

Post-Season Preparation, Review and Professionalism

Each State High School Basketball Tournament has a rich history and tradition. There are very high expectations of those who serve the Tournament in the role of an official.

A reminder, the official is part of the education process and responsible for assisting the State Association and the member schools in their effort to have the youth benefit from participating in this very special athletic experience. SPORTSMANSHIP is a priority.

Consider each assignment strictly confidential. Don't spread the word.

If you accept a tournament assignment, it should be the only game that you officiate that day.

You are expected to arrive at the tournament site dressed professionally.

Arrive at the game site early, at least one hour and fifteen minutes prior to game time.

First time post season officials, be prepared, be ready for the opportunity. Many things are completely within your control -- appearance, rested, attitude, respect the situation, demonstrate professionalism, be accountable, review manual and rules, etc. You control your chances of being invited back another time.

All officials, respect the high school game, bring your high school package of mechanics, signals and rules application to the State Tournament. Using other mechanics, signals and rules applications are a very obvious indication that one does not respect the high school game. If you do not intend to comply, do everyone a favor and simply thank the assigner for considering you and stay home.

A very thorough PRE GAME CONFERENCE is a must! Include coverages, communication and brief rules reminders.

Don't be over emphatic when making rulings on time-out requests; blocking or charging fouls; good goal in continuous motion/act of shooting situations, etc. These are not special situations, they are simply another ruling that you have made. React professionally and demonstrate composure.

It is expected that you will stop the clock by using the proper signal every time you sound the whistle in time-out, foul, violation and held ball situations.

Enforce the rules, all rules. That is what fair play is all about. Officials don't set aside the travel rule or the out of bounds rule, why set aside the disconcertion rule, grasping the ring rule, the behavior rule, etc.? When those rules are not met by a player or coach, apply the penalty. Do it NOW, don't fret, don't put it on hold and don't worry about it. Eliminate the issue. The game will be better off when rules are enforced. While intending to be "good" (by warning, ignoring) to that particular team, ask yourself about the opposing team who is adhering to the rule(s).

Do not officiate to "stay out of trouble". Be so prepared, so thorough and good at your work that trouble doesn't find you.

Do not initiate conversation with coaches. Do not delay the game to talk or listen to a coach. When there is an appropriate time to hear an appropriate comment from a coach, simply be an attentive listener. Answer only with statements (always use correct terminology) then move on. Do not delay the game to permit communication unless it is a very unusual situation. By rule, the game can not be delayed for such purposes.

Have respect and compassion for players and head coaches yet

expect rule abiding conduct. Penalize non rule abiding conduct.

CONTACT, it is suggested that every official review Rule 10.6 between now and your first tournament assignment. Contact such as bumping, leaning, forearm warding off, handchecking and displacing an opponent must be ruled a foul. Those actions are not incidental contact (4.27). Players and teams (offense & defense) are very seriously affected by such action. For an official to accept such contact as "part of the game" is not assuring fair play. Of course the official must care about the offense and defense in each contact situation, however, it is good practice to ask yourself "what did the defense do wrong?" Hopefully, the question is asked prior to applying the ruling. Keep in mind that every contact that goes unattended to encourages more contact. When we are careless with contact, we and the game reap what we sow and that usually is not a good result.

Know the free thrower, inform a partner before leaving the site of the foul. Take your time.

Carry/Palming must be penalized!!

Attention must be given to free throw coverage. Not a time to rest or talk with coaches.

Time out requests, when ball is in play, be sure there is player control.

Take your time at the site of foul and violation rulings, don't "hit and run" away. Demonstrate composure.

Don't be a "lazy" Trail Official. Get in the game.

Apply the closely guarded count, don't be slow/late in doing so. Six feet is a considerable distance – it is the rule!

An offensive or defensive post player "feeling" for an opponent who is behind them is a form of handchecking, enforce it.

Center and Trail officials, remain and read the situation prior to releasing in transition.

Other officials are watching your officiating. Other officials want to be involved in the tournament. It is upsetting to them to see a tournament official not applying the rules and not using proper mechanics and signals.

Demonstrate the pride and professionalism expected of an IAABO official, work hard, enjoy and benefit from your post season experience.

Peter Webb is currently the IAABO Coordinator of Interpreters. In addition, he is an IAABO Life Member and Past President.

