

# Official makes right call with book about his profession

T. C. Cameron, 36, of Farmington Hills is a high school and college referee and umpire. In his new book, "Attacked! Why We Love to Hate the Referee," Cameron hopes to change fans' usual venomous attitudes toward those donning the black-and-white stripes. For more information, log on to [www.tccameron.com](http://www.tccameron.com).

**QUESTION:** When did you become a ref?

**ANSWER:** I got into officiating in 1987, taking the officiating class at Royal Oak Kimball my senior year. I started working games for the MHSAA in 1990 after taking officiating at Eastern Michigan University.

**Q:** How much of the chew-outs are real and how much are for show?

**A:** Usually it's pretty real. That fake argument happens more in baseball than it does

in football or basketball. I might have a caught stealing/out call at second base that brings the coach out of the dugout. He might be acting demonstratively but might be saying, "T. C., are you sure of what you saw? OK, I can live with that. I know you hustle and get in position."

**Q:** Are makeup calls real?

**A:** Absolutely not. If I kick one at the far end of the floor, my partners aren't going to botch another one to even it up. That's a myth that the media can't seem to let go of. A lot of times we try to "match calls up." That means if my partner has a coin-flipper of a play that could be a block or a charge, I'm mindful to remember what he or she calls.

**Q:** What inspired "Attacked!"?

**A:** What inspired me to write "Attacked!" was being at-

tacked by a fan who ran 300 feet from his seat to meet me at my locker room door at Bethel College on April 22, 2006. I correctly called a runner's tag-up to be legal, breaking an 11-11 tie to win the game for Bethel College in their last at-bat (vs. St. Francis). Both benches erupted. Bethel College because they clinched the Mid-Central Conference; St. Francis came after us in unbridled rage. The loss eliminated St. Francis from the conference tournament, and they chased us down the rightfield line yelling things I couldn't have imagined.

- KYLE O'NEILL, SPECIAL WRITER

Says T. C. Cameron: "As a body of officials, we care greatly about getting the call right, and we hurt when ... we miss a call or rule that impacts a game."



Special to the Free Press