

Basketball Officials Communication Concepts

Outline

- Prior to game day
 - Partner(s)
 - School & coach
- At the game site, but prior to the game
 - Coaches
 - Game Administrator
 - Table personnel
 - Fans
 - Partner(s)
- During the game
 - Coaches
 - Table personnel
 - Fans
 - Players
 - Partner(s)
- After the game
 - Coaches
 - Table personnel
 - Fans
 - Partner(s)
 - Press

Specifics

- Prior to game day
 - Call your partner(s) if you are the "R"
 - Confirm date, time of arrival, game time, and site
 - If you're not the "R" and don't get called – call as your partner might be out of the game
 - Call the coach the day before (especially for Saturday games)
 - Confirm date and game time with him/her and let them know that crew will be there
 - I leave voicemail to have them return call if any information is WRONG if it is game day and varsity
- Game day - at site
 - Check in with coach when you arrive – keep it short
 - If any question (if it is below varsity level, a tournament, or non-district), ask coach if the table crew is experienced
 - Are the coaches boxes marked? If not have coach tape them down
 - Pre-game with partner(s)

- Help with shooters
- Where the ball will be put in play
- Time outs
- Trouble with coaches, players, fans
- Technical fouls
- Late in game situations
- Unusual situations - don't be afraid to talk
- When arriving on floor
 - If kids can get above rim - start communicating right away - blow your whistle to let them know you're coming out on the court (let's not start the game with a dunking technical)
 - Find the game administrator
- Table crew - if experienced
 - At 11 minutes before game, go to table to introduce yourself, check book and talk with crew. Talk about:
 - Help with keeping subs at the table until beckoned
 - Is there an "X" to mark spot for subs to report?
 - Make sure you know who the scorer is
 - Make sure you can understand our reporting of fouls - "Your job is to keep us out of trouble." (Tongue in cheek.)
 - End of game situation - My responsibility - I'll ask a simple question, "Had the ball left the shooter's hand prior to the horn sounding?"
- Table crew - if inexperienced (and if you don't know, ask)
 - General
 - Remind them that they are part of the officiating crew (that means they're impartial)
 - If ANY questions during the game - ASK for help because we're here to provide a fair playing experience for the kids
 - Scorer
 - Wait for signals - don't assume you know who foul is on
 - Clarify if ANY question
 - Review how technical fouls are counted - personal, team, coach (check after one happens)
 - Mark running score first
 - Compare with opponent's score keeper
 - Compare running score with timer (scoreboard)
 - 7th and 10th team fouls
 - 5th foul on a player
 - Time outs and delay warnings
 - Time outs late in game - when one team gets down to 2 or less
 - Timer
 - When and how to get our attention - offending team in possession or dead ball (what's a dead ball)
 - When to start clock (watch first throw in and FT) - watch our hand if an question
 - Time outs - how will you time? 15 seconds, 10 seconds

- Take score book to each coach and ask them to review AND initial it for correctness. Tell coaches you'll be back at 1 minute with partner(s) to do introductions and wish you luck (then do it reminding them of UIL sportsmanship rule)
- Captain's meeting
 - Short & sweet
 - Introductions
 - Who is speaking captain?
 - We'll ask for your help controlling your teammates if necessary
 - Play hard and good luck
 - (Mark their names in book as captain if you can't remember)
- Coaches meeting (about 2:00 minutes prior to game time)
 - Remind them of the UIL sportsmanship topic - sportsmanship starts with us adults. We'll appreciate your help in setting the proper image for the kids.
 - Coach's box - stay in it. We're not here to police the coach's box. But if you're talking to us, you better be doing it from within the box.
 - When you ask for a time out, please tell us immediately if you want a full or a "30". If we have to ask more than once, (I'll still ask twice), we'll give you a full. [*Be careful of this one if it's a hotly contested game and the coach truly forgets.*]
- During the game
 - To begin the game, each additional period or after long periods of stoppage of play - ask captains if they're ready to go - don't surprise anyone
 - Partners
 - An extra switch
 - Tighten it up
 - Rough play
 - Players attitudes
 - Your partner's attitude - be tactful
 - Players
 - Talk to the players - make sure they know you're human early
 - "Nice play"
 - "Don't do that"
 - Use captains
 - Use humor when appropriate
 - Get them to help with loose balls
 - Preventative officiating
 - Jump balls - tell them all to get set - hold your spots
 - Free throw violations
 - Throw-ins - don't let them jostle before giving the ball to the thrower-in. Talk to them

you're watching

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- Develop a way to handle a player who demonstrably disagrees with your calls – and stop it early – don't embarrass, remember, they're teenagers
- Fans
 - Don't talk to the fans unless you're comfortable doing it. After controversial calls – don't do it at all as you can't win
 - If you're comfortable – find the rowdy student section and talk to them before the game – befriend them
- Coaches
 - If they're professional – talk to them, but keep it short – you'll never win an argument
 - Don't bait
 - If a coach goes from nice to belligerent, extricate yourself politely and walk away
 - Try not to give a "T" for a comment if you're the only one who heard it – unless you need to make sure coach knows he can't intimidate you
 - If it's controversial – rule interpretation, timing issue, or if you think a coach will only want to work you, ask the other coach to come over prior to starting the conversation.
 - If a coach gets a "T", he needs to be told he now is bound by the seatbelt rule.
 - Reporting a 5th foul – do we want to change who reports?
- After the game
 - Table – Referee should look at table prior to leaving the floor to make sure there are no problems – a nod is good enough if scorer is looking. (They'll only be looking if there is a problem – then they'll be frantic)
 - Coaches
 - "Nice game" or "Tough game" is about it if you don't know them. Remember how you feel when you lose.
 - Don't let them in your dressing room – even if it is their office if they're belligerent. And report it if they are.
 - Fans
 - Don't – they're even worse
 - Get out of there
 - Press
 - Don't

Prepared by Barry Caponi 11/02

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