



## CORNY'S CORNER

### *Earning Respect*

*Corny Galdones, May 1997*

Every official should aspire to be respected. Respect means being highly regarded as a decent, responsible person and a competent professional. Respect means being sought by colleagues and others for technical answers and advice. Respect means the teams are glad to see a trusted match official, confident they can concentrate on their playing performance and not worry about anything else. Respect is not an official's right based on standing or experience. Respect is an honor earned through demonstrated model demeanor, quality performance, and sustained consistency.

***Model demeanor.*** Perception of an official's behavior and appearance on and off the court invariably becomes reality in terms of earning respect. Be dependable and cooperative. Exhibit integrity and exemplary moral standards. Take pride and be impeccable in uniform and grooming. During any officiating capacity be all-business, dignified, approachable, impartial, and pleasant but not fraternizing. Command with diplomacy and deference, never by being overbearing. Execute officiating fundamentals with natural and proper actions.

***Quality performance.*** Proving one's officiating proficiency with excellent match performance earns respect. Each match should have the teams as its focal point while the official with minimal whistle disruptions functions as a background facilitator in concert with the work team. Match procedures and protocol are performed without a hitch. Steady control is maintained with a skillful combination of tact, common sense, preventive measures, and rational issuance of sanctions without taking the enjoyment and spirit of competition away. And most importantly, officiating decisions are correct, consistent, and done decisively with projected self-assurance.

***Sustained consistency.*** One's officiating style and decision-making criteria should be correct and remain constant from match to match to earn everyone's trust and thus respect. This familiar pattern builds everyone's comfort and confidence with knowledge of an official's permitted playing parameters and that a well-officiated match can be expected. Teams in turn will make some allowances for a trusted official, but this deserved privilege should not be abused by relaxing one's officiating routine and standards.

Earning respect is a continuous, cumulative process. Respect gained can be easily lost with one bad deed or performance. To be respected, an official must always put forth one's best conduct and efforts regardless of the circumstances.