

And 1 More Referee

By Tom Conroy

As a basketball referee, Greg Wilson goes beyond making the calls and tries to instill knowledge into players and coaches to make the game better. He gives back to the game that he loves the same way that he strives to give back to the community, whether it is as a police chaplain for the Detroit Police Department or as an assistant pastor at the Maclin Temple Church of God in

keep up with me on the court," Wilson joked. His sons, Greg Jr. and Rashad, played college basketball at Wayne State and Arkansas-Pine Bluff, respectively.

Under Wilson's supervision, the neighborhood hoop in a church parking lot became a popular destination for players of all ages.

"We taught the kids to respect each other and the court," said Wilson. "As long as I was there, I don't remember there ever being any fights or incidents."

It was during those neighborhood games that Wilson noticed that the players always yelled, "And 1!" whenever contact was made during a layup. He knew they did not quite understand how to call fouls, so he took it upon himself to teach them.

"I got so tired of hearing them yell, 'And 1,' that I wanted to get a hold of a rulebook and explain to them what it means," said Wilson.

That ultimately led to conversations with friends who worked in officiating who encouraged Wilson to join their ranks. Four years of officiating basketball later, Wilson, 62, has never looked back.

During games, Wilson will go out of his way to converse with players and coaches to help them understand the calls.

"Some people say I talk a little too much during the game, and they're probably right," he admitted. "But I'm ultimately just trying to help them. I coached my sons' teams before, so I know what it is like for coaches to deal with officials."

While he does not want to get ahead of himself given his short time as a referee, Wilson hopes to one day officiate a championship or state tournament.

"I like to challenge myself so I don't get complacent," he said. "I had my first varsity game after only three years as a referee, so I'm going to continue to work hard to try to get to a tournament."

Tom Conroy is Referee's assistant editor. □



Greg Wilson's officiating career began simply as a means to explain foul calls to neighborhood kids.

Christ. It is that desire to educate younger generations and serve his community that ultimately led to Wilson becoming a referee.

A native of Saginaw, Mich., Wilson forged his love for basketball during his playing days at Arthur Hill High School. That passion for the sport remains today, as Wilson keeps himself in shape to play against teenagers in his neighborhood.

"My two adult sons can't even

Give Umpiring a Try



Randal Schoppa
Age: 59
Wichita Falls, Texas

When Randal Schoppa started working for AT&T in northern Virginia, he hoped to join a softball league in his spare time. Discouraged by long waiting lists in the local leagues, he decided to try his hand at umpiring softball after seeing an ad in a newspaper. It has now been almost 30 years of umpiring slow- and fast-pitch softball for Schoppa, who continued with his work on the diamond after moving back to his hometown of Wichita Falls in 2008.

"I umpire almost every night and plan to keep doing it as long as I can," said Schoppa. "I enjoy umpiring. You take everything off your mind. You forget all the problems at work or issues at home."

SOURCE: TIMES RECORD NEWS

Annand Is On



Ron Annand
Age: 58
Methuen, Mass.

Ron Annand is one of the few officials in his area that can officiate year round, with experience in baseball, softball, football and basketball. He previously served as president of the Merrimack Valley Umpires Association and still works as a rules interpreter in baseball. His knowledge of the rules, combined with his fitness regimen and game management skills, has earned him high praise from his fellow officials. However, Annand admits that he most enjoys officiating football.

"What I really like about it is the camaraderie," said Annand. "You're usually with the same crew and you get to know each other."

SOURCE: THE EAGLE-TRIBUNE

Do you know a person or group who should be profiled?

Send info to us at
profiles@referee.com