

2008 - 2009 Basketball Pre-Game

Official's Pre-Game Conference: Take the time to thoroughly discuss the material in the Mechanics Manual and the Rules Book. The purpose of a good pre-game conference is to figure out how officials can help their partners. This meeting should begin one hour prior to tip-off. Have a good Pre-Game before every game!

Administrative Duties: Be on the floor at least 15 minutes before game time. Both **head** coaches are to be available at that time. Hold the Pre-Game Meeting with the **head** coaches, captains (U1 has the home team and U2 has the visiting team), and all three officials. Be sure each **head** coach certifies his or her players are legally equipped and review the Points of Emphasis, including Sportsmanship and the Coaches Boxes! Following the meeting the officials will take their positions across the court from the scorer's table. At approximately 12:00, R will check the books – this allows for corrective action to be taken in a timely manner should there be clerical problems.

Number ONE Thing to Accomplish: Move so you can “see through” Players!! If you have to Flex (switch) to do so, DO IT!! Get the “OPEN LOOK!”

Review “Old” New Rules: 97-98: Keep players on the floor for 30-second time outs – correct positions for officials during time-outs - .3 seconds or less for “last second” shots; **98-99:** Head coach can call time outs – substitutions on multiple free throws; **99-00:** L handles all free throws – make sure calling officials lets L know the number to be shot; **00-01:** Emphasis on rough play and sportsmanship – also emphasis on not having huddles prior to free throws; **01-02:** Full time out signal; running the baseline; 60/40 split between L and C; new foul reporting area; **02-03:** Swinging elbows without contact is a violation – an injured player may buy his/her way back in the game with a TO; 1st lane violation is the violation enforced. **03-04:** Only six (2 offensive and four defensive) players on the lane for free throws – If the shooting team doesn't want to use their spaces, the defensive team can move into the vacated spaces – however, four remains the maximum. New positions at half time for the officials – new definition of team areas for timeouts – warning buzzer at 20 seconds in for disqualified players to be replaced. **04-05:** Expanded the kicking rule to include intentionally striking the ball with any part of the leg or foot – Added that bench personnel will be charged with a flagrant technical foul for leaving the confines of the bench when a fight **may** break out. **05-06:** The penalty for leaving the court for an unauthorized reason is now a violation (had been a technical foul). Changed the penalty to a throw-in for a team-control foul in all cases. For example, an illegal screen called on an offensive player while there is team control by the offense (know when there is team control), will result in a throw-in, even if the offensive team had seven or more fouls in that half. Of course, the penalty for a player-control foul remains a throw-in. The penalty for double-personal, double technical and simultaneous fouls has changed from a alternating possession throw-in to resuming play from the point of interruption. Players are prohibited from removing their uniforms within the visual confines of the playing area – penalty: Technical Foul. **06-07:** Proper signals for offensive fouls; now a fourth delay situation – not having the court ready for play following a TO; only takes two delay warnings for a technical foul; All headbands and wristbands must be the same color – wristbands must be worn below the elbow. **07-08:** All warning horns are now sounded at 15 seconds; Time to replace disqualified players is now 20 seconds (instead of 30 seconds); Penalty for illegal uniforms (varsity level) is one team Technical (KSHSAA rule revision) instead of the multiple T's specified by the Federation. **08-09:** Bottom lane space is left open on free throws – any item that goes around the head is considered to be a head-band.

During the Game: Primary coverage on a drive to the basket comes from C or T – from L if the drive gets into the paint. If a call is not forthcoming from T or C, L can commit (The Dan and Dwight Rule!).

Communicate with one another: Excellent communication is essential for proper game management. We are hired to “manage” the game and we can do so much more efficiently if we communicate properly: Make eye contact on every throw in; Get every free thrower; get every fouler (The Frank Rule) every time; Be ready to help another member of the crew; Be ready to listen responsibly when issues are brought to you by other members of your crew.

Talk with players as appropriate: Do NOT substitute talking with players for taking care of business – but, do develop a rapport with the kids – it lets the players know you are there – and watching.

Talk with coaches as appropriate: Be respectful and do not dodge questions asked professionally and courteously. Keep conversations brief and to the point. Or, as Phil Laurie puts it, “**Don’t go often – Don’t stay long.**” The more you talk, the less your words will mean!

“**You can’t shoot a squirrel from a galloping horse.**” Mechanically, get to your position and get still. You cannot see very well when you are running! Get where you are supposed to be and be prepared to make a call – don’t anticipate – but be prepared. It is far more egregious to not be in position and guess at a call than it is to be where you are supposed to be and just miss a call.

Be Excellent Off-Ball and Dead-Ball Officials: Nothing is worse than having players mix it up when such actions could have been prevented by alert officials. Be Aware! This is very important to game control and management.

Review court coverage: Jump ball procedures; Throw-ins (remember the new rule for this year), Free Throws, Time Outs, and all other procedures. Be aware of how important our other members of the officiating crew (the bench crew) are to an expeditiously run game. We’re all in this together!

Know three-person mechanics: Flex (Rotate) early and often to get better looks at the post play. T has about 60% of the floor and C has 40%; C, do not run away from pressure situations (help with the press) and remember you do have 40% after the ball crosses mid-court. Be aware that C may wish to initiate a flex if there is guard play that needs attention near mid-court. At L, do not allow either the offense or the defense to displace their opponents – displacement is the key!

Great Material from Amy Bonner and Doug “Sugar” Knight: L, be prepared to rotate by starting from the elbow of the end line and the lane – you should be there anyway because the and/or players heading to the other side of the court. Initiate the Rotation by moving to the other side of the lane – remember, while L is moving, L still has responsibility for action in the lane – hence, C should not be anxious to respond to L coming across the lane – C, stay and help with activity in the lane – wait to rotate to T until L is prepared to officiate on the new side of the court.

As we know, the new T is to stay a stride or two behind the player bringing the ball up court – do not get ahead of the ball and have to wait. It is very important that C, and to some extent L, anticipate where the play may go and where the secondary defender will come from – be prepared to help the new T as the play develops – Be Prepared!!

T & C: Be prepared to officiate drive to the basket that originate in your area – take them all the way to the hoop. When drives come from T or C, L is to remember their role is either to have a **Late** foul call or to **Leave** it alone. Also remember that C is an “off-ball official – as soon as C picks up an on-ball situation the flex – rotation should be initiated.

Develop the ability to see the “Big Picture:” Be better people watchers and quit being ball watchers. Work your area of responsibility but be aware of what else is happening on the court. As was the case in two-person mechanics, if a fellow official sees an infraction out of his primary area of responsibility, but is 110% sure, he must make the call – for the good of the game and the good of the crew!

Have a “Patient” Whistle on Rebounds: Make sure that any contact on a rebound is of significance and puts one of the players at a disadvantage. Two kids contacting each other while going up for a rebound is not necessarily a foul. Have a “patient” whistle on this type of play, see the entire play, and call only when an advantage is gained and/or there is displacement.

Call Your Own Line(s) but be prepared to help. If you need help, ask. If a partner comes to you with a differing opinion than yours, it is your responsibility to at least listen – actually, it is your responsibility to listen carefully and thoughtfully.

Get the “Open Look!” Every move you make should be to avoid being straight-lined – to get the “Open Look!”

Make Sure the Foul you call is a foul and don't go looking for fouls – or, “Don't Look for Fly Shit in the Pepper!”

After the Game: Leave the court together quickly and without delay – R, get eye contact with the official scorer before leaving the court. Review game situations and rules interpretations. Honestly review your performance and always graciously receive constructive criticism. Our goal is to get better every time out. While it is true that how coaches and administrators perceive your performance is important, the most important critic is yourself! Leave the locker room clean!

Food for Thought:

The Seven C's of Good Officiating: Communication, Comportment, Consistency, Courage, Common Sense, and Calming Influence.

Basketball is an Imperfect Game
Played by Imperfect Players
Coached by Imperfect Coaches and
Officiated by Imperfect Officials.

Officiating is as much a part of the game as
Dribbling, shooting, and passing.

Therefore, the only thing that really matters is
That the men and women officiating are people of integrity! Phil Laurie

Irv Brown: You aren't hired to be officious, overbearing, authoritarian, or a tough guy. You are hired to enforce the rules, **tempered with reason.**

Read the **Fundamentals of Basketball** in the Rules Book.

Accentuate Mechanics: Excellent Mechanics + Excellent Rules Knowledge + Excellent Judgment = an Excellent Chance to Get the Call Right!

Notes: John Laurie material: Go to: www.topekaofficials.com and look under the basketball section for John's material on **“What makes a Good Official.”**