

## MEMORANDUM

January 8, 2003

TO: NCAA Divisions I, II and III Coordinators of Men's Basketball Officials.

FROM: Henry O. Nichols  
National Coordinator of Men's Basketball Officiating.

SUBJECT: Bulletin No. 2 and January 7, 2003 Teleconference Follow-Up.

Because of the importance of this information, we would appreciate your consideration and effort in providing this bulletin to the head coaches in your office. We believe that providing this information to each institution demonstrates a continuing commitment to maintaining and improving the officiating in every game. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

### **Points of Emphasis**

During the past several weeks officials have improved their officiating of the points of emphasis. It is apparent that when officials decide to concentrate better on off-ball coverage and quit watching the ball, the quality of officiating post-play situations and officiating cutters without the ball rises dramatically.

It is imperative that a conscious, dedicated effort is made by officials to not only sustain the progress made thus far but to keep concentrating on improving their consistency in seeing each play from the beginning, seeing the entire play and calling the first foul.

It is of utmost importance that officials finally decide that they will not "back-track" as the season progresses and conference play becomes the focus for players and coaches. Remember the challenge to be a better official than ever before. Meet the challenge for the entire season.

Post Play. Recently, there have been a number of good "first foul" calls on offensive post players using an illegal lower arm to keep a defender from fronting. This trend of calling these fouls must continue. Also remember that many times the first foul occurs when the offensive post player dislodges his defensive opponent from a legally established position by "backing" him down or a defensive player moves his offensive opponent away from the basket by use of hands, forearms and/or body. Call the fouls – the players will adjust. Remember, when a defensive player jumps straight up he is still in legal vertical position.

Hand-checking. While officials have been generally consistent in calling hand-checking they have been inconsistent in calling fouls on players defending a player with the ball who bumps the dribbler with body checks. This is always a foul and must be called. A defender who initiates contact by putting his body on a dribbler gains a tremendous advantage and must be penalized. Aggressive defense is a wonderful part of the game but constant body contact by defenders is not defense by the rules and affords a team with an illegal physical type of defense to unfairly dictate how the game is played. Call the fouls, the players will adjust.

Players moving without the ball. The improvement made in this area must continue. Rededication to better off-ball coverage will allow officials to become more consistent in penalizing defensive players who hold, bump or grab the shirts of players cutting without the ball. Call the fouls, the players will adjust.

Offensive players causing contact when attempting a try for goal. By not rewarding the players who initiate contact when attempting a try for goal with free throws, officials are recognizing good defense. Officiating has improved in these situations but officials must be more diligent when officiating these plays so that defensive players who do nothing illegal are not penalized with fouls.

Screening. With the exception of back screening situations the officiating of illegal screens has been done well and officials must continue this excellent coverage throughout the season. More attention needs to be given to the illegal screens from behind opponents that are set so close to the players being screened that there is no space for at least one step backward.

Palming. Officials must gain more consistency in calling violations on players who obviously stop their dribble by allowing the ball to come to rest in their hand and then continue to dribble. Officials have not addressed this violation nearly well enough.

### **Mechanics**

Many officials are not implementing proper mechanics in the following situations:

1. The official calling a foul leaves the area too soon to report to the table. Officials must take time to observe the players involved long enough to make certain of the number of the player who commits the foul and to make certain that there is no untoward action by either player involved after the play.
2. While moving to a new position after a foul is called by one of the crew, the non-calling officials must keep all of the players in their vision. Officiating does not stop during dead-ball situations.
3. During free throws the trail official must take a position near the 28' hash mark, not in the center of the court.

### **Reminders**

- Cardinal Rule – Style of play will not dictate how a game is officiated.
- Zero tolerance for taunting, baiting or other unsporting behavior by players.
- Make certain a player has clear possession of the ball before granting a timeout.
- Coaches must stay in the coaching box and exhibit reasonable behavior throughout the game.
- A technical foul may be called if players from either team enter the mid-court area near the center circle during pregame introductions.
- Officials must use TV monitors to review last-second shots at the end of the game.
- Officials were challenged to be the best they ever were. Meet the challenge!

### **Rules and Interpretations**

The use of finger sweatbands shall be prohibited since it creates a possible hazardous safety condition. Player(s) or entering substitute(s) shall be instructed to remove the illegal equipment before being allowed to participate.

**Play:** B-1 commits a personal foul against A-1. This is the ninth team foul for Team B. Prior to the administration of the free throw(s), A-1 and B-1 are assessed intentional technical fouls for pushing each other. The official is informed that the technical foul assessed against A-1 is the fifth and disqualifying foul.

**Ruling:** The technical fouls charged to A-1 and B-1 are offsetting and no penalty free throws shall be awarded. Play shall resume at the point of interruption which was the bonus one-and-one for B-1's personal foul. However, since A-1 was disqualified, the bonus shall be attempted by A-1's substitute unless no substitution is available. In this case, any teammate shall attempt the free throw(s).

**Play:** After a violation by A-2, A-1 involves himself in a fight. B-6 leaves the bench and enters the court but does not participate in the fight.

**Ruling:** A-1 shall be ejected and shall be subject to the fighting penalty and suspension. Any player from Team B is permitted to attempt the two free throws for A-1's infraction. B-6 shall be ejected for leaving the confines of the bench area and entering the playing court. No free-throw penalty or direct technical shall be assessed to B-6. Because B-6 did not participate in the fight, no fighting suspension shall be involved. The acts committed by A-1 and B-6 are **not** offsetting as they are two different acts.

**Play:** While A-1 is attempting a free throw, B-1 violates by touching the ball while in flight. B-1 committed the violation during (a) the first try of two free throws, (b) the first try of a bonus one-and-one, or (c) the second try of two free throws or a one free-throw penalty.

**Ruling:** In (a), (b) or (c) assess B-1 with an indirect technical foul and count the goal. Any player from Team A may attempt the two free throws. In (a) and (b), play shall resume with the administration of the second try, which was the point of interruption.

When the goal-tending violation is committed by a teammate of the free thrower during the first try of two free throws, that free throw shall be cancelled. An indirect technical foul shall be assessed to the player who violates and play shall resume with the administration of the second try.

When the violation by the free thrower's teammate occurs during the first try of a bonus one-and-one, that free throw is cancelled, an indirect technical foul is assessed to that player and play shall resume by awarding the ball to the offended team at a designated spot nearest to where the violation occurred.

In (c), after counting the goal and administering the indirect technical, the point of interruption is a throw-in by Team B, the team not credited with the score, anywhere along the end line.

When the goal-tending violation is committed by a teammate of the free thrower, that free throw shall be cancelled. An indirect technical foul is assessed to that player. Play shall resume by awarding the ball to the offended team, (Team B), at a designated spot nearest to where the violation was committed.

HON/EB:blb

cc: Athletics Directors of Independent Division I Institutions  
NCAA Divisions I, II and III Conference Commissioners  
NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Committee  
NCAA Men's Basketball Rules Committee  
Selected NCAA Staff Members