



MEMORANDUM

February 13, 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. 3 and February 11, 2003 Teleconference Follow-Up.

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Because of the importance of this information, we would appreciate your consideration and effort in providing this bulletin to the head coaches in your conference. 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.

Generally, officials have made a good effort to enforce the points of emphasis in recent weeks – but there is still too much inconsistent application of the guidelines in some games. If game officiating is to reach the highest level possible all officials must decide that every game will be officiated as though it will be the most important game of the season. To do this all officials must upgrade their effort, concentration and attitude to a point that leaves no doubt every official is doing his best regarding the parameters set during the preseason clinics. It is February and every official knows that now is the time to be the best he can be. Do not be one of those officials guilty of not officiating the same in February as in the early part of the season. Do not give in, referee the game!

1. Areas of Concern.

- a. Players Moving Without the Ball. This point of emphasis is the area of officiating that has been very inconsistent. Too many cutters are being bumped, held and illegally detoured. It is crucial that off-ball coverage improve and fouls called when defenders make illegal contact (or grab the cutter's game jersey) in attempts to keep players without the ball from moving from one position on the court to another. Observe the cutters and call the fouls!

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- b. Coach and Bench Decorum. There are far too many conversations going on between coaches and officials while the game is in progress. There is no reason that officials should be constantly talking with coaches during a game. It is appropriate for communication to take place on occasion but thus far this season these conversations are too numerous and in many cases far too elongated. Coaches must understand that every call does not require a debate and officials must understand that constantly responding to the coach distracts them from concentrating on officiating the game properly. Also, officials and coaches have not done a good job of complying with the coaching box rule. Coaches – stay in the box. Officials – make certain that coaches remain in the box. In addition, there have been numerous blatant violations by coaches of the bench decorum rule which have not been properly addressed by officials. Officials must have the professionalism and courage to penalize these infractions.
 - c. Dead-Ball Officiating. All three officials must constantly observe all ten players on dead balls, especially after violations and foul calls. This is a habit that officials must acquire so that it becomes second nature. This season officials have become lax on dead balls and too many incidents that should be addressed have gone unnoticed.
2. Post Play. Officials must continue to call fouls when offensive post players back down opponents or use the lower arm to prevent opponents from moving. Call fouls when either the offensive or defensive player displaces an opponent from a legally established position. See the play from the beginning, see the whole play and call the first foul. Do it every game throughout the entire game.
3. Screening. There can be no slippage on calling fouls for illegal screens throughout the game. It is incumbent on officials responsible for off-ball coverage that illegal screens be penalized consistently. Call the fouls. There can be no backtracking down the stretch of the season.
4. Hand-Checking. Defenders moving into the dribbler and making contact is a foul every bit as much as illegal use of the hands on the dribbler by a defender. Call the fouls. Be careful to avoid calling a hand-checking foul on the defender when the dribbler causes slight contact by moving into the defender. Do not let the dribbler push off his defender to get separation or get open for a try for goal.
5. Offensive Players Causing Contact on Field Goal Attempts. Officials have begun to do an excellent job of not rewarding the offensive player with free throws when he initiates contact while going to the basket and attempting a try for goal. If the defender does nothing wrong he should not be called for a foul.

7. Mechanics.

- a. Whether lead, center or trail, officials must move to get to the best position to see any given play. Do not be riveted to the floor.
- b. The lead official must move to officiate low post play and offensive rebounds on the weak side. The center official cannot be expected to see every play clearly in these situations.
- c. When going from trail to lead on fast breaks or quick turnovers if you do not see a foul clearly do not guess. The center official must help on these situations.

Special Notes

Cardinal Rule – style of play will not dictate how a game is officiated.

Zero tolerance with taunting, baiting and unsporting actions by players – verbal or nonverbal.

If a foul should be called, somebody call it.

No official will tell a coach, “It’s not my call.”

Officials who are trying to be the best they have ever been will not falter during the most crucial part of the season; they will meet the challenge.

Interpretation

When precision timing is being utilized, a whistle stops the clock. When two whistles are sounded closely together, one signifying a foul and the other signifying the end of the game, and there is uncertainty as to which whistle occurred first; the officials are permitted to use the monitor to determine which whistle occurred first and whether the game is over.

Play: A-1 is in possession of the ball in the front court and throws a pass to A-2 who is located near the division line. A-1’s pass is errant. A-2 leaves the playing court with both feet in an attempt to prevent the ball from going into the back court. While in the air, A-2 gains possession of the ball and throws it into the playing court where it strikes the division line. The ball returns to the front court where A-2 recovers the ball before it is touched by an opponent.

Ruling: Team A has committed a back-court violation. Team A had control of the ball in its front court and the ball was last touched by Team A before going to the back court. The ball was then first touched by Team A after it went to the back court. Rule 9-11 says nothing about where the ball goes after it goes to the back court.

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USE OF REPLAY/TELEVISION MONITOR

PLEASE NOTE: Updated information clarifying the use of the replay/television monitor will be posted on the Web site in the next few days.

HON/EB:blb