

Officials Appreciation Week Profile:

Stan Abromavage

Stan Abromavage was a very active athlete during his time in the early 1980s at Wyoming Area High School in northeast Pennsylvania.

He quarterbacked the football team and threw the javelin during track season. He was good enough to play quarterback for four more years at Dickinson College in his home state.

As involved as he was in sports, becoming an official was never a thought.

"I can honestly say that becoming a sports official back then when was not something that crossed my mind at all," he said.

After graduating from Dickinson with a degree in Psychology and Secondary Education, he landed a teaching job at Morris Knolls High School in Denville. He recently retired after a 38 year educational career in which he also served as a school counselor and Director of Guidance/Supervisor of School Counseling.

"I was a young teacher back in 1988 when one of my colleagues, Lee Seras, approached me about getting involved in basketball officiating," he said. "Back in the day, I was coaching football in the fall and track and field or softball in the spring, just trying to survive on a teacher's salary. Lee's coaxing and the allure of making some additional money provided the impetus to take the IAABO basketball officials course and pass the test to become a basketball official. Thirty-eight years later, I am still running up and down the hardwoods, and have also recently gotten involved with assigning basketball games as an assistant to Jack Baum in the NJAC, Skylands and Union County conferences."

Aside from his basketball work, he's also become an accomplished softball umpire. In fact, he's worked multiple state championship games in both sports. He's also become a NCAA Div. 1 softball umpire.



"I've also worked as a NJSIAA softball umpire since 1996 after coaching softball at the freshman and junior varsity levels for a few years. After working a softball game with Mike Covello, a local college assigner at the time, I decided to give NCAA softball umpiring a try. Now entering my seventh year as a NCAA softball umpire, I am working primarily a Division 1 schedule in the Patriot, MAAC, CAA, NEC and America East Conferences. Being retired for a year now has opened the door to many more opportunities in softball, including traveling south for preseason tournaments and working more conference games than my schedule would previously allow."



Getting to know NJSIAA sports official Stan Abromavage:

What do you enjoy most about being an official?

"There is nothing better than the interactions you have with high school athletes and coaches and the camaraderie that you develop with your partners. I have been officiating basketball for 38 years now and have met some great people through officiating, some of which have become great friends over the years."

Do you have a favorite memory from officiating an event?

"My favorite memory from officiating is being given the opportunity to work the Tournament of Champions Final at the old Izod Center in East Rutherford in 2005. Seton Hall Prep over Saint Patrick's 63-60."

What's the best part about any given day of officiating?

"Being retired, I now wake up and look forward to the day knowing that I will be doing something later that I truly love doing. No job stress or worries, just the excitement of the high school or collegiate competition."



Do you have any interesting memories from your early days as an official?

"Back in the late 1980's when there were no assigners, we hustled games by calling AD's on the phone when the schedules were released. It was first-come, first served!"

You've been pictured in social media posts in past years being recognized by schools during Officials Appreciation Week. How nice is it to be acknowledged?

"It's nice to be recognized for what we enjoy doing. Personally, I take pride in the job I do each time I walk onto the floor or field. It's satisfying to occasionally hear 'Nice game, ref' or 'Nice game, ump' after working a particularly difficult contest."

What's the biggest misconception about the job of being an official?

"The biggest misconception is that officiating basketball or umpiring softball is easy. Many people watching a game don't fully know the rules or understand advantage/disadvantage when it comes to the application of the rules. Officials have to study and learn the rules and proper mechanics and apply them to every play throughout the course of every game."

What would you say to anyone thinking about becoming an official?

"We need sports officials! As I enter the twilight of my officiating career, I am focused on trying to recruit and help younger officials improve their craft and develop the skills to be great game managers. Attrition seems to be our greatest obstacle as the lack of sportsmanship by student-athletes and parents seems to be what drives promising officials away from the game."

Think you might be interested in becoming a high school sports official?
Check out this link to learn more: <https://www.njsiaa.org/officials/become-official>