SICK BAY. Within weeks of the start of NFL preseason games, two officials' health problems forced them to the sideline. **Ed Merrifield** (FJ, No. 76) and **John Alderton** (LJ, No. 25) are expected to miss the entire 1994 season. They join referee **Stan Kemp** (No. 108), who continues a medical leave of absence that began in 1992. Merrifield, a 19-year NFL official from Kansas City, Mo., suffered a heart attack. Alderton, a five-year NFL official from Portland, Ore., ruptured an Achilles' tendon. To replace those two men, the league added to its officials' staff **Kirk Dornan** and **Mark Steinkerchner**. Dornan, who formerly worked in the Pac-10 Conference, is from Tacoma, Wash. He is working as a field judge, No. 6; Steinkerchner, from Akron, Ohio, last season was in the Mid-American Conference. He's a line judge, No. 84. All of those changes were reflected in the rosters and crew lists published on pages 14 and 15 of *Referee's* 9/94 issue.

EDUCATED UMPES. Of the 194 minor league baseball umpires working in July, 92% have post-high school educations and 32% have graduated from four-year colleges or universities, reported *U.D.P. news*, the official newsletter of Baseball Umpire Development. The most "popular" states of residence for minor league umpes: Florida, with 21 umpires, leads the pack, followed by California (15), Arizona (13) and Illinois (10)... The Class A Florida State League doled out a record \$4,425 in fines and 44 suspensions to players from the Port Charlotte Rangers and West Palm Beach Expos after a June 23 brawl in West Palm. Four West Palm and three Port Charlotte players escaped without fines or suspensions; they were in the clubhouse or not at the game.

NAUGHTY, NAUGHTY. In its April newsletter, the National Intercollegiate Soccer Officials' Assn. (NISOA) reported on the Intercollegiate Soccer Coaches' Association of America's analysis of game reports submitted by NISOA college referees during the 1993 season. Games played in California yielded the most cautions (1,081) and ejections (125), followed by Illinois (779, 106). The analysis also showed that 21% of cautions and ejections occurred in the final 15 minutes of regulation time (75-90 minutes) and 20% happened between the 60 and 74-minute marks. In '93, 1,182 red cards were issued (down 12% from '92) and 9,060 yellow cards were given (down 3% from '92)... Speaking of disciplinary problems, Milwaukee Mustangs' general manager **Chris Vallozzi** was suspended for his team's July 1 game in the Arena Football League because in the second quarter of the previous game, he went onto the field to protest an official's call, then at halftime followed the officials off the field while arguing with them.

COLLEGE CHANGES. **Jon Steinbrecher** was named acting commissioner of the Mid-Continent Conference, replacing **Jerry Ippoliti**, who assumed the same post with the Mid-American Conference. Ippoliti succeeded **Karl Benson**, who became commissioner with the Western Athletic Conference. Also, **Linda Bruno** was named commissioner of the Atlantic 10 Conference. She replaced interim boss **Bob Steitz**, who had been serving since April, when **Ron Bertovich** resigned. Plus, **Jim Desmond** resigned as supervisor of Mid-American men's basketball refs. He had held that post since 1985.

BAIT & SWITCH. U.S. Surgeon General **Jocelyn Elders** was profiled in the July-August edition of *Family Life*, reported the *Chicago Tribune*. Writer **Norman Atkins**' story began by telling readers how "for more than three decades," Elders sat behind the bench as her husband coached a high school basketball team and she "mercilessly and ceaselessly" badgered referees. "So riled were the referees by this fanatic woman's ravings that they would occasionally exact revenge by charging" her husband with technical fouls, wrote Atkins.

Contributing sources: *USA Today*, *Milwaukee Sentinel*, *The NCAA News*.

How to adapt to the needs of deaf wrestlers

WILMINGTON, N.C. — The sounds of a wrestling tourney — coaches and fans yelling, a time clock buzzing, a referee blowing his whistle — are inaudible to deaf wrestlers. With more deaf students enrolling in public schools, the number of hearing-impaired wrestlers is likely to increase. As a referee, there are several things you can do to adapt your officiating to meet the needs of the deaf wrestler.

- Before the starting handshake, show the wrestler the hand signal you plan to use to start the match. Make sure you whistle and signal simultaneously so the athlete looking for the signal isn't put at a disadvantage.

- Check your position before starting, making sure you are in the wrestler's line of sight.

- If possible, show the points you award instead of just verbalizing the award.

- Special attention is needed to let the deaf athlete know when to stop wrestling. Relying on him to notice when his opponent stops, or giving a visual signal, may not always work if he is focused on the match.

Although it is generally not advisable to touch athletes while they are wrestling, it may be necessary in this case. A firm pat on the shoulder or back is recommended to get his attention.

- At the corner of the mat you may see the maximum number of coaches plus an interpreter, who should be allowed to stay. The wrestler may signal for the interpreter if you need to explain something to him.

Speak slowly and directly to the athlete, so your information can be relayed. Whatever you say in front of the interpreter is confidential:

He will not share your comments with coaches or other team members.

- Although coaches must remain in a designated area, the interpreter should be allowed to move around the mat's edge so the wrestler can see the interpreter, who is translating instructions from the coaches.

By allowing a few minor changes in format, you can ensure that a deaf wrestler is not put at a disadvantage.

—Written by **Barr Houston**, *Wilmington, N.C.* Houston is a teacher and a sign-language interpreter who has worked with athletes in wrestling, football and track.

'You can quote me on that'

FRANKSVILLE, Wis. — The following quotes are excerpted from the media sources indicated:

- **Sam Cassell**, last season when he was a rookie guard with the Houston Rockets of the NBA:

"In college, the referees tend to protect you a little more. In this league, they don't. This is a man's league right here. If you are not a man, you are not going to be in this league for long." (*Associated Press/the Journal Times*, 6/15/94)

- **Cheryl Miller**, women's basketball coach at the University of Southern California, about her efforts to emulate Louisiana Tech women's coach **Leon Barmore** in terms of the way he stares at officials:

"He's got the greatest glare at an official I've ever seen in my life. I'm trying to imitate it, but it's just not working." (*USA Today*, 4/1/94)

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