

Referees: Keeping officials a major issue

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"I might already be reaching panic mode," Folliard said. "There will always be enough varsity officials. But in some cases, in some associations, we may not be able to staff a junior varsity or freshmen game. That's where the real issue is going to be — making sure all the games can be covered."

For now, many referees work multiple games in a night. But the larger issue persists: Finding a solution to stop the bleeding isn't simple.

When Folliard began officiating in the 1970s, Oregon's referee situation looked far different.

"A lot of the referees back then were teachers and educators," Folliard said. "It was a way for them to be more connected to students. As their responsibilities at schools have increased, we have fewer educators."

Today, the situation is much more unsteady.

Salem Basketball Officials Commissioner Steve Bulen said the association, which covers Polk County, has 160 basketball referees, 10 to 15 short, but drawing in new referees isn't easy.

"The National Federation of State High School Associations put out a report and the top reason why refs quit was career movement," Bulen said. "Second on the list was poor sportsmanship by fans and participants alike. That's the one that I think is a real problem."

The OAOA does have procedures in place to deal with fans and emphasizes getting school management involved. But the verbal abuse can be a real turnoff.

"People don't like to get yelled or screamed at," Bulen said. "People don't even consider you as a human anymore. You're just an object out there, which is sad."

Other barriers include



Referee Brian Nava watches play during Dallas' girls basketball game on Friday.

lower-than-expected pay and difficult career advancement.

"You have to buy uniforms, go to meetings, work at home studying the rules, etc.," Folliard said. "I think people quickly understand

how complicated the rules are and how difficult it is to make snap judgments in an activity that is happening very, very fast."

Schedules can also be a major hurdle to attracting new referees.

New referees generally start with freshmen and junior varsity games to gain experience and receive feedback. Those games often start at 5:30 p.m.

"A lot of people have to work in the afternoons," Fol-

liard said. "It's tough for people with that 9-to-5 job to start officiating at any location, especially in spots where traffic is more difficult."

Despite a decrease in numbers, those who do remain find it to be a rewarding experience, Bulen said.

"I think it becomes a lifeblood for them," Bulen said. "The adrenaline starts flowing. I had officials compare getting assignments to Christmas morning."

Bulen said he's seen many referee crews become life-long friends.

While the benefits can last a lifetime, the OAOA is facing a struggle to bring in new referees. But Folliard is hoping potential referees aren't scared away.

"It takes a special kind of person to be a ref," Folliard said. "You're helping out the kids and doing a service to the community, because it's just recess with-out refs."

Whistle: Goodman in his 24th season as ref

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Playing basketball is one thing. Officiating is an entirely different world.

"There was more than one time I thought, 'Why am I here?'" Goodman said. "I didn't realize all the responsibilities they had. It gave me a whole new perspective."

Goodman thought his foray into being a referee would be a short one.

"Being a player, I was just involved in the plays," Goodman said. "Officials are there to blow their whistles. As a ref, I'd see a play and think, 'yeah, he shoved him.' Then I'd think, 'oh yeah, I'm the official, I'm supposed to call that.'"

If it wasn't for his promise to stick it out, Goodman may not have lasted through his first season of officiating middle school games.

"I was committed to at least finish the year," Goodman said. "The commitment kept me going when I first started."

As that first season wore on, Goodman became more comfortable. And to his surprise, he started to have fun.

"I thought at the end of my first season, this wasn't so bad," Goodman said. "It kept me in contact with the kids and I had the best seat in the house for a basketball game."

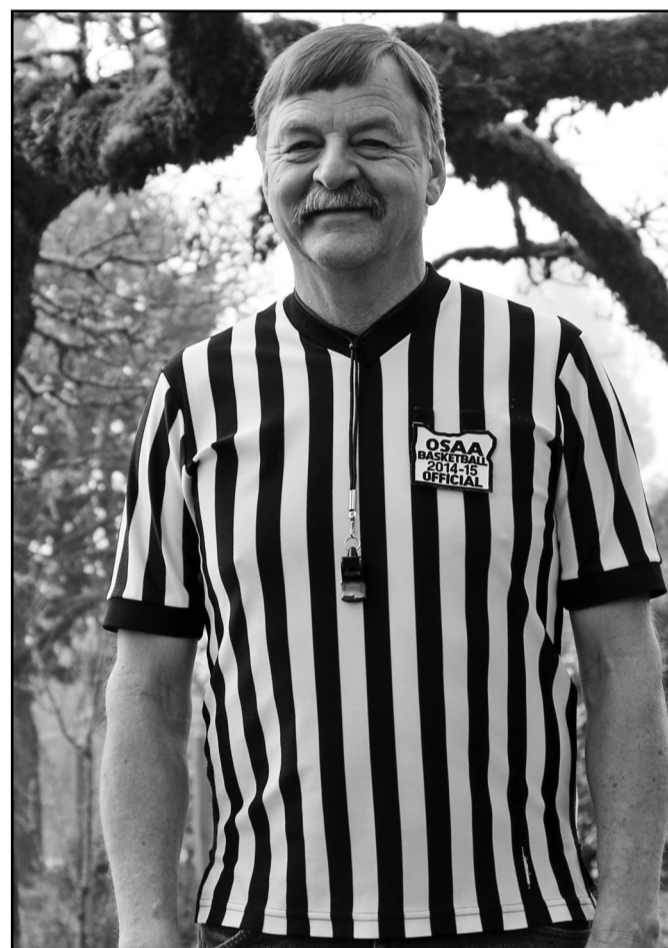
By the end of his second season, his mind was made up.

"I got better and better," Goodman said. "I was trying to be a part of the game, but not really being seen."

During his third season, Goodman was working high school freshmen and junior varsity games. The following year, he was ready for varsity assignments.

"My first game happened to be at Central," Goodman said. "I had a lot of nerves. I was probably as hyped up as much as I was (when I played basketball)."

There's a saying among referees that you're going to miss 50 percent of the calls, Goodman said. While refer-



Charlie Goodman has been officiating for 24 seasons and doesn't plan on stopping anytime soon.

ees offer advice and critique of each other after games, the ability to move on quickly is among the most important traits to be successful.

"You have to have a short memory," Goodman said. "If you dwell on it too long, it will haunt you and you'll mess up again."

It's not rule changes that cause the most problems. It's keeping up with players.

"The play has changed," Goodman said. "The play gets faster. The talent and skill level is going up."

During Goodman's first year, there were 200 basketball officials in the Salem area, a number that hasn't been matched since, Goodman said.

That's led to situations like last season, where he worked six games in a five-day stretch.

In the short term, Goodman said he doesn't mind the extra work.

It's that attitude that has made him one of the area's most trusted referees.

"Charlie is one of those officials that will go anywhere and do anything that is asked of him," Salem Basketball Officials Commissioner Steve Bulen said. "He gets along with coaches and other officials really well, and no one ever complains about him. He has really good common sense, which is really important too. I would love to have 10 more just like him."

After more than two decades as an official, Goodman, 63, isn't sure how much longer he'll continue to officiate. For now, he knows he's having too much fun to walk away.

"When I reach the point where I can't move as well and I don't feel like I'm doing justice to those kids, then I'll quit," Goodman said. "When you're no longer contributing, it's time to get out."

PREP BOYS BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

Central loses Fleming

Senior leader out at least four weeks

Itemizer-Observer staff report
INDEPENDENCE — Central's boys basketball team picked up a pair of league wins last week, yet it suffered a big blow to its lineup.

Senior Kyler Fleming injured his left hand on Jan. 20, causing him to miss at least the next four weeks.



Fleming

The Panthers responded with a pair of Mid-Willamette Conference victories.

Central posted a 51-43 win over Crescent Valley on Jan. 21 as Kaj Bansen scored a team-high 22 points, while Jarrett Landers added 10 points.

"Losing Kyler was a big hit for us, but the kids responded really well, and I'm very proud," Panthers coach Tim Kreta said. "They knew what to focus on and stayed focused on our game plan during the week."

Central (10-3 overall, 4-0 MWC) also earned a 53-43 road win over Lebanon on Friday. Bansen scored 17 points, while Kevin Cable added 12 points.

"Madison (Stepp) got into foul trouble early and Kevin (Cable) and Mohamed (Eltebany) stepped up well for us," Kreta said. "We slowed down and continued to

break their pressure and hit a couple shots."

The Panthers have a showdown at Silverton, which enters the matchup undefeated in conference play, on Wednesday (today) before hosting Corvallis Friday at 7 p.m.

DALLAS BOUNCES BACK: Dallas' boys basketball team kept pace with the Mid-Willamette Conference's top two teams after earning a pair of league wins last week. The Dragons (7-6 overall, 3-1 MWC) opened with a 68-31 win over South Albany on Jan. 21. Everett Minahan, Logan Hatley and Bradley Huey scored 11 points each to lead Dallas. Minahan scored a game-high 18 points against Corvallis on Friday, as the Dragons defeated the Spartans 66-57. Harrison Broadus scored 14 points, and Isaac Tichenor and Chase



Minahan

Mauk added 11 points apiece as Dallas won at Corvallis for the first time since joining the MWC. "Harry Broadus broke out of an offensive funk and had a big game for us," Dragons coach Trent Schwartz said. "Brad Huey continues to be a steady presence for us in the paint in both games. ... Overall, we played our best basketball of the season so far last week." Dallas returns home for a pair of league contests. The Dragons host Crescent Valley at 7 p.m. Wednesday (today) and Lebanon Friday at 7:15 p.m.

PIRATES FALL TO RIVAL:

Facing rival St. Paul for the first of two clashes, Perrydale's boys basketball squad dropped a Tri-River Conference game to the



Price

Buckaroos 50-40 on Friday. Chad Price scored a game-high 20 points, but the Pirates gave up 16 free throws, while attempting just 15. "In a 10-point game, that is a deal breaker," Perrydale coach Mike Lowry said. The Pirates earned a 38-31 win over Santiam Christian on Jan. 20. Brant Barnes scored 12 points and Price added 11 points to lead Perrydale. "Brant Barnes had one of his best games of the season at both ends of the court," Lowry said. "... It is a hard thing to ask any athlete to be locked in mentally and give everything they have physically every night. For us to win games, that is what we have to do." Perrydale faced Kennedy Tuesday after press time. The Pirates host Central Linn Friday at 7 p.m. before playing at Regis on Monday.

FALLS CITY DROPS TWO:

Falls City's boys basketball team saw its two-game win streak come to an end after a 38-32 loss to Jewell on Jan. 21 and a 33-26 loss to Willamette Valley Christian on Friday. No details were provided. The Mountaineers played at Country Christian Tuesday after press time. Falls City plays at C.S. Lewis on Friday.

Fennell: Senior scored 22 points on Jan. 20

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The early results seem promising. Fennell scored a game-high 22 points against South Albany on Jan. 20.

As Fennell adds a new dimension to her game, she can help open up the rest of the Dragons' offense.

"Our kids are more than capable of doing this," Brautigam said. "We just need to get the ball moving a little bit more and not freeze up so much."

Fennell's evolution comes at a critical time for Dallas. The Dragons entered the week at 2-2 in Mid-Willamette Conference play, good for fourth out of seven teams, with games against Lebanon and Silverton on Friday and Tuesday, both of which entered the week with 1-3 league records.

"I've been coaching in this league for a long time now," Brautigam said. "You can see a team like us at 2-2



Dallas senior Taylor Fennell looks for an opening to the hoop against Corvallis on Friday night.

win five games in a row and you can see a team that is 3-1 lose four in a row. You have to stay mentally tough."

Fennell's ability to stretch the court can help open

things up for teammates. "We just need to keep working hard," Fennell said. "We need to bounce back and realize we can hang with any team in our league."

Sudoku
Difficulty: ★★★★★

2	7				5			
3				1	9			
		1		7	5			
		7						2
			4	3	2			
4						6		
			9	4		8		
		3	8					7
		8					9	4

How to do Sudoku
Fill in the grid so the numbers 1 through 9 appear just once in every column, row, and three-by-three square. See example above.

Sudoku
Difficulty: ★★★★★

4	3	2	8	1	6	7	5	9
5	6	9	3	7	4	8	1	2
1	7	8	9	5	2	4	6	3
3	4	7	2	8	5	6	9	1
2	1	6	7	4	9	3	8	5
9	8	5	1	6	3	2	7	4
7	9	1	4	3	8	5	2	6
8	5	3	6	2	1	9	4	7
6	2	4	5	9	7	1	3	8

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