

Al Goldberger's Important New Book



Earlier this year we published an important new book. Written by Al Goldberger, *Sports Officiating: A Legal Guide* is destined to become an essential resource for you and the leaders in our industry.

The book is the essential guide for sports officials and those who supervise, manage and use their services. Its contents are a clear indication that officiating in today's world is not like the "old days." Contemporary officiating practice now must be guided by the legal realities confronting officials when they take to the floor, field, diamond or pitch. The book

is the definitive exposition of those new realities.

More than 32 years ago, when we began publishing *Referee* magazine, many a thought was given to the legal rights and responsibilities officials had. There was no case law to guide us, nor attorneys who spoke for us or spoke against us. Within 18 months of *Referee's* beginning, I received a call from a young attorney/basketball referee from New Jersey — Mel Narol. Mel and another attorney, Stu Dedopolous, had come up with the concept of marrying Mel's love of officiating and the practice of law. Mel and Stu intended to help officials through the legal system. Mel asked if I would be interested in publishing columns on the subject.

We jumped at the chance. Anything that would help officials better understand their roles and, most importantly, provide them protection from legal challenges, was something the magazine wanted to publish. That phone call from Mel led to a 25-year relationship through which Mel became the recognized authority on the subject of sports officials and the law.

During those same years, another New Jersey-based attorney and active official, Alan Goldberger, was busy merging his two passions. While Mel worked basketball, Al was a three-sport official. Al and Mel knew each other. They crossed paths many times, both building tremendous experience and vast knowledge about officials and legal matters. Mel was a *Referee* magazine columnist and legal advisor to the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) until his untimely death in June 2003. Al wrote and had published many groundbreaking articles in a host of other noteworthy journals, newsletters and magazines.

In 1984, Al authored the first edition of *Sports Officiating: A Legal Guide*. At the time, that first edition represented the most comprehensive and authoritative presentation of the laws and legal requirements affecting sports officials. It has remained the only such publication until this day.

The newly published edition has been built upon Al's superb original work in 1984. Yes, it has been a long time between editions. But in some measure, we benefit by that lag because the legal landscape has changed so much and notably in recent years, that this new edition can rightly claim to be the most current and authoritative guidebook on the subject. We now can benefit from more than 20 years worth of Al's observations, practice and insights. For any active sports official, assigner, supervisor or league administrator, the book is a must-read and commands frequent review.

Al is part of the *Referee*/NASO family. He not only authors insightful articles for the magazine, he also is the legal foundation for the Member Information and Consultation Program serving NASO members. He is one of the most popular speakers at the annual NASO Sports Officiating Summit as well. Since its founding in 1980, NASO has become the leading legal advocate on behalf of sports officials. Al is an essential part of that initiative. He knows what he is talking about and knows how to say it in an understandable way. We in the officiating industry are in his debt.

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