



## CAPITAL ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

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March 27, 2009

### **February 2009 “START” Program Adds 61 Spring-Sport Officials; Plans For April 2009 Sessions Featuring Falls Sports Announced**

YORK, Pa. -- Three NCAA Division III Conferences, including the Capital Athletic Conference (CAC), Centennial Conference (CC) and Colonial States Athletic Conference (CSAC), working in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA), recently recruited 61 college students in five spring sports from the February 2009 “START” in officiating, and plans are being formulated to offer a similar program for four more sports in April 2009 focusing on fall sports.

The officiating recruitment program “START” stands for “Students of Today are Referees of Tomorrow.” The goals of the “START” program are to recruit new officials in all sports on the collegiate campuses and increase opportunities for scholastic officials to advance to the intercollegiate level.

“The START program is an excellent recruitment vehicle for current and former student-athletes to stay in the game as officials in their favorite sports,” said Dr. Robert Lombardi, Associate Executive Director of the PIAA.

February classes at Cabrini College (CSAC), Franklin & Marshall College (CC) and York College of Pa. (CAC) produced 61 new PIAA officials in one of five spring sports – baseball, softball, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse and track & field.

The program hosted by the CAC at York College of Pa., with support from the YCP’s Sports Management department, had 33 registered participants take an officiating test, including four students from nearby Elizabethtown College interested in becoming track & field officials.

The START program at Cabrini College, hosted by the CSAC, added 18 new officials to the avocation while the program at Franklin & Marshall College, hosted by the CC, had 10 officiating candidates participate.

“The students that participated in the program in February were energetic and eager to become active in officiating,” said Tom Byrnes, Commissioner of the Capital Athletic Conference. “Institutions and conferences utilize many resources to provide a meaningful and enjoyable collegiate experience for the student-athletes. The START program is adding to that experience by extending the athletic careers of all interested college students, not just the student-athletes”.

The program at each location included three nights of orientation about officiating in general and rules instruction. On the third evening, the candidates were given the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) test to become registered officials.

START programs in April will feature officiating for fall sports such as field hockey, football, soccer and volleyball and again be held at Cabrini College ([April 15, 22](#) and 29) and York College ([April 16, 23](#) and 30).

The Middle Atlantic Conference (MAC) is also planning to host two programs in April, including one at Albright College in Reading ([April 9, 16](#) and 23) and another at King’s University in Wilkes Barre, Pa. ([April 7, 14](#) and 21).

The Centennial Conference and the NCAA Division II Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC) are planning to hold sessions featuring winter sports during the Fall 2009 semester.

Program organizers hope the early success of the program will draw interest in expansion to other state associations and institutions throughout the Middle Atlantic Region.

Although the program is primarily for students from any college or university, others interested in becoming scholastic, and potentially collegiate, officials are encourage to attend. Students with proper college ID will be offered the opportunity to take the PIAA officiating test for that sport free of charge. Non-students may take the PIAA test at the regular \$30 fee.

Those that pass the test will be assisted in contacting local officiating chapters so they can begin officiating PIAA sanctioned events (and other intramural, youth or recreation league events) as soon as possible.

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