



News Release

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ECAC Names 2007 Red Hill Award Recipients

CAPE COD, Mass. - The Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) announced today that football officials James Kearney (East Boston, Mass.), Tom Mawhinney (New York, N.Y.), and Peter Walsh (Lincroft, N.J.) have been named the 2007 recipients of the Red Hill Award, for excellence in football officiating.

James Kearney has been officiating football for 20 years at the college level, in Division I-AA, Division II, and Division III. Over the years, he has been an umpire for six NCAA Playoff games and two ECAC Bowl games. In 1996, Kearney was inducted into the American Amateur Football Association (AAFA) Hall of Fame. He is currently the First Vice President of the Boston Chapter of the Eastern Association of Independent Football Officials (EAIFO). In other roles for the chapter, Kearney has served as an on-field technician at clinics and as a mentor to assist new officials in the college ranks.

Since 1978, Kearney has also officiated in the high school ranks. He is the Commissioner of the Boston Public Schools Football Leagues and has been assigning high school football officials for the past 24 years. Kearney is a member of the East Boston Athletic Board, and chairs the Fred L. O'Brien Scholarship Committee which benefits high school senior student-athletes in the area. Kearney, a University of Massachusetts-Boston graduate, resides in his hometown of East Boston, Massachusetts.

Tom Mawhinney began officiating football in 1979. He is a charter member and past president of the Western New England Chapter of the EAIFO. Beginning in 1993, he was promoted to work at the Division I-AA level, and has had the privilege to work some of the most storied rivalry games in college football - Harvard/Yale and Lehigh/Lafayette. This past season, he was an official for the Amherst/Williams game, the first Division III contest to host ESPN's College GameDay. Through the years, Mawhinney has worked a combined six NCAA and ECAC postseason contests.

A graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, Mawhinney was a four-year letterman in football and broke several pass receiving records. He has a doctorate from St. John's University and is currently an associate professor at the Touro Graduate School of Education and Psychology in Manhattan. Mawhinney has two grown children, Dan and Kate, and a younger daughter, Sophie. He is engaged to be married this spring to Laura Sagan.

Peter Walsh started officiating in 1984 at the high school level, and has been working college games since 1991. He achieved Division I-AA status in 1999, and has since been rewarded with eight postseason games to officiate. On other levels, Walsh worked in the National Indoor Football League (arena football) from 2002 to 2005, and has been working practices for the New York Giants since 1999.

Since 2001, Walsh has been the Chief Financial Officer for Cantone Research Inc., an investment banking firm. Three years ago, he became a partner at the Harbor Light Cruise and Travel agency. The 1982 graduate of St. John's University also spends time coaching football, baseball, and basketball. Walsh and his wife, Sally, reside in Lincroft, New Jersey, with their three children - Emily (13), Erin (11), and Daniel (8).

The award is named for Red Hill, who was an ECAC football official for 29 years. Hill served as the director of the Eastern Association of Independent Football Officials Boston Chapter for 12 years. He served as the Vice President and the President of the EAIFO, and was responsible for instituting many of the EAIFO policies. Over his career, Hill has made numerous contributions to the EAIFO and to college football officiating in general.

The recipients of the Red Hill Award will be honored on February 19, 2008 at the annual Eastern College Football Awards Banquet presented by FieldTurf Tarkett, an event held in the Pegasus Restaurant at the Meadowlands Sports Complex in East Rutherford, N.J.

About the ECAC

The Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) is the nation's largest athletic conference and only multi-divisional conference, with 322 member institutions and over 122,000 student-athletes ranging across 16 states from Maine to North Carolina and westerly to Illinois. Established in 1938 with 58 charter members, the ECAC has since emerged as the nationwide leader in service. The ECAC assigns over 5,200 officials in 12 sports across Divisions I, II, and III, including baseball, men's and women's basketball, fencing, field hockey, football, gymnastics, ice hockey, men's and women's soccer, softball, and wrestling. In addition, the ECAC officiating bureaus provide clinics and workshops, improving the level of officiating and attracting the most qualified collegiate officials. The bureaus assign for both conference and NCAA championships and totaled over 46,000 assignments last year.
