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# Mark Becker Recognized for 25 Years as Referee Official

NOVEMBER 28TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Mark Becker Recognized for 25 Years as Referee Official

**St. Louis, Missouri** - Being a referee can sometimes be difficult. Most fans do not realize the level of commitment or compassion referees have for the game of football. Most of all they get little recognition for their efforts. This past Saturday, Mark Becker, was honored for his efforts of refereeing high school football for 25 years at the Dome during the MSHSAA State Football Championship games.

That's 25 years in a sport he lives, breaths, and loves. One can only imagine being yelled at by football coaches, players, and even fans from the sidelines, but each game he has officiated with a professional attitude and has performed 100% as the best referee in the business. We give little credit to the men in the zebra striped shirts, but they deserve a firm handshake and a thank you. Takes a lot of heart and soul to go out and face two teams battling for a win, perhaps even a championship win, Becker does it with finesse and integrity.

Becker was recognized not just for his 25 years of service, but in recognition of outstanding contributions of leadership, guidance, and integrity on the field. He has not only taken part in high school games, but came out on many Saturdays each season to help with Dexter Parks & Recreation's little league football teams.

He coached the Red Team in the 1980's for Dexter Parks and Recreation and then moved on to refereeing.

Why did he get involved? “In 1990 I started refereeing. Rick Williams encouraged me to get involved and it was a way for me to stay in touch with the game I love. Camaraderie of the crew and just enjoying the football atmosphere is something I enjoy,” Becker said.

“My best memory was refereeing a game between Kirkwood and Webster Groves,” continued Becker. “It was a semifinal football game with over 10,000 people in the stands. That was great!”

Becker’s referee crew includes Rick Williams, Don Backfish, Pat Carda, and Jimmy Smith. They cover games in Southeast Missouri all the way up to St. Louis, Missouri.

“I have had the chance to do some big games over the years,” stated Becker. “A combination of a great crew and having been graded as a solid crew. We have been able to referee more than a dozen quarterfinal football games; six semifinals, and twice now at the Dome in St. Louis for Missouri State High School Athletic Association Football Championship games. It’s been a major honor to be invited to referee these types of championships.”

Mark is married to his lovely wife, Cathy and they have a son and a daughter. “It’s been a sacrifice having games sometimes three nights a week. It’s tough, but you know it’s been a good deal.”

</images/2015 Images/Mark Becker 2.jpg>

He’s also a Bearcat through and through and as the saying goes, “He bleeds Red and Black!” His high school career was from 1971 -1974 and he played mostly as a guard on offense for the Bearcats. He did cover other positions as well especially when people got hurt. He even managed to get some defensive playing time as a defensive end and linebacker.

Becker has been in the game of football for more than 40+ years playing, coaching or being a referee official. He’s seen a lot of changes, new rules, and seen many young men play in this sport. Referees are getting more and more scarce these days. Today’s referee is getting older and the young are not stepping up as much as they did.

“I think young people need to get involved,” stated Becker. “They need to experience the game from a different level. They need to start at the bottom and work their way up then take a test to become an official. It’s a great atmosphere

and they would really enjoy it”

Congratulations on Mark Becker’s recognition of 25 years as a referee. Well deserved!!

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## Good Luck Lady Bearcats!

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### **Good Luck Lady Bearcats!**

**They open their season on Friday, November 27th against St. Joseph's Academy at 12:30 p.m. with the junior varsity**

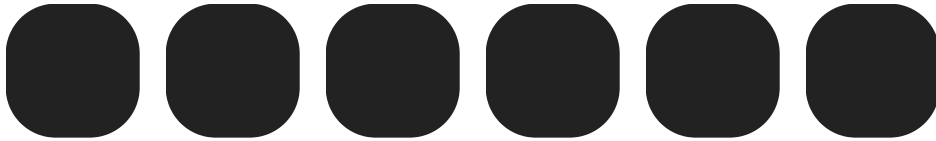
**and varsity playing around 2:00 p.m.**

**You can listen to the varsity game on the 90.3 Christian Radio with Jim Reiker, Matt Thurmon, and Scott Nelson.**

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## November Firearms Deer Harvest Ends

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**Missouri** - Preliminary data from the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) shows that deer hunters in Missouri harvested 189,938 deer during the November portion

of fall firearms deer season, Nov. 14-24. Of the 189,938 deer harvested, 92,020 were antlered bucks, 21,256 were button bucks, and 76,662 were does. Top harvest counties were Texas with 4,544 deer checked, Howell with 4,046, and Franklin with 3,707.

Last year, hunters checked 166,383 deer during the 2014 November portion of firearms deer season with 78,556 being antlered bucks, 19,300 being button bucks, and 68,527 being does.

"Good weather and plenty of deer activity likely are the reasons why there was an increase in deer harvest during the November portion of the firearms deer season this year," MDC Deer Biologist Jason Sumners said.

MDC reported five firearms-related hunting incidents during the fall firearms November portion. The five incidents involved self-inflicted firearm wounds and occurred in Butler (2), Franklin, Newton, and Howard counties.

Deer hunting in Missouri continues with archery deer hunting from Nov. 25 through Jan. 15, firearms antlerless portion Nov. 25 through Dec. 6, firearms alternative methods portion Dec. 19-29, and firearms late youth portion Jan. 2-3.

Missouri offers some of the best deer hunting in the country and deer hunting is an important part of many Missourians' lives and family traditions. Deer hunting is also an important economic driver in Missouri and gives a \$1 billion annual boost to the state and local economies.

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## Disabled Veterans Hunt Successful

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### Disabled Veterans Hunt Successful

**Dexter, Missouri** - Through a cooperative effort involving several entities, another successful deer hunting adventure took place at Gobbler Ridge Farms on Tuesday, Nov. 17 at the Disabled Veterans Wildlife Facility.

The 125-acre farm, located west of Bloomfield, was offered to six area disabled veterans on Tuesday for a day of deer hunting in some prime Stoddard County wilderness. 

Gobbler Ridge Farm, owned by Tom Love and Alan Hedrick, was transformed into a haven for disabled veterans in 2012 through a no-cost lease agreement with its owners and the American Legion Post #59 in Dexter.

Legion members manage the facility, which includes a spacious, handicap equipped cabin, and the facility operates through generous community donations and a host of volunteers.

Along with Tom Love and members of Post 59, making the hunt possible were several members of the Missouri Department of Conservation, the Sikeston Rotary Club, Jerry Elder with Zalma Frozen Foods and members of the National Wild Turkey Federation.

The six veterans ended their day with a total of three deer killed. The group enjoyed lunch in the cabin on the farm and a tour of the grounds.

The Disabled Veterans Wildlife Facility is available to all disabled veterans in the area, regardless of whether the disability is a direct result of their service.

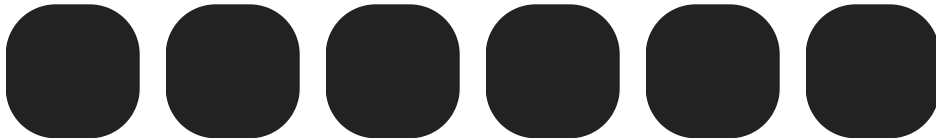
Contact Tom Love at (573) 820-0802 for further information. The farm is available for hunting, fishing, or simply enjoying the abundant wildlife on the farm.

Veterans included in the hunt were Chris Hyche, Tony LaForest, Mike Cord, Matt Johnston, Wayne Godwin and Tony Curran

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## DMS 8th Grade Boys Basketball Team Defeats Poplar Bluff

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[DMS 8th Grade Boys Basketball Team Defeats Poplar Bluff](#)

**Dexter, Missouri** - The Dexter Middle School 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys basketball team defeated the Poplar Bluff Mules 44-31 on Monday evening at T.S. Hill Middle School.

Brodie Pollock dominated the court with a game-high 19 points. Pollock scored 13 of those points in the first quarter.

Poplar Bluff held the Bearcats to just two field goals in the second quarter as it moved ahead 20-19 by halftime.

Dexter held the Mules to just 3 points in the third quarter allowing them to increase their lead back to eight to start the fourth quarter.

Garrett Henson hit three treys and finished with 12 points.

Logan Wyman recorded one 3-pointer.

### **Final Score 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Basketball: Dexter 44, Poplar Bluff 31**

Poplar Bluff 5 15 3 8 - 31

Dexter 13 6 12 13 - 44

Poplar Bluff (31) - Dawson Hanner 2, Josiah Kilgore 5, Sammy Persons 5, Keshawn Reid 4, Philip Toledo 6, Luke Becker 4, Chaz Casey 5. FG 12, FT 7/14, F 18. (3-pointers: None, Fouled Out: None)

Dexter (44) - Logan Wyman 8, Spencer Warren 1, Haden Hillis 4, Garrett Henson 12, Brodie Pollock 19. FG 17, FT 6/16, F 11. (3-pointers: Logan Wyman 1, Garrett Henson 3. Fouled Out: Warren)

***Dexter will be back in action on Tuesday when they play at Jackson.***

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