



OGAD16

GOOD IS THE ENEMY OF GREAT

Officiate

GA Day

2016

Presented by Smitty Official's Supply



July 22-23, 2016 | Macon Marriott City Center

Welcome

The Georgia Athletic Officials Association (GAOA) Board of Directors, Joe DeRosa, owner of Smitty's Sport Apparel, Inc, and Officiate Georgia Day's title sponsor, welcome you to GAOA's 10th annual OGAD Conference.

Please join me in saluting OGAD's planning committee members for the outstanding speakers we have scheduled for this year, all of whom are among Georgia's and the nation's top officials. We are excited for their participation in this Conference, and look forward to learning from the insight and experience they can relate to us.

This year's Conference theme is "Good is the Enemy of Great," and it is through events such as this that we can continue and strengthen our unified efforts to improve as officials and to identify and address current issues and challenges that affect us all. Of particular focus this year is the development of a campaign to recruit and retain officials, especially young officials, the consideration of means to recover recent fee increases imposed for registration, camp attendance, and the new uniform policy, and, as ever, to strategize to reduce and eliminate the growing issue of violence against officials in Georgia. I hope that after we spend this weekend together, we are all motivated to dedicate ourselves even further towards supporting our fellow officials and strengthening our organization.

Please review the list of sponsors in this year's program. GAOA could not conduct OGAD at the high level of success it achieves without these sponsors' loyalty and financial support, and we extend our gratitude for their involvement with this event. Additionally, I encourage you to visit OGAD's stellar group of vendors, all of whom supply us with quality goods and services at competitive prices offered to this year's Conference attendees. Their support of our organization and this event is also greatly appreciated.

GAOA is fortunate to have special partnerships with the GHSA, the GISA, the GACA, and the NASO. I thank these fine organizations' leaders and their staffs for their unwavering support and friendship. I would also like to thank GAOA's 4,300 members - the lifeblood of the GAOA - and the approximately 400 members that are here today for their continued support.

In closing, please attend your sport-specific professional development session today to offer your input regarding what you feel is going well for you and your Association and your recommendations for what issues you feel still need attention to improve conditions for officials in Georgia.

Respectfully,
W. Alan Smith - GAOA Executive Director





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For any assistance, please ask any staff members wearing grey staff shirts or any hotel staff.

Schedule of Events

7:00AM
– 8:55AM

Registration and Check-in

9:00AM
– 9:15AM

Opening Ceremony and Invocation

9:20AM
– 9:40AM

NFHS Awards Presentation
Ernie Yarbrough, GHSA Commissioner of Officials

9:40AM
– 10:00AM

GAOA Awards Presentation
Alan Smith, GAOA Executive Director
Earl Etheridge, GHSA Officials Committee

10:00AM
– 10:05AM

Comfort Break
Cheerleading officials move to Ballroom A

10:05AM
– 10:45AM

Christie Cornwell
ACC UIC and 3x World Series of Softball Umpire

10:45AM
– 11:25AM

Marvin Hudson
17-year MLB Umpire

11:25AM
– 12:25PM

Officials' Blue Ribbon Panel
See next page for panel members

12:25PM
– 1:00PM

Lunch Break
(Lunch is included!)

1:00PM –
1:30PM

Dr. Ralph Swearingin
Former GHSA Executive Director, football official,
and author



Blue Ribbon Panel

- **Moderator Van Stokes** – USA Wrestling Board of Director
- **Mike Raynor** – ACC Coordinator of Softball Umpires
- **Harold Mitchell, Sr.** – SWAC Coordinator of Football Officials
- **Tony Greene** – NCAA Basketball Official, Coordinator of SIAC Officials
- **Alan Eck** – NCAA Football Referee







Identifying Officials of the Future

The state of Georgia's passion for high school athletics has driven the quality of its competitions to national prestige. Georgia high school athletics annually produces an impressive percentage of the nation's elite teams and talent across a variety of sports, and provides a significant economic windfall to the state economy. High school athletics in Georgia have a proud tradition of enthusiasm and excellence, and that tradition is perpetually maintained by the three pillars of high school sport: fans, high-school coaches, players, and administrators, and officials. This passion for and production of excellence requires dedication and sacrifice on all fronts, and these three pillars of high school athletics must continue to optimize their relationships and working interactions among each other to continue to improve a tradition that provides such emotional and economic impact to our state.

Despite the ever-growing popularity and impact of Georgia high school athletics, there is also a growing problem on the horizon. As the ranks of Georgia high school officials ages, and veteran officials approach retirement, the pool of young officials to replace them is not growing at the rate necessary to maintain or exceed the current standard. High-level high school athletics require high-level officials to help promote the excellence now associated with sports in Georgia, and new, young officials are proving increasingly difficult to recruit.

The recruitment and retention of young officials in Georgia has become a difficult, lagging endeavor over the past decade. The growing personal cost of entering into the world of amateur officiating – personally purchased uniforms, equipment, camps, certifications, training – and the perceived threat of unsafe arenas in which to officiate are preventing too many potential members of the next generation of officials from choosing to participate in the sports we love.

These are complicated problems that we must face, and ultimately resolve, together, but they are not quick-fix issues and will require consideration and collaboration over time towards our common goals.

There is, however, one immediate measure I would encourage anyone involved in Georgia high school athletics to take to help alleviate this growing concern. Despite our current challenges, officiating remains an incredibly enjoyable and rewarding endeavor. Please encourage anyone moving on from your programs who you think might be suited for and would enjoy remaining in contact with the sports he or she loves after the end of their high school career to contact the GAOA at gaoa.asmith@gmail.com or to visit our website at www.gaathleticofficials.org for more information on potentially becoming a Georgia high school official.

Respectfully,

W. Alan Smith, GAOA Executive Director





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Charlie Bloodworth Lifetime Achievement

2016's Recipient is Tony Greene

The 2016 recipient of GAOA's Charlie Bloodworth Lifetime Achievement in Officiating Award is Tony Greene of Atlanta, Georgia. One of the most respected officials working today in all of college athletics, Greene began officiating high school basketball in Miami in 1983 and has since enjoyed a decorated career that has led him to work collegiately in the SEC, ACC, Big East and Big 12 conferences, officiating in seven NCAA Final Fours, with five National Title Game appearances.

"I started out in Miami," Greene relates, "I played basketball and other sports, loved sports in general and wanted to stay close to the game. I decided I wanted to officiate while attending a high school basketball game in Miami, I saw them out there and I realized I wanted to do that and thought that I could. I approached the officials after the game and asked them how to get involved – they let me know, and from there I began working my way up to high school ball. I started out working with little kids outdoors on black top in 95-degree South-Florida heat, which I didn't expect,

but I stuck with it. I eventually got noticed by a man named Virgil Valdez, a fellow official and a leader in officiating in Dade County – basically South Florida's equivalent of Charlie Bloodworth; he saw me officiating and liked my potential. He eventually introduced me to Charlie and that had a great impact on my career."



When asked about his transition from recreation-league beginner to high school to college official, Greene reflected on his path with advice for his fellow officials, particularly those just beginning their own careers, "take the time to put the work in. Everybody wants so much so fast, but they

Charlie Bloodworth was a husband, a father, a grandfather, a friend, a mentor, a fundraiser, a consensus builder, and a leader. Charlie was the son-in-law every father wishes for, the husband every woman dreams of, the father and grandfather every child deserves, and the friend everyone treasures. Charlie selflessly helped everyone he could and every good cause that came his way.





don't realize that some people work for 10 years or more before that next opportunity comes along. You can't just go to one camp and expect it to happen immediately. You have to work hard and be patient – and when that opportunity comes along, you had better be ready." Further addressing the move from officiating high school to college basketball, Greene continues, "I tell people – you have to decide if this fits your family and your job situation – otherwise there's nothing wrong with being the best high school official you can be – it's about what fits your lifestyle. But regardless of what level you want to work, if you're going to do it you need to be prepared to work – don't show up to camp out of shape giving false hustle, you never know who's watching and you can always get better. I'm proud that people noticed my potential and that I worked hard enough to get where I am, and I think of Charlie Bloodworth fondly for his role in helping me with that."

When asked for insight into what he has taken away from his many years as an official, from working towards earning high school games early on to the highest level of intercollegiate competition in his sport, Greene relates, "officiating has given me a sense of understanding people – you go to work every day and you have this structure – and officiating has given me an understanding of how to deal with people overall. When you're officiating you're dealing with fans, coaches, players, all types of attitudes and levels of emotion – if you can handle this you can handle anything. It has also given me an opportunity to make friends, friends for life, throughout the country. That fraternity of officials is an extension of your family."

Greene concludes by speaking about Charlie Bloodworth, one of the "earliest

and most influential," as he put it, members of his officiating fraternity and family. "When we talk about this award being in the name Charlie Bloodworth," Greene explains, "Charlie Bloodworth was one of the first people I met – told me I had potential. I came to my first camp in Carnesville, Georgia, and Charlie was involved in that camp. Charlie Bloodworth took me under his wing and made sure I got there, up to Georgia from Miami – got the ball rolling. A year later, I moved to Atlanta. Charlie Bloodworth was a large influence in my life; he helped me realize I could do this."

Greene continues, "Charlie Bloodworth was a guy that all of us officials adored and appreciated because he took time to help you understand the game and life – he'd been there. He showed me the ropes – the advice I give people now when asked is often drawn from many of the things Charlie told me and the rest of us. He was a big influence on my life. Charlie had a large effect on many officials' lives. I met Virgil – he knows Charlie – I meet Charlie – and here we are all these years later and my name is associated with an award in his honor – and it's amazing because that's a guy I met getting started, not later on after I had already made it. It means a lot to me."

The GAOA extends its congratulations to Tony Greene, GAOA's 2016 recipient of the Charlie Bloodworth Lifetime Achievement in Officiating Award.

Written by Layne Smith





Earl Etheridge Excellence in Officiating

2016's Recipient is Tim Tipton

The GAOA is pleased to announce that the Earl Etheridge Excellence in Officiating Award for Overall Official of the Year in 2016 is Tim Tipton of Flowery Branch, Georgia. Tipton, a lifelong resident of Flowery Branch, Executive Pastor of Chestnut Mountain church in Flowery Branch, and distinguished official entering his thirty-second year officiating football as a member of the Lanier Football Association, out of Gainesville, Georgia, is husband to Paula Tipton and a father of three, Alec, Cole, and Karli Tipton. Tipton has served as the president of the Lanier Football Association for the past 12 years.

Tipton describes his entry to officiating as facilitated by his uncle, Bill Tipton – a 30-plus year football and baseball official as well. He explains, "I played football through high school, graduating in 1981. After my father passed away in 1985, I spent

a lot of time with my uncle. I missed football and I asked my uncle how he became an official. He guided me to the Lanier Football Association, his local Association. I joined with my best friend, Jeff Benefield, who officiated for 18 years. I was calling varsity level by my third year, and it took 6 years to get on a crew with Jeff, which was great fun."

When asked what he has taken away from the past three decades of officiating, Tipton responds, "One thing that I think in our area is, we're really blessed – one thing that hasn't changed much on the field is the relationship between the coaches, players, and officials – the respect we have for each other. There are three teams involved in a football game, officials, players, and coaches, and I think there is a mutual respect here that has not deteriorated since the mid 1980s. I think coaches want

The Earl Etheridge Award is given to an official that truly has shown excellence in this business, and has done more than just officiate his or her games. Earl Etheridge is an individual that has exhibited professionalism as a coach, as a father, and especially as the Director of Savannah Parks and Recreation Services. Earl has improved conditions for officials by leaps and bounds in his relationship with the GAOA, and we will never be able to pay him back for his support and friendship. This award represents the highest award given by the GAOA.





consistency and professionalism – they have a lot of time invested, just as we do. Our Association teaches that you have to respect coaches and communicate with them – it lets them know your head is in the game. Anticipate coaches’ needs and desires, treat them professionally and be in the game – and they know the officials are working hard and doing their job, and that breeds respect.”

When asked what message he would convey to younger officials just starting out their careers, Tipton responds, “Don’t view this as a hobby – it’s not deer hunting and it’s not fishing – this is a job. We are not being paid like it is a job, but if you love the game of football, or any sport you officiate, and want to be the best you can be, you have to treat this like a job. You have to ask yourself ‘how can I get better game to game.’ Don’t get your feelings hurt from feedback or criticism – you have to learn from your mistakes.” He also provides advice for the ever-changing climate of cutting-edge officiating: “you can be on YouTube before you get home these days – you have to stay professional at all times. Stay professional and constantly work to improve. The training is so much better now than it was 30 years ago – take advantage of it.”

Reflecting on his career when asked to speak about what he has been most pleased with from his investment in officiating, Tipton offered, “I’m probably most proud of the

Association that I’ve been a part of – when they elected me as the president 12 years ago we were a totally different Association. In an 18-year span, our playoff game participation grew from 12 games officiated in the 6 years prior to my becoming president of the Association to 39 in the 6 years after my becoming president, and we’ve officiated 63 playoff games in the last 6 years since then. That is what I am most proud of – my participation in and contribution to this Association. I had a vision and guys embraced it because they wanted to be great too. The way the Association has rallied together to be one of the best in the state, we’ve been recognized for doing it the right way – and one guy can’t do that – it takes an Association. I have been honored to be asked to lead them and I am honored that they followed my lead.”

The GAOA extends its congratulations to Tim Tipton, GAOA’s 2016 Overall Official of the Year.

Written by Layne Smith





David Blair
Football
Georgia Officials Athletic Association (GOAA)



Darrell Lane
Basketball
SOWEGA Basketball



Michael Bates
Baseball
Marietta Baseball



Larry McCaden
Softball
Atlanta Quarterback



Mellanie Vinyard
Cheerleading
Southwest GA Cheer



Doug Oertley
Wrestling
Metro-Atlanta Wrestling

Officials of The Year



Keith Collis
Lacrosse
Atlanta Peachstate

Each year, the GAOA honors its top officials at each sport during **Officiate GA Day**. It is the highest honor any GHSA or GISA official can receive in their specific sport.



Elaine Hutton
Soccer
Georgia Soccer



Fred Wright
Volleyball
Athens Volleyball



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Lanier Football Officials Association
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Metro-Atlanta Cheerleading Judges Association

Middle Georgia Basketball Officials Association

Middle Georgia Football Officials Association

Multi-County Basketball Officials Association

North Georgia Amateur Umpires Association

Northwest Georgia Basketball Officials Association

Northwest Georgia Football Officials Association

Rainbow City Chiropractic (Atlanta)
Savannah Basketball Officials Association

Southwest Georgia Officials Association (SOWEGA)

TARA Umpires Association
Warner Robins Basketball Officials Association

West Georgia Football Officials Association



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Thank You!

Without the continued support of our vendors and sponsors, the GAOA would not be able to advocate for officials all over Georgia and put on events like Officiate GA Day.



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Vidalia, GA

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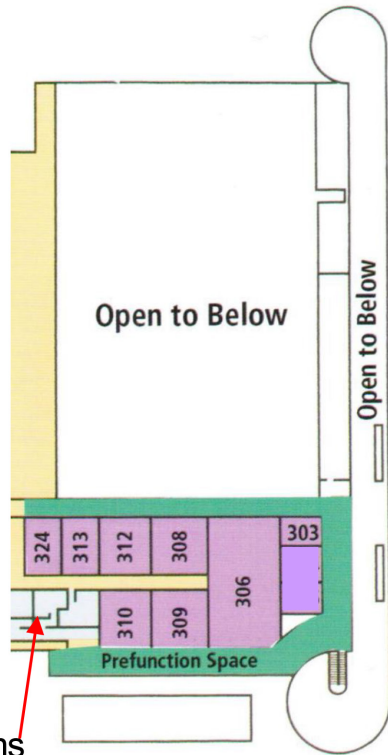
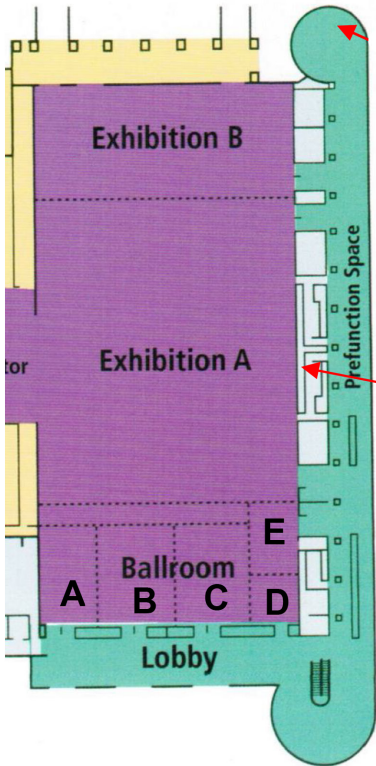
Conference Coordinator
Alpharetta, GA

Facility Maps



First Floor

Second Floor



Restrooms

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OGAAD16

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GAOA Membership

P.O. Box 1400
Lyons, GA 30436

Media and Sponsorship

3000 Old Alabama Road
Suite 119-253
Alpharetta, GA 30022
david@gaathleticofficials.org
(770) 712-1369

GAAthleticOfficials.org

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July 22-23, 2016 | Macon Marriott City Center

Edited by David M. Lemcoe Jr.