

## OFFICIATING GUIDELINES FOR IAABO BOARD 12

### Introduction:

These guidelines are intended to provide a framework for all of us officiating for the IAABO Board 12. The overall objective is to help us provide a better and more consistent product to the schools that we service. This is not a substitute for the rule book .The material in the Guidelines should be considered a combination of policy as well as guidance on enforcement of some basketball rules all of which are endorsed by the Executive Committee (EC) to help all of us to be better and more consistent officials and provide a higher quality product to the schools we service.

The NFHS rule book is the basis for officiating our games with a few customized additions. As excellent as the rule book is, there is always a gap in translating some of the rules and applying them in game situations. The rule book consists of a set of principles or guidelines that each official and the officiating team must apply in real game situations. To the extent that the officiating team can be consistent or not in the application of these rules then the product is either a well officiated game or not. Short of cloning us all, we have to live with our individual uniqueness and judgment with the result that we may never achieve complete consistency as a team but we can narrow the inconsistency- gap by dealing with as many of the game situations as we can to maximize our opportunity for consistency throughout the games that we officiate. Given that the game of basketball is an inconsistent endeavor to begin with and given that for the most part we work each game with new partners and given that we each have our own judgment system we must do better because the game is getting better and more challenging. The challenge for us then is to find ways to make us better. Complete knowledge of the rules is necessary but not sufficient-we must be able to apply those rules in a consistent manner in the split second we have to make those decision. We are not trying to

replace the rule book –just trying to apply it the same manner as an officiating team so each official will know what to expect from the partners and most important the coaches and players will also so that game to game they will see us as being consistent. In essence that is the intent of these guidelines. Remember simply put, your overarching responsibility is to create an environment where both teams can play within the framework that the rules allow and where the rules are applied consistently such as to give both teams a fair chance to win. You have chosen a difficult avocation and it takes a mixture of rules knowledge –both spirit and intent of the rule- people management skills-ability to focus for the entire game – good common sense and the courage to do what is right regardless of the outcome.

### BEFORE THE GAME

1. Double check your assignments time/location.
2. Make sure you plan your route to the game site –use radio or internet to pre-check for traffic jams.
3. Have cell phone on.
4. Plan to arrive at the game site a minimum of 60 minutes before game time. Call Joe Marosy if you run into trouble.
5. Contact AD when you get to game site and locate partners. Call Joe Marosy if partners not at game site 30 minutes before game time.
6. Since you are representing Board 12 dress and conduct yourself appropriately
7. Be aware that you are being scrutinized for appearance/behavior and what you say and are representing Board 12. Avoid any situations that give even the appearance of being impartial to either team (e.g. do not fraternize with coaches/players/fans/AD). In summary conduct yourself as a professional referee.
8. Be extra careful in lockers rooms in what you say-assume the walls have ears. As the referee, conduct your pre-game about tonight's game only with the sole purpose of making your crew consistent as a team. Pre-games are typically 15 minutes and can

be customized with the crew you are working with and the type of game at hand. You will not have time for a complete rules/mechanics review. Better to concentrate on game management, unusual and difficult situations (e.g. technical fouls) and how you can be consistent and professional as a crew.

9. Have an effective meeting with the team captains. Remember their names. Your goal is to make them part of your team as far as controlling players and dealing with difficult situations and use them during the game as an extension of the officials-they can help you manage the game. Don't waste time talking about shirt colors and boundary lines-they are usually obvious. Rather use the brief time with them to gain their confidence that your team will work hard and be fair and you expect them to do the same in helping the officials to do the same. You will respect them and you expect them to do the same. In many cases they can help you with difficult players and perhaps save a technical foul.

10. Plan to go to the table at about 12 minutes. This will allow you enough time to have corrections made in scorebook if necessary. Your goal here is to check the scorebook and try to preclude administrative technical fouls if possible. Remember they are part of your team-a mistake at the table will be considered your fault. Some of these people may be very young and inexperienced-you need to sense that and work with them accordingly. Do not assume anything –always double check. Following is a list of suggestions:

- provide the scorekeepers with the number of players on the floor and ask them to verify that they have the same amount
- double check that all starters are identified
- request visiting scorekeeper to verify visiting team is correctly listed in the home book
- ask that each scorekeeper keep track of AP situations
- ask that each scorekeeper record time outs, when called and by whom (this will be helpful if a coach later questions the number of time outs left)
- make sure they advise you about onset of bonus situations
- go over substitution procedures

-review with clock operator when the horn should/should not be used

-review procedure if clock not started/stopped correctly

11. Examine the gym for possible safety situations and have game management correct any problems. Overall game safety is your responsibility. This includes location of cheerleaders, fans, player benches, photographers, floor condition, score table etc.

12. Pre-game dunking is not allowed by rule so you should enforce it. If you do not and there is an injury you may be held liable.

Suggest that you involve and advise coaches so if you have to call a subsequent technical foul you can at least feel that you issued a warning. Remember in National Federation Rules, the technical foul is also an indirect on the head coach and he/she must sit down for the entire game

13. Review all players for any illegal articles (braces, jewelry, bracelets etc). Try to correct during warm-ups if possible vs. waiting until the start of the game.

### DURING THE GAME:

1. Start the game with a good toss. If the initial toss does not go well for whatever reason, expect that your partner will call it back.

2. As a team, you want to establish early what you consider a foul and a violation-the players will adjust. Call the travels, hand checks, 3 sec, over-the-backs, fouls on the shooters, rough play, charges/blocks etc at both ends of the floor-the players will adjust.

3. Travels-you need to have a philosophy on travels. If you call it extremely close, you may impede the game so much that the teams can't get into a flow. It is as wrong to call a travel that wasn't as it is to miss a travel that was. If you call a travel every time a player does something a little unusual and you have not watched the pivot foot to make sure it was a travel, then you will be calling travels that are not-always watch the pivot foot. Better to err on the side of not calling unless you are absolutely sure. Remember that a player diving on the floor for a loose ball that slides due to momentum

has not traveled no matter how far the slide. It is a travel if the player obtains possession of the ball and then rolls or slides to avoid the defense.

4. Always officiate to protect the shooter but make sure that you do not penalize the defense where contact is caused by the offensive player-remember the principle of verticality. You must know where the defense is and see the whole play. If the defense is in proper position and contact occurs primarily caused by the offense, then you can call an offensive foul if the contact is serious or you can no-call it. In general if you have a train wreck you should have a whistle. Again you need to be consistent as a crew at both ends of the floor. For block/charges-remember that the defense must obtain a legal guarding position and then can move laterally to maintain that position even with one foot off the floor. From a philosophical perspective if it is close- you are better off calling a player control foul vs. looking for a reason not to-your game will go a lot better. Again you need to strive for consistency among your crew. Have the courage to not penalize a good defensive play and the good judgment to protect the shooters.

5. For 3 second calls-make sure it is a legitimate 3 + seconds. In other words don't make it so close that you are calling so many that the flow of the game never develops. If a player is leaving the lane and you reach 3 seconds-let it go. If the player in the lane receives a pass and makes a path to the basket and you are at/near 3 seconds let it go. If a player is in the lane for a few seconds, receives a pass and then passes outside the lane and stays in the lane-that is a good 3 second call. If a player falls down in the lane and is crawling to get out-let it go even if you have reached the 3 second limit. Remember that the 3 second call is the popular call from coaches and fans but you are there to appease them-call the game for the players so they can play.

6. Over the back calls- if an advantage is gained then call a foul. If the contact is slight and no advantage is gained then pass. An exception might be if the game has been very physical and you are

struggling to keep/get control-then you might want to call a foul on any contact.

7. Handchecks- call it early and once it has been called your partners need to call it also. Do not allow it east/west and call it north/south-some offenses work on east/west plays and they would be put at a disadvantage.

8. Screeners- make sure you understand the rules about the screeners and the player being screened. See the entire play and if the offense gets an advantage you should blow the whistle. Many teams run a screening offense but do not teach proper screening techniques. Watch for elbows and forearms-these will lead to rough play, retaliations and fights. If you get these calls very early in the game, it usually stops but if you don't it tends to escalate.

9. Hard fouls and intentional fouls- As a general rule when you have hard contact with players on the floor-you should have a whistle even if it is not a clear offensive or defensive foul particularly at the high school level-to not do so invites rough play and coaches concerns about injury. Some wise person described a basketball as a tennis ball that you hold in the palm of your hand-it rolls around in your hand as the game proceeds and you let it roll so as to not over officiate and let the players play but every now and then it threatens to roll off your hand and you have to quickly bring it back before you lose it. Have an understanding with your team that severe crashes near the basket by the defense can and should be called hard fouls -even if the lead does not call it-make sure one of the other officials does-don't pass on those because you want to send a clear message that rough contact will not be tolerated-better to err on the side on conservatism for these situations. Also have a clear understanding with your team about what type of fouls you will call intentional particularly near the end of a close game. These calls can be game deciders so you need to have a clear understanding of the game situation and be careful about "was the defense making an reasonable attempt to play the ball ". Fouls away from the ball at this time should seriously be considered as intentional.

10. Out of bounds situations- Prior to giving the ball to the in-bounder always

- make eye contact with your partners and the table
- always indicate both verbally and visually as to a designated spot or not

- remember that there is no limit on backward movement and that the inbounder only needs to have 1 foot within the 3 ft wide lateral space

- remember that violations by the defense do not prevent the running of the baseline after a made basket

- make sure you know the procedure on delay of game tactics by the defense

- be aware of late game situations where the defense may reach over and touch the ball in the inbounders hands (technical foul) or foul the inbounder(intentional personal foul).

11. Basket interference and goal tending- know the rules and the players so you will not surprised when it happens- otherwise you will miss this call or miscall it when it is not there. Just some hints:

- try not to call from the lead (unless it is a fast break and you are on the floor)

- in a 2 person crew, as trail try to get an angle where you can see if the ball is on its downward flight. Rule of thumb-if the shot was taken from some distance from the basket and the defense goes up and touches it-it probably was goal tending. In a 3 person crew-off official has primary responsibility

- remember when any part of the ball is in the basket cylinder and it is touched by any player you have basket interference. If the ball is on the rim no one can touch it or any part of the basket.

- important to get these calls correct the first time it happens. If it is so close suggest you make the call-if you do not it will continue and escalate and it is hard to recover from.

12. Timeouts- this is the time to raise your concentration level. Some hints:

-when reporting to the table, give color/who called it/time of the game. This will help you if later there is contention about how many time outs are left.

-make sure your partners know how many time outs are left or if a team has none left. As a courtesy you can tell one of the assistant coaches (don't bother the head coach during the time out). Good opportunity to build rapport with coaches.

-if there are to be free throws after the time out ,make sure your team knows who the shooter is and how many shots. If the ball will be inbounded, make sure your team knows which team will get the ball and whether it is a designated spot or not. This can be very critical near the end of the game that is close-you do not want to make a mistake here.

-be aware of the score and time of the game and expect when a team will want to call a time out-lost seconds here will be critical.

-make sure no subs come in after the warning signal

-don't hesitate to conference with your team particularly near the end of the game to discuss the game situation, coverage and possible plays that may happen.

-if a player is injured and you think it is serious, blow the whistle immediately and request help regardless of play on the court. Do not attempt to offer assistance or medical advice-you are creating a possible liability situation as well as possible additional injury to the player. If you believe the injury is not serious and you can let play continue particularly if the other team is on a fast break, then do so and stop the game at the next opportune moment. Remember the rule about an unconscious player.

-if a fight breaks out you are not obligated to get involved but if you can prevent it-then do so. You should rather try to keep additional players from entering the court and quickly beckon the coaches on to the court to help. You and your team will then have to rule on technical fouls and shots and ejections- remember you cannot use videos etc. When a loose ball is on the floor do not call a jump ball prematurely. When you have a jump ball make sure

you show your presence both visually and verbally-this will usually prevent fouls and fights.

13. Game management- knowledge of the rules and mechanics are obviously prerequisites for being a good official but game management skills will make you an excellent official. The very successful officials are usually those that have the skill to manage a game and deal with people. Following are some helpful suggestions:

- convey a professional image. This starts when you arrive at the gym -by how you are dressed ,arriving 60 minutes early, arriving on the floor 15 minutes before, watching the players, correcting any safety problems, meeting with team captains in an effective manner, meeting with table personnel and giving guidance as to what you want them to do during the game, introducing yourself to the coaches with a firm handshake and good eye contact-just as you would in your job situation and of course have an impeccable uniform and finally be in physical shape to keep up with players. All of this is create an image that you can and will manage this game.

- try to make your first call a good one-it will set a good base for the rest of the game-first impressions are very important. You want to convey a sense of confidence to the players and coaches. They want believe that the game is in good hands and you want them to let you officiate the game.

- have a good set of signals and look and be decisive. Take your time with your signals to the table- rushing may convey a lack of confidence.

- establish early in the game what contact you will/will not allow and what you will call a violation-the players will adjust. That is not to say you should over call the game but rather you want to set the “bar” so the players understand the boundary conditions.

- have awareness when trouble may be developing between players and your team needs to address it. Use the captains or talk

to the players directly or to both coaches but you must demonstrate your people skills to prevent the situation from deteriorating. If you have to call technical fouls- try to keep them balanced if you can. In these situations it is better to act decisively than not.

-table management is your ultimate responsibility. Don't assume that the table personnel will do everything correctly. If something goes wrong –you will be responsible to correct it. So you must train yourself to devote some of concentration to everything the table does including bringing in subs, running the clock(s), time outs and scoring. For those games with shot clocks it is another dimension that you need to continuously watch and expect to have to correct often because it is a difficult task to do and mistakes are many.

-avoid interacting with fans unless they impede the game or become abusive to your team or the players. This is the time to get the school management involved to help. To protect the game don't hesitate to have the trouble makers ejected from the gym by school management-just be sure you have good rationale and can support your decision. Don't have "rabbit ears" but don't accept abuse.

-dealing with coaches is part of the game and your responsibility. Understand that coaches want to win and they can get emotional. Some believe that they have a right to try to intimidate and influence the officials. There is no one way to deal with coaches. You need to factor in your own personality and that of your partner(s) and find a way to deal with this very important part of the game. Some coaches will take you as far as you let them. One of your responsibilities is to create and maintain an environment where the players decide who will win the game. You cannot do this if you allow a coach to say things to you or your team that is intended to intimidate or has the appearance to do that. Understand that coaches are very aware of what the other coach is saying or doing-they know each other very well. They will watch your reaction to see how you will deal with this and may in fact become vocal to attempt to balance things out maybe more so if

they are the visiting team. You should recognize this type of situation early in the game and issue a very civil warning such as “coach I have heard what you said and I will take a look at it but we cannot have you talking to us like that anymore” .Now that you have “drawn the line in the sand” and told your partners, you are obligated to call a technical foul at the next instance or you will lose credibility with both coaches and the players. Recognize that there are times that a coach may want a technical foul to get his team to change their play. Do not get emotional- treat it as just another call to make the game better. You want to get the coach to coach and your team to officiate and the players to play. Don’t bait the coach-let him/her have their say and get the game going again. If the behavior continues your partners understand that the next technical will be called by them. Do not try to correct bad behavior near the end of the game when you have allowed it go on for some time unless it is something outrageous that you cannot ignore.

-as you can see Game Management is a complex process that consists of a number of skills that are required above and beyond rules and mechanics and is perhaps the most difficult part of officiating to hone and develop.

14. Clock awareness- this is a dimension of the game that requires forced concentration to become good at. It is easy to get focused on the game play and not have clock awareness. Understand that if the timer makes a mistake and you do not the knowledge to correct the mistake, you will be held accountable. You may have had a fantastic game to that point but they will only remember the timing mistake. Hints:

-train yourself to look at the clock every time the whistle blows to stop it and make corrections quickly.

-train yourself to make sure the clocks starts when it is supposed on an inbounds ,jump ball or after a missed free throw. Remember on an inbounds play , the clock(s) starts as soon as it is touched by any player so if the ball is quickly knocked out of bounds by the defense, then some time must be taken off the

clock(s). This can be critical near the end of a period where seconds are very precious.

-in games with a shot clock, you have an additional dimension that you need to manage. Be aware that this is a very difficult job for the shot-clock operator and you should anticipate that mistakes will be made. So your team has to have a constant awareness and be able to correct the mistakes. You will know you have good clock awareness when your team does not have to rely on the table persons to correct timing errors.

### AFTER THE GAME

1. Leave the floor with your entire team and proceed immediately to your dressing room. Make arrangements to either have a key or have game management be with you to get into the dressing room. If you think you need security, do not hesitate to ask for it before the game ends thru game management. Avoid any confrontations with coaches, players, fans. Understand your legal situation should you become involved in any physical contact. If you are assaulted, try to be able to identify the assaulters and report it to the game management and the police and Joe Marosy immediately. Try not to retaliate unless you have to protect yourself. Make sure you have your team partners as witnesses do not make any statements about the game to anyone.

2. Have a post-game review with your partners and discuss how you as a team could have done a better job-there will always be room for improvement. Be frank with each other so you can improve for the next game-this is a golden opportunity to get better so set your ego aside and accept any constructive criticism as a chance to improve.

3. Leave the facility together including the parking lot if the situation warrants it.

4. Keep a notebook of each game with comments from yourself and partners and use it to become better for the next game. Learn from each mistake and try not to repeat it. If you find that you are

repeating the same mistake, challenge yourself to work at correcting it.

5. Call Joe Marosy to report any technical fouls that have been called or any unusual situations that he should be aware of.

6. Look forward to your next game and do a better officiating job than you did tonight.