

## **OHSAA Fall 2023 Officials' Reports on Positive Sporting Behavior (Report No. 2 as of 11/7/23)**

**Note:** The following are reports the OHSAA office has received from registered contest officials on positive sporting behavior that has been observed. The names of the officials and individuals at schools have not been included but the schools involved have been noted. Some reports have been edited due to length and for clarity.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Football (Cincinnati Finneytown High School at Cincinnati Mariemont High School, 9/15/23)

**Details:** I want to commend the sportsmanship shown by the Finneytown varsity football players and coaching staff. I was the official working on their side of the field and have only compliments for the way they handled themselves and their opponent. The kids were respectful to the officials and their opponents. The coaches listened to what the officiating crew said, understood the situation and would move on to the next play. The ball person they assigned, a young lady from their junior high program, was the best ball person I have had in years. She listened to instructions and followed them. It was a pleasure to work this sidelines with this group.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Football (Gahanna Lincoln High School at Pickerington High School Central, 9/15/23)

**Details:** Our football officiating crew recognizes and celebrates the outstanding lockerroom facility and accommodations for the officials. The towels and bars of soap were a first quality touch. Provision of a variety of cold drinks on ice and various snacks was appreciated. Of course the Italian sub sandwiches were a great treat for the ride home. Lastly, we recognize the prompt and courteous treatment getting all of us into and out of the locked dressing area. Thank you to the Pickerington Central athletic administrator and staff!

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Football (Lima Senior High School at Toledo Bowsher High School, 9/15/23)

**Details:** On behalf of our entire crew, we hope and pray that the injured Lima Senior player is doing well from Friday evening's game at Toledo Bowsher. Everyone knows that football is a very emotional game as well as volatile sport. Even though a student-athlete was ejected from the contest, this does not mean his disqualification should overshadow SPORTSMANSHIP. The entire student-athletes, coaching staff and Lima family and fans displayed the true meaning of sportsmanship and spirit for the players and school on Friday, and they should be commended for it. Thank you for allowing us as officials to officiate your student-athletes. Best of luck!

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Soccer (Marengo Highland High School at Galion High School, 9/18/23)

**Details:** I wanted to take a moment to recognize the Highland boys soccer team and coaches for their outstanding sportsmanship. The Highland boys team has been the most respectful group of kids I have officiated this season. From the initial pregame meeting/coin toss through the duration of the match, we observed every player and coach acting in an extremely respectful manner to the opposing team and officials. When addressing the officials, players always used words such as "please, thank you and sir," and spoke in a calm and respectful tone. At no time during the match did any player from Highland question a call. However, there were a few times in which they would respectfully ask for clarification on a call. Additionally, in a few situations in which a player from the opposing team was not offside on an attack on their goal, they would respectfully ask which player kept the attacking team onside and they would always reply "thank you" once they were told. If a player from the opposing team was down for any reason (fouled, tripped on their own, etc.), most of the time a Highland player was there helping them back to their feet and making sure they were ok. It is hard to pick out just one player since this was seen throughout the whole team. They showed great maturity during the game. We realize that soccer is a passionate sport and sometimes the passion comes out in a way that does not truly reflect the students. However, Highland made sure that the passion they showed was positive. From the manner in which

the coaches talked to their players, you can tell that great sportsmanship is a key element for this team. The coaches lead by example, and it shows in every player.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Soccer (At Willard High School, 9/18/2023)

**Details:** The ball handler has been present for Willard boys (and maybe girls) soccer games that I have officiated there for several years now. He is recognizable to me because of his energy and ownership of his duties as a ball handler. He takes the responsibility very seriously and covers the touchline from goal line to goal line. Players on his side of the pitch NEVER have to look for a ball when it goes into touch, because he is RIGHT THERE with a ball so that play can resume with little or no delay. And he is on it, with both the home team AND the visiting team. There are a number of facets that go into making a contest go as smoothly as possible. The ball handler is often overlooked . . . until the player is delayed in resuming play because there is no ball available. I simply found this an excellent opportunity to give some praise to a young man who takes full ownership of a task and does it in an exemplary manner! I hope that his school administration can find a way to communicate this praise directly to this fine young man.

**Contest Details:** Girls Junior Varsity and Varsity Volleyball (Plain City Jonathan Alder at London, 9/12/23)

**Details:** I was one of the volleyball officials last night at London for the JV/varsity volleyball game with Jonathan Alder. After reflecting on the evening, I wanted to make sure I expressed the sportsmanship and supportive atmosphere that I have encountered at London. Last night was my first time at London this year, but I had this game last year with a different partner. In addition, I have been to London several other times as a volleyball official and a softball official. I have always been treated well, but last night I noticed items that I wanted to bring to your attention and thank you for: 1.) The people at your scoreboard know the game and are always very helpful. They are easily among the best I work with all year. 2.) The AD came up to us after the game to thank us and offered us pizza and, although I declined, he offered me anything else and so I asked for water. In addition, he has always been kind and helpful when I have been on site. 3.) \*At one point in the JV game, there was a question on a touch call and your JV coach was clear that she saw it touch her player and motioned that it should be a JA point. This is so rare. Most coaches will step away and would not do anything to help an official make the right call. 4.) All the varsity players gave the officials a fist bump and a smile and thanked us for being there. 5.) As I was exiting and going out to my van, another gentlemen thanked me for being there that night (I think it might have been the school's high school principal).

It seems to me that London has a very well laid out initiative for sportsmanship and integrity, and I could not just let it go. It is above par with what we typically experience. I so much appreciate what this school is doing.

**Contest Details:** Girls Volleyball (At Salem High School, 9/21/23)

**Details:** The coaching staff of the freshmen, JV and varsity volleyball teams treated the officials with respect. Not one time did they complain about an official's call. Their interaction with us was pleasant and with a smile. This extended to their players. Each one of them came to us after the match, looked us in the eye, shook our hand and thanked us for officiating their match. This is a coach's influence and its very impressive! The host administration got us water and took care of our needs. In addition, all three head coaches coached their players to play better and put their focus on them. They were polite and engaging. I have officiated for them in the past and always look forward to it. Their players consistently chased the dead ball as was requested during the captain's meeting.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Football (Cincinnati Winton Woods High School at Cincinnati Anderson High School, 9/22/23)

**Details:** Anderson's head coach sets the standard for professionalism, courtesy and respect as a varsity football coach! His sideline was under control and not once during the game were coaches or players in the box while the

ball was live. When he questioned a call, he did it respectfully without raising his voice and accepted the explanation even though he may have seen it differently. When the head coach sets such a high example, the rest of the staff and players follow the same! It was an absolute pleasure working with this head coach, his staff and players.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Girls Soccer (Wellington High School at Oberlin Firelands High School, 9/13/23)

**Details:** The outcome of this game was decided in the first 20 minutes of the game, with Firelands going up five to nil. It was apparent they were the better team on the field. The Firelands coaching staff did an exceptional job in managing the sportsmanship on the field throughout the game as they not only played everyone on the roster, but ultimately they also began moving their players around to other positions as a way to keep everyone playing hard and without making Wellington feel "less than" by dominating play with their position players staying in their normal spots. The coaches did everything within their power to keep their team engaged and competitive without demeaning their opponent.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Girls Soccer (Elyria Catholic High School at Lorain High School, 9/23/23)

**Details:** Elyria Catholic had a sophomore wing who played the game with an infectious enthusiasm. She displayed pure joy in playing, supporting her teammates and encouraging her opponent in what was a one-sided victory for her team. She sought to engage her teammates, actively engaging them while she could have chosen to play on goal, seeking to involve them in the scoring. She reached out regularly to her opponents, telling them to keep playing hard, not to be discouraged and to just have fun playing. It was a treat to observe while officiating the game. Her character and sportsmanship are a credit to herself, her coaches, the school and the EC community.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Soccer (Kent Roosevelt High School at Aurora High School, 9/26/23)

**Details:** Both the Kent Roosevelt and Aurora boys varsity soccer teams' end-to-end conduct throughout the entire contest, including all players and coaches, is noteworthy for their respect and graciousness to their opponents, the officials and the general sport. Thank you, and have a great season.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Soccer (Wickliffe High School at Cuyahoga Heights High School, 9/26/23)

**Details:** Our referee crew wishes to commend the terrific sportsmanship shown by both schools tonight. The players, coaches and fans all added positive involvement in this game. The players took direction gracefully, and we had zero incidents of misconduct of any manner. Be very proud of the effort shown by both schools in a hard-fought match that exemplifies what high school soccer should be.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Girls Soccer (At Ashville Teays Valley High School, 9/25/23)

**Details:** This was my first time officiating at Teays Valley, and the hospitality was amazing to see. The scoreboard had the visiting team information on it with a number of effects, the announcer was gracious to both teams, the site director and volunteers offered the officials drinks between the games and then, after the game, the home team gave both the away team and the officials pizza on the way out. From start to finish, there was great hospitality shown to both teams and the officials.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Football (Piketon High School at Chillicothe Unioto High School, 9/22/23)

**Details:** I would like to congratulate both teams on exhibiting good sportsmanship over the course of the game. Usually, as officials, we are not making a report for good behavior but rather for something that went wrong . . . this is the exact opposite. Both teams over the course of the game were helping opponents up off the ground and exhibiting great sportsmanship regardless of what the score was. I am happy to offer my thanks to both sets of players, coaches and schools.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Girls Soccer (Youngstown Cardinal Mooney High School at Canton Central Catholic High School, 9/25/23)

**Details:** Both schools tonight showed great sportsmanship and class. The players respected each other as athletes and us as officials. In all my years doing high school officiating, this was the cleanest and easiest game I have ever had. This is a credit to players, the coaches and the fans.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Football (Columbus Marion-Franklin High School at Columbus Africentric Early College High School, 10/27/23)

**Details:** Outstanding sportsmanship was displayed by the coaching staff, players and fans of Marion-Franklin. The head coach has a well-disciplined staff as well as the student-athletes. They were respectful of their opponent as well as to my officiating crew. Their athletic administrator was on the sideline and even helped my chain crew. It is no wonder that this team is so successful. Very positive leadership.

**Contest Details:** Junior Varsity Boys Football (Euclid High School at Brunswick High School, 9/30/23)

**Details:** Late in this JV game, the Brunswick coach approached me about a special needs player they have and his desire to have him run the ball. The result of the game was not going to be in question with around two minutes to go in the fourth quarter. The officials told the Euclid coach what was going on, and he then brought his defense together to explain the situation. Two plays later, the special needs player was put in at running back for Brunswick, and the Euclid players helped him run the ball for a gain of around 30 yards. I thanked a Euclid player for doing this, and he said "some things are bigger than football, sir." All the Euclid players deserve props for the way they acted and their character. This is why I officiate and why I love it so much!

**Contest Details:** Varsity Girls Soccer (Medina Highland High School at Medina High School, 9/30/23)

**Details:** The entire officiating crew wishes to commend the outstanding sportsmanship of both teams tonight. Both came in unbeaten and both are in the same city and county. It was a fantastic effort throughout and not a single issue of misconduct. The final score of 1 to 1 shows these young women put on a display of great soccer in which their schools should be proud.

**Contest Details:** Junior Varsity Boys Soccer (Columbus St. Francis DeSales High School at Pike-Delta-York High School, 10/2/23)

**Details:** I wanted to commend both boys JV soccer teams for their excellent conduct in this evening's game. I was a solo referee for the match, and I asked the boys if they would help with the throw-in calls on the honor system, assume that I would not be in position to see offside and that I would focus on foul calls. They accepted the circumstances, and all rose to the occasion of managing throw-in decisions with integrity. The game went very well, and the boys focused on good, competitive soccer. I was very pleased with their positive conduct throughout the game. They represented what interscholastic sports should be, and it appeared to me that their coaches have not only developed their soccer skills but they are also developing decent young men. I am typically hesitant to officiate high school level games solo, but this experience has reminded me positive student-athletes will rise to meet challenges when asked. Thank you for a great evening of soccer!

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Football (Mt. Orab Western Brown High School at New Richmond High School, 9/29/23)

**Details:** This goes out to all of New Richmond athletic staff but mainly the athletic administrator. As luck would have it, this was my second time in just a hand full of years to be there for military appreciation night. The first time was awesome. Last night they took it to another level. There were coaches on both teams that were veterans, and they arranged to bring the game ball out to one of my crew members and me just prior to kickoff. In the Navy, we used "attention to detail." The New Richmond staff paid attention to detail. At halftime, they

invited down all military and first responders and recognized them. I was pleased to see just how many there were. On top of that, they took great care of my crew and me. We want to thank you for a job well done!

**Contest Details:** Varsity and Junior Varsity Girls Volleyball (Alliance High School at Alliance Marlinton High School, 10/5/23)

**Details:** Both the JV and varsity coaches exemplified sportsmanship and integrity in their coaching and interaction with the officials. Not one time did they complain to an official. They coached their girls to play better instead of yelling at them when mistakes were made. This is consistent behavior by the coaching staff in all of the matches I have had with them. The host administration is attentive to our needs by bringing us water and taking care of any problems that may arise. It is always a pleasure to officiate at Marlinton.

**Contest Details:** Freshman Boys Football (Dover High School at Tallmadge High School, 10/6/23)

**Details:** I would like to compliment the Dover freshman football team and coaching staff on their exemplary sportsmanship. Too many times we only report the negatives and not the positives of teams and coaches. Team and coaches were by far the best team that I have had the opportunity to officiate this year. It was a very pleasing experience, one that I wish happened more often. Congratulations to the entire coaching staff and especially these young student-athletes for exhibiting such a high level of sportsmanship and character. I wish the best for these young men, and I extend a heartfelt thank you to each one of them.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Football (North Royalton High School at Twinsburg High School, 10/6/23)

**Details:** When it comes to hospitality, the staff at Twinsburg is unparalleled. The athletic administrator was present and engaged. An impressive hospitality room was available before, during and after the game, which is something I have not found in my several years of officiating varsity football. Since it is expected for officials to be at the field at 5:30, some minimum level of food should be provided.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Girls Cross Country (At North Jackson Jackson-Milton High School, 10/7/23)

**Details:** At the Jackson-Milton Cross Country Invitational, I observed the Sebring McKinley coach inform the Newton Falls coach that one of the Sebring athletes in the girls varsity race had expressed her gratitude for the Newton Falls runner who had consistently encouraged her throughout the race to keep running, keep trying, etc., as she struggled to continue. The Sebring athlete felt that without that encouragement, she might not have been able to finish the race. I believe that both the Newton Falls runner (for her encouragement) and the Sebring coach and athlete are to be commended for giving credit to the Newton Falls athlete and for sharing that positive experience with the Newton Falls coach.

**Contest Details:** Junior Varsity Boys Soccer (Lebanon High School at Cincinnati Turpin High School, 10/5/23)

**Details:** It was a pleasure to referee this match at Turpin against Lebanon. It was the most enjoyable match of the year! The Turpin and Lebanon players, coaches, staff and fans should be congratulated and recognized for their amazing good sportsmanship. Thank you!

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Football (Carroll Bloom-Carroll at Columbus Hamilton Township, 10/13/23)

**Details:** The Hamilton Township vs. Bloom-Carroll game was more than the hype that was leading up to it. I must thank the Hamilton coaches and staff for nothing but professionalism and great character throughout the evening. As intense as this game was, the coaching staff remained under control and was easy to communicate with. As an official, I have great respect for the whole staff at Hamilton Township.

**Contest Details:** 7th/8th Grade Boys Miami Valley League Cross Country Meet at Piqua High School, 10/14/23)

**Details:** I wanted to acknowledge the student from Tippecanoe Middle School for his fantastic display of sportsmanship during the Miami Valley League Middle School Cross Country Championship today at Piqua. After finishing his race, he moved to a position about 20 meters from the finish and cheered on and encouraged all the runners from the other schools as they finished the race. Excellent display of sportsmanship!

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Soccer (West Union High School @ South Point High School, 10/19/2023)

**Details:** I have officiated several matches at South Point High School this season. In all of them I have been impressed with the professionalism and positive attitude of the Athletic Director, Boys Coach and Girls Coach. Win or lose, they show the same positive behavior. It has been a pleasure to officiate at South Point High School.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Football (Miamisburg High School at Delaware Hayes High School, 10/27/23)

**Details:** Our officiating crew would like to take moment and thank the Miamisburg athletic administrators and coaching staff for their outstanding sportsmanship. We had the first-round playoff game with Miamisburg playing at Delaware Hayes. Prior to the start of the game, the Miamisburg athletic administrators came to us to introduce himself by shaking our hands and thanking us for what we do on Friday nights for not only for the OHSAA but also for the athletes and coaches. We also want to give a thank you to the coaching staff at Miamisburg, as the head coach should be very proud of his staff and his athletes. He and his staff were great to work with the whole night, with praise not only from the head coach, but also from his assistants, thanking us for the job we did and do for the student-athletes. With all the bad press at times in the world of sports, we just wanted to recognize the Miamisburg AD and Coaches.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Boys Football (Bellefontaine High School at London High School, 11/3/23)

**Details:** Bellefontaine's No. 11 displayed poise and leadership as a captain and player. In a very heated rematch and rivalry game, he kept his cool by getting his teammates to focus on the game and encouraging them, helping up players that tackled him and leading by example. He exemplified what a captain should be and do on the field.

**Contest Details:** Varsity Girls Soccer (Olentangy Liberty High School vs. Cincinnati Seton High School at Wright State University, 11/7/23)

**Details:** The conduct of the Seton soccer players was nothing short of superb during a highly contested match. On multiple occasions, different players from Seton provided compassion for their opponents when injured, respect toward referees when communicating and supported each other in times of adversity. Seeing and hearing these things not only makes for an enjoyable experience as a referee, but it also helps retain our referees in a time when there is a massive shortage. I wanted to take the opportunity to commend these players and their coaches on providing excellent sportsmanship tonight.