



CHESAPEAKE REGION VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION

REFEREE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Haste Is Waste In Making It To The Top

Corny Galdones, October 2008

Everybody wants to be on top. It's a fact of life, even for officials. Those rushing on the road to glory cheat only themselves by taking shortcuts in creating a firm foundation. Their day of reckoning is coming. Sooner or later, a shaky structure could collapse when put to the test. Fetch the duct tape. Our budding Humpty Dumptys may need it when the dust settles.

What's the hurry? Just because our compatriots have gone ahead of us is no reason to get anxious or bent out of shape. Biased factors such as politics and perception might have favored these lucky dogs. Hey, more power to them. Focus instead on what we can control. Teams at the top expect and demand the best. The players are better. The coaches are sharper. The action is faster. The stakes are bigger. In this pressure cooker, we can't learn as we go. Despite a bundle of nerves, we have to bring an "A" game to every match and can't be a basket case. Assess ourselves. Do we know all there is to know? Do we have what it takes to do the job well? Fudging fools nobody. Own up to the truth to progress faster and further. We'll reap what we sow. Talent realizes greatness with experience and preparation. It takes time.

The number of matches we work is earning power, not experience. At any rate, practicing the same old habits isn't for our greater good. Work counts as experience when we break out of our comfy shells to take on new worlds, develop know-how, and improve from mistakes. No one has officiated until being ripped apart by players and coaches and living to talk about it. The point is to grow by facing new, tougher challenges under fire. With added exposure, no condition should catch us by surprise or at a loss on what to do or say and how to go about it. Train to spot and resolve problems on the fly. Study to foresee the action and the moment it happens, know the proper thing to do. Then via repetition, we'll gain command of selling our correct and confident decisions, mechanics and delivery, making them second nature, *i.e.*, more instinct and less thinking. Knowledge begets knowledge. The higher we climb, the harder the learning will be. Our heads will spin unless we have seen it all and know what we're doing. To blossom fully, we must be rooted in the ground with these basics.

In moving up the ladder, a one-track mind sacrificing everything else to reach the top by tomorrow has a hole in the head plus a hole in life. Get a hold of ourselves. Get a life. In fact, get a total life, for the well-rounded are better suited for the big show. Besides whistle blowers, we have to be managers, mediators, professionals, diplomats and much more. Our tools must be honed for the whole trade, or else we'll stall on a lower rung forever frustrated. No longer can we hide in the background. Step to the forefront as leaders by being on the ball, taking charge and directing traffic. No longer can we rub folks the wrong way. Control and cool matters like good cops by getting along with people and staying out of their way while ensuring the match flows. No longer can we take things casual. Rise to the occasion as role models by setting fine examples in dress, conduct and execution. No longer can we trip over our tongues. Find a way with words like silver-tongued devils to tell others where to go and have them like it. We can sparkle like diamonds by polishing every officiating facet.

Our stock depends on whether we invest in building our entire base solid as a rock. Thinking or claiming we're ready for prime time gets us nowhere. Go out and show them.