



IWFFA

International Women's Flag Football Association

Officials Corner

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April 2025

Keeping the Game Calm and in Control

Officiating women's flag football is fun and rewarding. When things get emotional we can lose sight of this. Managing difficult personalities, players, coaches, or spectators requires patience, confidence, and strong communication skills. Here are some key tips to handle challenging situations effectively.

Establish authority early. As an official, it is your responsibility to set the tone. Set the tone on the first whistle, with clear, firm, and fair officiating. Be confident in your calls and positioning. Communicate proactively to prevent escalation. Stay calm and professional. Do not take complaints or arguments personally. Maintain a composed demeanor, even when others are upset. If someone raises their voice, lower yours. It forces them to listen. Be consistent and fair to avoid bias. Enforce rules the same way throughout the game. Be transparent in your decision-making.

Use preventative communication. Give quick, clear explanations when making calls. If a player is frustrated, acknowledge their feelings but stay focused on the game. "I hear you, but this is what I saw". This can help de-escalate. Set boundaries with coaches and players. If someone becomes too aggressive, warn them calmly. Use penalties when necessary to maintain control. Avoid engaging in prolonged arguments. Make your call and move on. Manage spectators smartly. If fans become disruptive, address it through the coach or event staff. Do not engage directly in arguments with spectators. Lean on your crew. Communicate with other officials to ensure consistency. If tensions rise, work together to manage situations.

Lastly, know when to walk away. If a conversation is going nowhere or someone is being disrespectful, disengage. Return focus to the game. Avoid power struggles. Your job is to officiate, not to debate. Remember it is the official's responsibility to not only manage the game. How you manage yourself sets the stage for how you expect others to conduct themselves!

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