

Athlete Protection Program – Event Producers

Recommendation for the Safety of Athletes at Events in Guarding Against Predators

It is recommended that Event Producers train their staff in ways to spot a predator and what procedures they should take if they feel someone is acting in a manner that that is questionable and not in the best interest of the competitors (such as following a team/individuals closely, lurking in areas that are restricted, using telephoto lenses to photograph teams/individuals, etc.).

Ways to spot a predator:

- Observe actions. Be aware of movements – predators are often charming and friendly. They appear likeable and make things sound reasonable when they are really wrong. They succeed by talking people who don't recognize them as predators into doing things or letting things be done (or because others are too afraid to question their motives). Conversely, predators can also be extremely quiet and unassuming. Predators go about their business and often succeed because no one thinks to question them, either because they – 1. Appear confident in what they are doing or 2. Are quiet and/or appear to go unnoticed.
- Predators are looking for “prey” (in this case, innocent cheerleaders and dancers who are performing/competing on stage). They operate best in a climate of fear and silence. This is why it is IMPARATIVE that the individual who is tasked with handling the VIP area at events, and security at the events in general, be firm, authoritative and not afraid to speak up and ask questions. If something does not feel right, use gut instinct to address the situation.

What to do if you feel a predator may be present at an event:

- A written plan of action and procedure should be distributed to and discussed with all staff members who will have an involvement in the event. Such a plan should include the following steps (see Addendum A):
 - Immediately notify another staff member of your concern before addressing the situation. That staff member should plan to be present if/when you choose to confront the individual as back-up.
 - The Event Producer/Director should also be made aware of the situation and should be ready to immediately radio to building/facility security for back-up assistance if necessary (phone numbers for these individuals, as well as local authorities, should be readily accessible).



Perhaps the best means of discouraging a predator from attending an event is to make them feel unwelcome/uncomfortable.

Safeguards against predators gaining access to events:

- Signage should be posted and prominently displayed throughout the event
 - In addition, we recommend that Event Producers include this information with packets that go out to coaches and parents as well as post this on event websites.
 - “If You See Something, Say Something. Safety is Everyone’s Responsibility.” (to be posted in all locations and in event programs)
 - “No Telephoto Lenses Over 200 MM Permitted at Event” (to be posted in all locations and in event programs)
 - “Family/Friends Are Only Permitted to Photograph Their Specific Team/Program or Other Programs With Prior Consent From Gym Owners” (to be posted in VIP area and in event programs)
- Media Photographers/Videographers
 - Photographers and/or videographers who intend to sit in the VIP area all throughout the event) should be identified and properly credentialed. A bright colored lanyard that is different in color from other event personnel is strongly recommended for quick and easy recognition of media. One step farther is to provide a credential to all approved media personnel, clearly indicating “Priority Media” (such a credential might include Company Name, Photographer Name, Areas Permitted for Access). Staff/security working the VIP area shall be diligent about requiring this credential to be shown in order to gain access to and take photos/video from the VIP area
 - Anyone who desires to be designated as a formal “Media Photographer” should be required to submit/make a request (either written or a verbal phone call) prior to attending the event and must be cleared by the Event Producer to shoot at the event
 - As an additional level of security at events, USASF ‘Professional Membership’ status is strongly recommended for media photographers/videographers in the very near future (possibly starting with the 2014 – 2015 season)
- PA’s to be announced by emcee several times throughout the course of the event
 - “Attention Friends and Family: We appreciate you attending this event and supporting all of the competitors. In the interest of safety, please be sure to approach an event staff member or a member of the building or facility if you see anything that raises concern. Safety is everyone’s responsibility. Thank you for your assistance in keeping our event safe for all in attendance.”



- “Attention Friends and Family: For the safety of the competitors, neither telephoto lenses nor flash photography are permitted at the event. We thank you in advance for your cooperation in keeping our athletes safe.”



Addendum A

PLAN OF ACTION – SUSPICION OF A PREDATOR PRESENT AT EVENT

Ways to spot a predator:

- Observe actions. Be aware of movements – predators are often charming and friendly. They appear likeable and make things sound reasonable when they are really wrong. They succeed by talking people who don't recognize them as predators into doing things or letting things be done (or because others are too afraid to question their motives). Conversely, predators can also be extremely quiet and unassuming. Predators go about their business and often succeed because no one thinks to question them, either because they – 1. Appear confident in what they are doing or 2. Are quiet and/or appear to go unnoticed.
- Predators are looking for “prey” (in this case, innocent cheerleaders and dancers who are performing/competing on stage). They operate best in a climate of fear and silence.

It is **IMPERATIVE** that the individual who is tasked with handling the VIP area at events, and security at the events in general, be firm, authoritative and not afraid to speak up and ask questions. If something does not feel right, use gut instinct to address the situation.

What to do if you feel a predator may be present at an event:

- Immediately notify another staff member of your concern before addressing the situation. That staff member should plan to be present if/when you choose to confront the individual as back-up.
- The Event Producer/Director should also be made aware of the situation and should be ready to immediately radio to building/facility security for back-up assistance if necessary.

Emergency contact for Building Security is: _____

Emergency phone number for Building Security is: _____

Emergency phone number for Local Authorities is: _____

******* IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, DO NOT BE AFRAID TO CALL 911 *******