

#thankthestripes



December 1-3, 2023

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To: APSJ Admin, Officials & Mentors

From: Mitchell Jeffrey, Vice President of Officials for APHA & SJAMHA

Greetings,

#thankthestripes has become a tradition in APSJ over the last six years. I, personally, have been involved as a minor hockey referee administrator since 2013 (an official since 1999) and #thankthestripes doesn't feel like something we just added but something that is part of the fabric of our community. It is exciting to see our timekeepers and on-ice officials receive that recognition of the work required to manage games to be safe and fair.

This year's theme for #thankthestripes is "Officiating is..." What does officiating mean to you? Take a moment and think about that. Officiating consumes a lot of time and it is easy to get caught in rush of the role. To me, "officiating is community." It is about working together to manage games...but it is also about growing and improving together. It is about the time in the dressing room before and after games. It is about the text message with a fellow official about the thing you just witnessed. It is about togetherness and common experience.

"Officiating is..." can also shed light in the darker side of hockey. Harassment, maltreatment, and exhaustion. Officiating is hard, it is privilege, it can be all consuming. Officiating is often what we do on top of being a student, an employee, a kid, a parent and all the other roles that we take on in life. So, as we get into the very busy holiday season, remember to take moments of rest and recovery. Remember to take a breather. If you are asked to do your (insert number<sup>th</sup>) game of the day but you have a "no feeling" and really just need to go home to read or nap or whatever...be ok with taking a break. Your mental health cannot come second to other things. If you burn out, then you are not going to be able to...officiate...nor participate in life.

Thank you all for being timekeepers, referees, liners, and officials. Thank you Ted, Jorie, Mike, Josh, and Bryce for keeping the gears turning. Moving through the season...strive, fumble, spin, walk, stumble, prance, run, fall, and get up over and over. Our success is doing it together.

Life is 10% what happens and 90% how you react to it. #thankthestripes

Mitchell Jeffrey

Vice President of Officials

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