



Basketball Bulletin

No. 1

For Athletic Directors, Basketball Coaches, Basketball Officials and Basketball Observers

January 25, 2008

Late January is here and as advertised North Central Conference basketball is into what will certainly be it's last season but it also may be it's most hotly contested. On both the men and women's side. It will take only our best effort as officials, each and every night, to match the intensity of the players and coaches. We must be at that level every night out.

Some observations on play to date

The North Central Conference has always maintained that officials need to be at the game site at least one hour prior to game time. Because of the distances many officials have to travel on game day, we have kept the minimum time at one hour, which by the way is less than virtually every other DII league in the country. Many are 90 minutes and some are two hours. There are few excuses out of a car accident that may be acceptable to this measure. Tardiness is a disservice to the conference and more important to the coaches, players and your partners and will not be tolerated.

Along these same lines, the officials dressing room is for officials. Unauthorized visitors should not be encouraged to visit the officials locker room. Any business with unauthorized visitors will be conducted outside the locker room.

I become concerned when it is reported to me that there little or no pregame. Visiting is fine but the game itself and the one hour prior to the game should be business. Coaches sometimes prepare up to five days for a game, we can certainly prepare for one hour.

One more note on pre-game activity. The NCC has no dress code for officials, we just assume that you will attend the game in appropriate attire. Clean, neat, etc..

Likewise, officials, especially on the men's side, are sometimes lax in getting onto the court at the proper time. You should be on the floor with 30 minutes on the clock or when at least one team is on the floor after that time. In the case of doubleheaders, most places put 25 minutes on the clock when the first men's team appears on the floor. Be there!!!

Too many double whistles or even worse, three whistles on a play, tell me that we are ball watching. Ref your area and trust your partners are to officials what "be prepared" is to the boy scouts.

Signals: Some of us have become very lax in making signals on the floor and reporting fouls to the table. Good signals help convey what you have called to both the coaches and the scoring table but more important it lets your partners know what you have called. When reporting fouls, get to a clear and open area. Once is to often to have the score table blow the horn and ask you to repeat what you have reported.

If there is any question on whether we have a team control foul or a loose ball foul and shooting or not shooting free throws is a question get together and get it right. Discovering in the locker room after the game that we should or not shot free throws is not acceptable. Get it right.

Don't be a stationary official. You don't have to be a race horse and jump around like a monkey on heroin but if set yourself in concrete you have a great chance of getting yourself straight lined. Move your feet and see between the players not behind the players.

Good teamwork by official...total concentration...working your areas...trusting your partners...can make what may a difficult contest, actually an easy contest to work.

Ruling: Rule 7, section 5, Article 4, page 113: After a common foul and before the bonus rule takes effect, any player of the offended team shall make the throw-in from a designated spot nearest to where the foul occurred, thus, if we have a foul in the post and ball is behind the three-point arc or in the backcourt we take the ball out under the offensive team basket.

We do a disservice to our game if we allow one coach to abuse the coaching box privileges. It encourages not only that coach to continue misuse of the coaching box rule but it says to the opposing coach that he can go ahead and abuse the rule also. Take care of business early and it will make our lives easier and the game go better. As one NCC observer noted: 'I think our officials talk to the coaches too much.'

Don't let the style of play dictate your officiating of the game. Be consistent from start to finish. Coaches and players deserve that. The first few possessions of the game are as critical as possessions at the end of the game. We must be ready to go from the start and not be content to ease into the contest.

Player safety is paramount. If a player goes down and appears to be injured *stop the game*. We had a recent game where a player incurred a probably ACL injury and play continues. Not good. Better to be safe than sorry.

The best game managers are the officials who have awareness of the shot clock and the game clock at all times. Be one of them.

Lastly: I can't believe I am bringing this up again. This is not an isolated incident or just involving one official. I am running out of fingers to count the number of times this season that coaches have expressed concern about the things that officials say.

You are not a coach, thus no need to tell a player how to play or a coach how to coach. No need to reply to comments and when you do decide to respond to a respectfully asked question, do so in a brief and respectful manner. Lending an ear to a coach only encourages the opposing coach to do the same. You have heard this all before: "you can't quote silence." Keep your mouth shut before you say something stupid, because if you keeping talking, the chances to doing that increase rapidly.