



Post Play Express

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OFFICIATING FOR SAFETY

By Martha Bradbury, Provincial Interpreter of Manitoba

With the growing popularity of basketball in Canada and around the world, what used to be a seasonal sport now happens year round. That means that many of us are officiating more games than ever. Sometimes, as a result, we work to get games done quickly and lose perspective when it comes to player safety or what's best for the game. We have a primary responsibility to maintain the safety of players in every game we officiate. We do that regularly by calling contact and ensuring game roughness doesn't escalate when tempers run high.

How well a job do we do when a player goes to the floor with an obvious injury? We all know what a rolled ankle or even a torn ACL looks like. It's our job to manage the situation in a way where our primary focus is ensuring that the injury doesn't become more severe. We need to use our common sense. Our first thought shouldn't be that the game is going to go long or that we can't start our second game on time, if we don't make the player get off the floor. Our priority should be what actions will ensure this player is taken care of correctly. It's important to note that a medical emergency severe enough to warrant calling an ambulance is an extremely rare occurrence. In the approximately 1400 games I have officiated in my career, I've only been involved in one game where an ambulance needed to be called. Just like in our preparedness to officiate a game, we need to expect the unexpected when it comes to medical emergencies and be prepared to manage any injury or situation that may arise during the course of a game.

Here are some simple steps to follow in managing a medical emergency involving a player:

- Perform a quick assessment of the player
- If you or your partner are concerned, call in the coach or trainer
- Instruct all other players to head to their bench
- If a player is clearly injured severely enough that moving them could cause additional injury, **WE MUST NOT MOVE THE PLAYER**

- Call 911 and provide all pertinent details of location of game
- Wait for first responders to arrive
- Allow them to perform their necessary duties
- Wait for them to safely remove the player from the playing court
- Resume and complete the game
- Report the injury to your assignor following completion of the game.

Another thing to be considered is, if we make the decision to move a player that has a significant injury and we make it worse, what is our liability? Oxford defines liability as, “the state of being responsible for something, especially by law.” Consider the fact that pretty much every game is recorded by someone. If we were seen rushing to move an athlete without taking the time to assess the situation and acting against the advice of a coach or parent, we potentially could be sued. Parents who feels an official caused greater injury to their child, would certainly be within their right to sue. While it shouldn't be our primary focus on the court, it should always be something to consider.

All Provincial/Territorial Sports Organizations have insurance with liability coverage. So, all officials who are members in good standing with their local basketball official's association have liability insurance. (NOT ALL PTSOs USE THEIR INSURANCE PROGRAM)

Why Liability Insurance?

Because no matter how careful you are, accidents happen. And you can be sued by anyone who claims injury or damages resulting from your activities. You may not be liable, but you will need to be defended in court. A liability policy will pay for this defense as well as any costs awarded against you. In short, liability insurance gives you peace of mind. Protect yourself and your partner from being sued. Focus on the safety of all players first. Don't focus on how quickly you complete the game or on starting the next game on time. Take care of the important things in the game!

Heart Attack

Heart attacks are another risk in a basketball game due to the high cardio levels attained. We all officiate players who are at different ages, fitness levels and abilities and heart attacks are a real life possibility. Would you be able to recognize if a player/coach/spectator or even your fellow official was having a heart attack? Do you know the signs? Take the time to get yourself comfortable with recognizing when someone may be having a heart attack and understand what you can do to help.

Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

- Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the centre of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

With the growing popularity of social networking and the availability of video on every smartphone, we are seeing more instances of players that suffer a heart attack during play. One recent example is of a young girl in Georgia dropping to the court during a volleyball match. Take a look at the dramatic footage:

[Heart Attack During Play \(Crise cardiaque en cours de match\)](#)

Thankfully, there were people on-site that recognized that this player had had a heart attack and knew what to do in order to save this player's life.

When you get to any game site, it is your responsibility to ensure the site is safe. While you are checking for safety, add a few more items to your process:

- Locate the onsite Automated External Defibrillators (AED) so that you are prepared should someone suffer a heart attack
- Jot down the address of the game site should you have to call 911 in the event of an emergency or injury
- Put your phone on silent versus turning it off in case you need to phone 911
- Ask the onsite supervisor if there is a first aid kit available and, if there is, find out where it is located.

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)

Anyone can safely use an AED without training, provided that the user can read the AED's text and follow its voice-prompt instructions. The AED assesses the heart of a person in cardiac arrest for a shockable rhythm. If such a rhythm is detected the AED requests the rescuer to push a button to deliver a shock to a victim's heart. If no shockable rhythm is detected, no shock will be requested nor can a shock be given.



Here is a simple video that outlines ease of use and how to use an AED:

[Using an AED](#)

Another area of concern is stroke. Do you know the signs for determining if someone is having a stroke? What should you do if you think a player/coach/spectator/official is having a stroke?

Spotting signs of a stroke



Face Drooping – Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person's smile uneven?

Arm Weakness – Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

Speech Difficulty – Is speech slurred? Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like "The sky is blue." Is the sentence repeated correctly?

Time to call 9-1-1 – If someone shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get the person to the hospital immediately. Check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared.

What to do if you think someone is having a stroke?

- **Stay with the person. When offering stroke help, you need to make sure that no additional harm comes to the stroke victim. Stay with the patient to prevent them from falling or further injuring themselves.**
- **Take a few notes. Make note of the time when the stroke took place. This is critically important information later.**
- **Do not offer the person food or medicine. Although most strokes are caused by blockage in an artery, some strokes are caused by bleeding from an artery that burst. Giving aspirin to someone with this condition could make it worse.**
- **Stay calm. Although it can be difficult, it's important to compose yourself and assure the stroke victim that everything is going to be all right.**

Knowing the signs and taking the correct steps to help in a situation such as a stroke are paramount to the recovery of the person involved. If someone that has had a stroke receives treatment within four hours, chances of a full recovery increase immensely.

Finally, we need to consider what to do if a player receives a concussion. Like the protocol for a serious injury, if a concussion is severe enough that the player shouldn't be moved, don't move the player. Call an ambulance in the case of a player losing consciousness or appearing to have a severe concussion. We don't want to be held responsible for making the concussion worse than it already may be.

Canada Basketball has devised a documented concussion protocol. Unfortunately, it doesn't currently include a component on Officials and their responsibility. We do not have the power to prevent a player from playing. That decision is left up to the coach. For now, we should follow the outlines that apply to Parents/Guardians of the player.

Canada Basketball Concussion Protocol

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION OBSERVED BY PARENTS/ GUARDIANS:

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to being hit or falling
- Can't recall events after being hit or falling
- Appears more emotional

WHAT SHOULD A PARENT/ GUARDIAN DO IF THEY THINK THEIR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

Seek medical attention right away. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports. Notify your child's coach if you think your child has a concussion. Keep your child out of play. Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon – while the brain is still healing – risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.

Canada Basketball Concussion Protocol – entire document



Canada Basketball
Concussion Protocols.

Take a look at the below video that came from the Manitoba Coaches Super Clinic in 2012. It includes a lot of good information around concussions and how we can help to protect the athlete:

[Concussion Education and Management Video](#)

This article is intended to make each of us think about our responsibilities in the game outside of calling fouls and violations. It's not meant to be a comprehensive overview of every potential thing that can happen in a game related to injury and medical emergency of players/coaches/spectators/officials. We need to educate ourselves to ensure we're prepared to handle everything that can occur in a game. Officials need to continue to make the game of basketball safe for everyone involved. Much of what is required by us is common sense. Don't lose focus on what is important. This knowledge can help in other aspects of life, not just on the basketball court. Knowledge is power!

RETENTION OF OFFICIALS : Part 2

By Bill Redden, member of GVBOA

The successful retaining of services of officials from one year to the next, is a common and important goal of local associations of officials. Part 1 (PPE 7.10. May 2016) introduced a three-component [Instruction(I), Opportunity (O), Recognition) (R)] operational model. It pointed out the role each component has in aiding retention. The specific need to help official's combat fear of failure in performance as well as unsportsmanlike behavior (abuse) by coaches and spectators was also addressed in a general sense. The emphasis in Part 1 was based primarily on the Instruction component. Several suggestions were offered for local associations regarding this component. Part 2 herein, deals specifically with three linked Instruction strategies (Reality training, Role Playing, Mental Practice). In addition, the explanation of both the Opportunity and Recognition components of the I.O.R. model will be expanded upon and several suggestions utilizing these two components to aid retention will be provided.

Reality Training, Role playing and Mental Practice can provide officials with the understanding, knowledge, and confidence to help cope with unsportsmanlike behavior. Reality Training provides direct insight into participants' expectations of officials, the reasons why abusive conduct occurs, and the importance of officials reacting in a timely way to discourage, warn, and penalize in these situations.

Options for Reality Training include:

1. Panel discussion moderated by a basketball official, with an experienced representative of coaches, players, and spectators as panel members.
2. Lecture presentation by an official clinician and guest coach.
3. Officials in small member discussion groups with a qualified moderator.

Role playing provides officials with experience in communicating with participants in all situations including those that have a potential of conflict. To be effective, role playing sessions must be conducted authentically with all the emotions involved by the person playing the role of coach, player, or spectator.

Mental practice is the repetition of stationary and movement visions in the mind's eye. Such visualization practice is a learning strategy that, used alone, or in combination with physical practice, has proven to be effective in learning skills of all nature including conflict resolution.

The drop-out rate for officials due to unsportsmanlike conduct is especially high with inexperienced officials. Experienced elite officials have been shown to be generally very resilient to this kind of conduct. Thus, it is very important to ensure that inexperienced officials and more experienced officials who have difficulty dealing with unsportsmanlike conduct, take part in the type of conflict resolution training suggested above.

Opportunity provides good possibility for success and provides confidence in future games. Opportunities for physical and mental practice, especially those that utilize off-court settings, should be promoted to assist in the

learning, review and remediation of officiating skills. Real game experiences should be provided in a manner that provides success, by matching the demands of the assigned game to the knowledge, experience, and physical fitness of the official regardless of age. Officials should be assigned games in which they can be successful. They should be assigned to higher levels of games, only after they achieve repeated success at a lower level as judged by association sponsored assessments.

Recognition is the formal and informal acknowledgment of a group or an individual effort or results that support organizational goals and values that are above normal standards. Formal acknowledgement consists of written tributes on association letterhead, awards that are part of a standard system, and organized social occasions. Informal acknowledgement is verbal and more casually delivered in both group and individual recognition occasions. Both formal and informal recognition have an important place in association recognition programs.

Here are examples of events which could be the object of formal recognition:

- having made a step advancement through official certification ranks (e.g. 1-5),
- been assigned to a provincial or national tournament,
- received a CABO service award (e.g. Wink Wilcox),
- served a set number of years as an association member (e.g. 3, 5, 10, 15 etc.),
- been awarded an association scholarship/award.

Informal recognition is a verbal acknowledgement extended by an elected leader of the association for overall association or individual performance in such things as:

- meeting attendance,
- attendance at officiating clinics and camps,
- CABO exam participation/achievement rates,
- achievement in fund raising for charitable causes (e.g. Pink Whistle Campaign),
- contributing solicited and unsolicited opinions having the potential to improve association programs.

Perhaps the most powerful recognition is verbal praise for game performance to a team of officials or individual official by an elected association leader, experienced officiating partner, knowledgeable observer, or evaluator. Younger and less experienced officials are particularly sensitive to rewards, praise, and criticism. This should be considered when making evaluative comments. A positive, diplomatic approach should be used when critiquing, regardless of the purpose and timing of the critique. All of the above sources of recognition have the potential to make officials realize that they are part of a group that has admirable goals. This in itself is a powerful motivator for continued participation.

Other steps that can be taken to use group membership recognition to help increase retention rates are:

- holding “meet and greet social sessions” with new and current members in attendance,
- have new officials (local prospects or those who “transfer” in from other geographical areas) introduce themselves at local association meetings,
- interview officials who are “transfers” to determine their background and experiences with their former association(s),

- make it a priority to find out why individuals leave officiating. This can be carried out by an interview process with the leaving official or by a questionnaire to those officials who decide to withdraw their officiating services. This step will provide feedback on association programming which, in turn, may lead to improvements that will help retention.

Two of the most applicable, current, and printed sources on retention are:

- “FIBA Recruitment, Retention and Education” on the FIBA website (FIBA.com) and
- “Understanding Factors Contributing to the Retention of Canadian Sport Officials” on the Sports Officials Canada website (Sportsofficials.ca).

GETTING BETTER IS IMPORTANT

By Gerard MacDonald, Supervisor of Prince Edward Island

No matter what the caliber of basketball is being played from Mini, Bantam Junior High, High School, College to the CIS Level, we must come to officiate every day and give them our best service. What we are noticing is that, at the lower levels such as Mini and Midget basketball, there is no preparation prior to a game. We all start the season with our mandatory meeting and some of us even go the extra step of having study sessions reviewing old exams in order to get prepared for the on line exam. After the exam and the season begins, that is where the preparation process ends for many officials, even with our newer officials. The less experienced officials must spend more time preparing for each and every game and must continue the process throughout the year.

Years ago within the PEIBOA, we used to have two levels of officials, (A and B) with two levels of pay. In order to achieve the higher pay rate, which was A level, you had to pass a floor test and have a full understanding of the rules. Then at one point, the membership of our association voted to go to a one pay rate because everyone was doing the same job. We believe this has hindered the progression of our younger officials and even some officials with experience. When the old system was in place and you wanted the extra money, you strived to be better. It may be not have been a great incentive, but it did invite numerous floor tests and assessments. In order to be an "A" official, you had to work hard. You had to be in the gym on your own time, watching senior officials handle a game as in foul selection, maintaining the 24-second clock, handling a frustrated coach or player, simply officiating the game without being noticed on the floor. On those days that you were not officiating, you were in the gym because, when you went for a floor test, you forfeited your game fee to the evaluator who, at the end of the game, gave you a written report with your mark, pass or fail, with areas to work on.

The present day we rarely see newer officials in the gym watching the higher level games, because it does not matter since they are getting the same dollars as a 20-30 year official. Also they are not receptive to any information that would make them a better official or they are in a hurry to get out the door.

I know that it is 2016 and everything you need to know is on line. And if you want to see a block/charge call, you just google it and view it on YouTube or watch the NBA, which I know is a bad reference, but is quoted as a reference. All

of the above are not the same as sitting in the gym and seeing different scenarios handled by senior officials. Also, going in after a game and asking the officials questions of certain situations is a great way to learn and improve. Experienced officials are usually willing to field questions from younger officials. Yes, some younger officials are keen and eager to learn the game in order to follow the progression from Mini, Midget, High School, College to the CIS Level. No matter what direction you take as an official and whatever level you are content with, we need you to be the best official that you possibly can be and it all starts in the gym.

See you there!

This is the last issue of Post Play Express for the 2015-2016 season.



HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!