

## Editorial

Gilbert Fellingham\*

# Thoughts from the Editor

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Having served in this position now for a little over a year, I would like to make some general comments to potential authors, potential reviewers, and our current Associate Editors.

First, to our Associate Editors, thank you so very much for your thoughtful service. You are the backbone of the journal, and your work is critical to our producing a worthy product.

Second, to potential reviewers, we are also most grateful for the service you provide. I would like to emphasize to potential authors that your research cannot be published without the service of those asked to provide a review. I once had a colleague who told me, “If you are going to ride in the boat, you need to take a turn at the oars.” Refereeing is a task we all must be willing to take on. The very existence of the academy depends on the service referees provide. So please consider this a plea to all to be more willing to take on the task of refereeing. Finding potential referees is the most difficult task associated with being an AE. I would like to offer these suggestions to those who take on the assignment to referee. Don’t think that you need to finish your review in one sitting, and thus put it off until the due date is past. I suggest that you read the paper as soon as you can after receiving the assignment, and complete this first reading without making any (or with very few) notes. It is my experience that letting a paper turn over in my mind for a week before attempting to provide the final review can be very helpful. You’ll be amazed how differently you think about an article after a week of reflection than you do right after a first reading. I believe you will find that writing your review is much easier.

To potential authors, I would like to review the guidelines we try to follow as we review manuscripts. As a publication sponsored by the American Statistical Association, we look for one of these three things in a JQAS article: (1) demonstrate original ways of approaching problems from a statistical point of view, (2) develop cutting edge statistical methods, or (3) apply innovative statistical thinking to solve difficult challenges in sports contexts. We value good

technical work, and I at least am looking for manuscripts that would change how a coach, athlete, or administrator would approach their daily tasks to improve their performance. Although I don’t expect coaches and athletes to be primary readers of the journal, they are, in a very real sense, the reason we do this work. I am looking for articles that tell a story. Make sure you are consistent with the story you are telling. Too often authors wander away from the main point and then the readers miss the point of the story and the impact the article could have is lost.

Again, as a publication sponsored by the American Statistical Association, we will require more than point estimates in every article. As I’m sure we are all aware, point estimates alone cannot tell us if two (or more) items are really different in a statistical sense. Estimates of variability are essential to making appropriate decisions about the strength of any conclusion.

Finally, I would ask that you consider taking the following simple steps before making your submission. First, almost every article I read could use a going over by a good English editor. If your grammar is incorrect, or your word choice is imprecise, or your sentences garbled, it is unlikely you will get your paper past my review. Second, remember that the captions of your figures and tables should allow a reader to get the important points of the article. Don’t assume when you write captions that the reader has read all the previous text. Last, but certainly not least, I believe it is the responsibility of the author to make sure any document cited in the article is in the bibliography, and vice versa. Please check the bibliography of your article prior to submission. A final careful read through of your paper prior to submission can make all the difference.

I would like to conclude by saying how much I have enjoyed being associated with JQAS. My association goes back to the founding of the journal by Ben Alamar, and the decision by the ASA to take over sponsorship of the journal that was accomplished during my tenure as Chair of the Section on Statistics in Sports of the ASA. Having this journal as a respected outlet for scholarly work has made all the difference in my career. I hope to be able to carry on following in the footsteps of all those who have served as EIC’s in the past. I am grateful for this opportunity to contribute to JQAS.

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\*Corresponding author: Gilbert Fellingham, Editor-in Chief, JQAS, Brigham Young University, Provo, USA, E-mail: gwf@stat.byu.edu