

# ***TOA Basketball Newsletter***

December, 2008

**Proper Preparation Prevents Piss Poor Performance:** OK, some may think this is a rather 'in your face" approach to the beginning of the basketball season. And, I have no idea why this timeless officiating phrase popped into my aging brain. But, there is one thing I know. I know that it is **true!** It is still beyond my comprehension why some officials barely speak one word about basketball and officiating when they enter the locker room before a game. There is absolutely no way that a game can be properly officiated without all officials being on the "same page."

**Proper Preparation** begins before the game. Have you done anything more than glance at the Rule Book - the Mechanics Book - the new books from "Referee?" Have you worked some scrimmages?

It is also interesting to me that the KSHSAA "Area" meetings have become much more comprehensive in nature - our meeting in Lawrence featured excellent discussion - a lot of work on mechanics, and an excellent review of 3-person positioning, etc.

The one part of 3-person mechanics that deserves a great deal of attention is the fine art of "flexing" - "rotating" - "moving to get the 'open' look!" Is this incredibly important part of officiating even mentioned in your pre-game conference (if you even have a pre-game conference)? Go over the "Three Person Pre-Game Conference that was included in the material for Meeting 1. All three of you **MUST** be on the same page and there is no better way to achieve this than to discuss it in a good pre-game - talk about issues at half-time, and actually review your effort after the game. Those officials who do not care to participate this fully do not deserve to work at the varsity level!

**Move to Improve:** This favorite saying of those charged with leading basketball officiating in Kansas certainly is appropriate - not very comprehensive, but appropriate. One primary goal in officiating is to be able to see between the player with the ball and the defender. That is called, "getting the Open Look!" How can you call a foul (and, many violations) without getting the "Open Look?" If you don't get the "Open Look," you are only guessing - not something that is popular with coaches and players.

Secondly, the KSHSAA material talks about flexing from the Lead position - certainly that is appropriate. However, it seems as though many, if not most, switches actually come from "C." Here's how it usually happens: An offensive player in front of "C" receives a pass 15 - 20 feet from the basket - remember: "C" is **not** an "on-ball" position - C needs to initiate the rotation by backing out to "T." Think of it this way: The majority of officials need to be on the side where the ball is - pretty simple!

**Move to Improve - II:** When an official is in the C position, we often see the ball move to C's side on the baseline - many officials react by dropping much lower than the free-throw line extended because L wouldn't or didn't flex across the lane. The proper reaction is for the C official to flex to Trail - forcing L to flex. Once again, ball side requires two officials - L and T.

**Characteristics of a Quality Official:** Fran included an interesting piece about "Characteristics of a Good Official." Compare that list with the piece that John Laurie presented to the Sunflower League officials a couple of weeks ago. The one area that John emphasized that is probably the most important - Preparation - study and have a thorough and comprehensive pre-game!!