



# Post Play Express

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## **TOUGH ON ISSUES, EASY ON PEOPLE**

By Pierre Marion, Vice president of CABO

To perform as a basketball referee, you need to develop and constantly improve upon an important skill set: knowledge of rules and mechanics, fast and accurate decision making processes, emotional control, fitness, appearance, teamwork and more. The difference between a good official and a great official is the ability to handle tough game situations: anything that goes beyond covering the plays properly and calling balls and strikes. This is what is expected of a crew chief. When game situations need to be addressed, we are looking for officials who can step up and prevent or resolve problems. My intent here is not to review all the personal skills required to be efficient in these matters, but rather to look at a specific point that could help you to better manage tough situations: be tough on the issue, but easy on people. This is a skill I have learned over years of performance management and it works. I think you could apply this approach to your game management.

### **PLAYERS AND COACHES DON'T HAVE ANYTHING AGAINST YOU**

Often at the end of a game, after you have had to make a difficult refereeing decision, the coaches' comment is "Good job, ref!" There are always exceptions, but most coaches and players understand and accept your role as a referee. No coaches wake up in the morning and think about making your life miserable. Basketball is a very complex game to referee. That being said, there are always game situations and players' behaviour where we, as the referee, have to step in and solve a problem to restore the game structure.

### **GIVE THEM THE RIGHT TO DISAGREE**

Respect brings respect, nothing new here. But what exactly does this mean during a basketball game? Respect means treating participants politely and accepting that they might have a different opinion on a specific play. They

have the right to disagree! What you must deal with is how they express their disagreement. This is where your ability to project yourself in a way which makes people accept the difference and move on, is important.

## **PROTECT THE GAME STRUCTURE**

Players play, coaches coach and referees referee and they all interact with each other respectfully. In the best of worlds, this is the way the game should be structured. As a referee, you want to make sure that no participants are taking advantage with behavior that should not be tolerated during a game:

- players taunting opponents with comments such as “in your face”
- coaches acting in a manner that questions the official’s integrity.

Some situations are obvious and need to be stopped right away with a technical foul. These are “no-no’s”. When we say obvious, it means that everyone watching the game knows why a T has just been called. Some other instances are not so obvious, but still need to be addressed. In all cases, you need to act fast to maintain or restore the game structure. You must intervene when needed, but you should not interfere when the game flow has not been disturbed. Your role is to resolve problems, not create them!

## **TOUGH ON THE ISSUE, EASY ON PEOPLE**

Be clear, specific, concise, and, to a certain extent, non-negotiable on issues. Be firm, approachable, and easy at the same time in your interactions with coaches and players. Express your concerns and expectations clearly. Treat participants with respect, never threaten, and always use appropriate language. Here are some examples of common game situations and how to deal with them while being tough on the issue, but easy on people.

- *“Coach I need your support here. I am asking you to tell your assistant to respect bench decorum, sit on the bench and stop making gestures on calls he disagrees with. I appreciate your help coach, thank you.”*

Tough on the issue, easy on people.

- *“Guys, help me keep my whistle silent. You’ve got to stop pushing each other. The first on the spot gets the right to that spot. It’s up to you now. I will be watching.”*

Tough on the issue, easy on people.

- *“I cannot let you stare at me and try to intimate me like this. I am asking you to stop. If you have an issue, come to me and ask your question, I will be pleased to answer.”*

Tough on the issue, easy on people.

Most of the time, you will be able to deal with the situation very effectively on the first attempt. If they don’t comply, they made the decision to let you fix the situation differently. You need to address inappropriate behavior and give structure back to the game. Be firm and clear, tough on the issue, but easy on people.

# LET'S TALK BLOCK/CHARGE

By Bill Denney, BCBOA Director of Officials' Development

The emphasis in coaching today involves the teaching of defensive principles. Accordingly, officials must realize this emphasis and give the defense every opportunity given to the offense. Many officials fail to reward the defensive player and call a block when in fact, a textbook charge has occurred. The principles involving guarding outlined in the rule book must be learned and adopted to referee the game of basketball correctly.

Once a defensive player has established a legal guarding position and contact occurs in the torso region of the body, it is a charge. Again, in such a case, it is not necessary for the defender to have both feet on the floor to draw a charge. Often, TV commentators use the phrase 'He/she was not set.' This is a misstatement of the rule and its application, but it unfortunately influences impressionable officials who take it as gospel. A team cannot play defense without moving their feet. Therefore, a defender does not have to be stationary when contact occurs.

A charge call gives officials the opportunity to sell themselves and their ability. A good strong call will project confidence and show a knowledge of the game. By the same token, calling such a play a block will cause everyone to question the official's knowledge of the rules. It is imperative that the official watch the defensive player to determine whether that legal guarding position has been established. Officials who have trouble making this call are probably watching the offensive player and see the defensive for the first time when contact occurs. Because of the emphasis in teaching of drawing the charges, it is much easier in gray-area situations to call the charge. This is to say that if the defensive player moves slightly as the offensive player jumps and contact occurs some 8 to 10 feet later, the easier call to make is a charge. A replay of the situation of such a call will have five people saying the player moved and five other people saying the player was in place. If such a case, again, it's easier to sell the charge. Hopefully, the ball will go in the basket and each side will get a piece of the action. In gray-area situations, where there is doubt as to whether the ball was released by the shooter prior to the contact, it is much better to allow the basket and call a charge. To call a charge and disallow the basket is a harsh situation that can be avoided. Obviously, if the charge occurs before the ball is released, the basket cannot count. What we are talking about are in-between calls.

A block/charge play often occurs on a fast break outlet pass. The offensive player has his/her head turned and is looking for the ball when he/she runs into his/her opponent. The key to getting this play right is to determine whether the offensive player has possession of the ball and one or both feet on the floor. In such a case, the defender does not have to give the offensive a chance to stop or change direction. No fans and few coaches understand this rule. The head turned by the offensive player is not a factor. In contrast, if possession of the ball has not been obtained with one or both feet on the floor, then the defender must give the opponent sufficient time or distance to stop or change direction, but never less than one step. In many play situations involving outlet passes, the offensive player gets startled and shuffles the feet. If in fact the player travels, call the travel as it occurred prior to the contact. However, it does not always happen this way and some officials attempt to dodge this call and always call the travel. If it is a travel, call it. If it's a charge, call it with courage.

# **BENCH BEHAVIOUR**

**By Gerard Brien, Interpreter of Newfoundland/Labrador**

**Coach/Official interaction and bench decorum have been a CABO point of emphasis for several years. However, it seems that problems still exist in this area. Thus, a review of this aspect may be helpful in ensuring that bench behaviour is both appropriate and sportsmanlike.**

**All coach/official dialogue should be respectful. Obviously, there will be occasions when coaches and officials will disagree, but there is no excuse for inappropriate behaviour. The head coach may communicate with officials, but not when the clock is running. The officials may reply to the head coach at the appropriate time. The officials are encouraged to wait until the end of a charged timeout or interval of play to address the head coach, who should be in the team bench area (sometimes referred to as the coach's box). The head coach should never enter the playing court to voice displeasure. Officials should work with coaches and remind them if they stray from the coach's box. The head coach may ask legitimate questions, but rhetorical statements should not be accepted as appropriate interventions and should not be answered by officials. Officials should warn a head coach who is about to cross the line. During free-throws, the head coach may talk to an official, but should not expect the official to divert his attention from the game. The official may acknowledge the head coach, but should not let him/her gain an advantage, such as getting the next call.**

**While basketball can be an emotional game, the head coach is expected to exercise self-control. Questioning the integrity of the officials, constant negativity, excessive gesturing to express disagreement, throwing objects (e.g. water bottles, clipboards), making comments that are personally insulting, screaming, yelling, using bad language, charging onto the court, etc. must be penalized with a technical foul or even, in extraordinary circumstances, a disqualifying foul. Officials should recognize when the intensity level of a game is increasing and try to address any emotional situations with bench personnel early, to prevent technical fouls if possible. Assistant coaches must sit if the head coach is standing while play is in progress. By rule, assistant coaches may not address officials. Substitutes and team followers are not to stand while play is in progress and may not address officials. Officials should address any issues with the head coach and should expect cooperation. Officials should avoid penalizing assistant coaches prior to warning the head coach, but there may be occasions where a simple warning may not be sufficient. Officials should try to work with the head coach to avoid penalizing bench personnel for inappropriate behaviour. Disrespectful communication between opposing bench personnel, such as taunting, baiting or trash-talking, should not be tolerated and should be penalized immediately via technical or disqualifying fouls. Head and assistant coaches may approach the table during dead-ball periods and request statistical information. They may also request charged timeouts. They may not request substitutions. Substitutes are to report to the scorer and sit by the table ready to play (i.e. warmup gear removed and shirts tucked-in). Substitutes may not enter the court until beckoned-in by an official (except during a charged timeout or at the start of a period).**

**If officials and bench personnel follow the proper protocol and show respect towards each other, the game of basketball will benefit greatly.**

# **FROM THE DESK OF THE CABO EDUCATION OFFICER**

**By Jim Cervo**

The Post Play Express articles are typically educational and we have been well taught for numerous years. I thought I would write an article that is more informative in nature to bring everyone up to date with a number of current items that I have been involved with during this year.

## **CABO DATA BASE**

At the National Council meeting in September, we discussed the annual cost of providing a national exam to our members. I was asked to research the option of having a national data base site that would allow the officials to write the national exam, store data and provide a few other features. The timeline to have this in place for the 2016/2017 exam was quite short. We did not have time to beta test the site thoroughly but still decided to move forward with having the national exam on the site and have the membership write it using this tool. Although we did encounter a few issues, for the most part, we were able to have our members complete the exam and provide the needed exam results. Several improvements to the data base are in the works. We are planning to put a practice exam on the site and ask everyone to complete it well in advance of next year's exam period to work out any kinks. Our thought is to add some practice exams as well that will assist local educators.

I want to thank Martha Bradbury for the countless hours she put in answering questions, resolving problems and providing needed help. We would like everyone to go on the site and ensure their personal information is correct including their email address, local board details and name presentation. Please advise your Provincial Supervisor of any issues and we will try to resolve them as quickly as possible. Having detailed information such as this on the data base will assist in sending notifications and emails to individuals, local boards, provincial groups etc. I will be requesting each Provincial Supervisor to provide us with the NOCP level of each official and I will work to have that information updated on the site as well. Over the next year, we hope to render this site more functional and provide many features that will be of great benefit to all our members. The CABO executive felt it was very important to have an online repository that contains historical documentation as well as current pertinent documents. Up until now, a lot of this information has been stored on individuals' computers.

## **NATIONAL TOURNAMENTS – CBOC COMMITTEE**

The Spring National tournaments have just completed as I write this article. These tournaments are the CCAA Women's and Men's Tournaments, the U Sports Women's and Men's tournaments. The officials selected to these events along with the A/E's were published in the March edition of the PPE. Congratulations to all.

The officials' selection process for the U Sports tournaments was under the direction of the CBOC selection committee, as it was in the previous year. The committee is made up of CABO members from each of the U Sports conferences. This year, the Provincial U Sport Supervisors were asked to nominate up to 8 officials for each

tournament by completing an application form and providing a resume of each official. The CBOC selection committee then selected 12 officials for each tournament using the information received.

The Canada Summer Games will be held in Winnipeg from July 28 to August 13, 2017. Basketball competition involving U17 Men & Women will be part of the Games. The U15 National tournaments will be held in Regina once again, from July 23 to July 29, 2017. Provincial allotments to these tournaments have been communicated to the Provincial Supervisors.

Looking ahead to 2018, the U Sports Men's National championship will be in Halifax for a second year while the U Sports Women's National championship moves to Regina. The CCAA Men's National championship will be hosted by Cegep Montmorency in Laval, QC and the CCAA Women's National championship site is still to be confirmed.

I hope everyone has a great summer and gets a little time off the court, although we all know that basketball has become a year-round sport. There are quite a few excellent officials' development camps being held across the country. If you can attend one, it is a great time to improve your skills, interact with great evaluators and build friendships with fellow colleagues.

**ERRATUM:** In the March 2017 issue, the list of participants to the various national championships erroneously cited Craig Parsons as being from Nova Scotia. Craig now hails from Newfoundland. Our apologies.