



CORNY'S CORNER

Moving Up The Ladder

Corny Galdones, July 2007

Wanting to validate our abilities through advancement is normal. Go for it. One common dilemma faces us. How do we convince the powers we're ready for the next level? It's easy. Brown-nose. Not! Oh, we'll become known all right – for wrong reasons. Don't even think of going there.

Our peers are who matter. Build a solid reputation and network with them. Work hard, excel and keep at it. Be patient. The officiating nation is small. People talk. Sooner or later, hearsay of our distinction, good or bad, will spread far and wide. Watch when a big mess occurs. News of our snafu might flash so fast across country and back that it beats us home. Even a hick from the sticks could hear about it. Once our fame is created, particularly one of notoriety, it shadows us like a dark cloud everywhere we go. The sun shines only if we shine.

Impressing leaders higher up the chain of command to get ahead can't hurt. What harms our careers is to neglect one detail. We must tend to business at home first. Bypassing the system turns everyone off. Have we fulfilled our local obligations and proven ourselves? Are we problems solvers or pains in the patoot in our units? We fool no one. What happens in Podunk doesn't stay in Podunk. Hardly anything escapes the folks who need to know.

Be a ghost while officiating. Still, we can't expect to be noticed unless we're visible. This calls for showing up all over the place. Attend clinics, camps, conventions and tournaments inside and outside our area. Embrace work and advice. Take on tasks. Matches above our comfort level but not over our heads improve our skills and measure our progress. Push forward. But don't be pushy. Rather, let our good deeds speak for us. Hence, making appearances isn't enough. Learn and do each job right because we're always being watched. Word gets around.

The cream will rise to the top. Cliché or not, it's true. Believe in ourselves. Aim high. Nothing's given, however. Those who control our destinies tell it like it is. Trust them. Listen! Listen! Listen! Denying the truth holds us back. To progress, correct our flaws and demonstrate time and again we have what it takes.

Success? Congratulations! First, be sure to thank all who aided us along the way. Next, don't take the patch and run. Look after more than just ourselves. Assist those below us up the ladder. Prime assignments are limited. Don't hog them. Give up-and-coming officials cracks at these. Be a mentor. Be a role model. Grow the organization. Contribute.

No duty is beneath our egos. Each and every match deserves the best officials and our best efforts. When we toot whistles and tutor wannabes at lower playing levels, the entire sport benefits. Here are well-kept secrets. Officiating old-timers is a riot if we can stay awake. Pre-teens are fun. Plus their moms and dads, whichever fits, are cuter. Rest assured rewards wait for the diligent and caring. Character counts.