



Post Play Express

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MORE IS BETTER

Submitted by Seward Nielsen, Interpreter of New Brunswick

As CABO officials, we are expected to be very knowledgeable with what is contained within the Rule Book, Case Book, Mechanic's Manuals and Interpretations. The following are a few suggestions that are in addition to what is stated within these references.

- [Focused pre-games prevent potential problems (it matters not whether this is your first game with your partner(s) or the two or three of you have worked many games before; a pre-game provides for a proper mind-set prior to the ball being tossed.)
- [Sell the call, only when absolutely necessary (for example : a block/charge or an "off ball call ")
- [The table officials are part of your crew; get them on your side. Your "bench communications should always be the same; precise, concise and from the same general area of the floor.
- [Always employ the "correct" mechanics; both personal and team.
- [There is no "magic spot" on the floor; the ball and players are virtually in constant motion. You, the official, must also move in order to maintain optimum sight lines and see the spacing between the players.
- [Fatigue makes cowards of us all; get into excellent physical condition so that fatigue does not become a distractor.
- [Be realistic not legalistic.
- [Avoid the "i" sins: indifference, ignorance and indecision.
- [Every official needs a wishbone, a back bone and a funny bone.
- [Make the correct call and there will be no room for comeback.
- [Championship skills are special skills honed by constructive practice and completely mastered through understanding of the "complete" game.
- [With every assignment leave no doubt about the singularity of your purpose: " THE GAME ".

THE THEORY OF IDENTICAL ELEMENTS APPLIED TO TRAINING AND PRACTICE Part I

Submitted by Bill Redden, Member GVBOA

The Theory of Identical Elements states that the more one mastered task is related to a second task, the better chance that the second task will be performed successfully. This implies that the more training/practice sessions for officials are similar to the physical, perceptual, cognitive, and social officiating skills required in a game situation, the greater the chance for successful game officiating performance. Part I of this article will consider selected skills from each of the first three categories above. Part II of the article, to appear in a future edition of Post Play Express, will focus on the social skill of official-coach communication.

Officiating Skills and the examples herein are:

- **Physical - gaining optimal position on the full court through running, stopping/starting and using good footwork, half court dribble-drive coverage, putting the ball in play by throw-in;**
- **Perceptual - visual field (area) skills;**
- **Cognitive - infraction recognition.**

For these three categories, suggestions for learning/practice strategies based on the Theory of Identical Elements will be presented.

When training physical officiating skills, use game-like drills that allow for active, physical repetitions in gymnasium settings. Initially, in each different skill instruction process, an accurate demonstration/description of skill and drill takes place. The drill goal is to provide an optimal number of repetitions and ensure that feedback is provided on group and individual performance. Thus, for some drills, in order to provide the opportunity for individual skill repetitions, it is necessary to have two or more different areas (teaching stations) in the gym in which small groups of people perform the same drill.

Specific drill labels/names for the three above-mentioned physical skill examples, in order of their appearance, are:

- **“Trail to lead and lead to trail positioning on full court”;**
- **“Strong side drive and shot for lead and trail officials in half court”;**
- **In pairs, administer throw-in from both sides of the thrower-in using all appropriate precautionary warnings (Play Ball, Ball’s In, Whistle Only)”.**

A wide variety of drills can be creatively developed and labeled by examining officiating individual/ partner movement skill patterns. The role of players in the drills can be portrayed by members of the training class or other people recruited for the role.

Perceptual and cognitive skills – visual field skills and infraction recognition. Visual field skills include being able to visually focus “on ball” and “off ball” and switch between a narrow and wide field of vision. An example of narrow vision is focusing on seeing the space between a field goal shooter and defender and focusing on any contact points that occur in the situation. An example of wide vision is seeing a ball-screen situation develop and occur that

involves the offensive and defensive player as well as the screener. Infraction recognition is the skill of determining if a rule infraction has occurred.

Visual perception and infraction recognition skills can be practiced by attending as a spectator-official at games/scrimmages. A spectator-official assumes a standing or sitting position in a spectator area off-court that provides the same sight lines as those of on-court officials. Thus the spectator-official is positioned to practice seeing off-ball and on-ball game views from their position off-court. Another example is the spectator-official who sits or stands near or behind an end line in a non-intrusive position and adopts the role of a lead official. The spectator-official performs the skill of not gazing at the ball in the air during field goal attempt from area 4. The spectator-official focuses on the shooter and defender until the shooter's both feet have contacted the floor and then the spectator-official shifts focus to potential rebounders. This particular skill practice transfers well into one the roles of a game official in the lead position. With the exception of not having the exact same view angle, the elements of this situation are identical for both the floor official and the spectator-official in terms of perceptual skill requirements.

Infraction recognition - When an infraction occurs, the spectator-official should use the exact FIBA rule book words and short phrases to describe to themselves 'why' the infraction was called or 'why' a potential infraction was not called. These 'why' phrases can also be used to clarify these situations to partner(s) and coaches, if necessary. 'Why' phrases can also be constructed when making infraction judgments on recorded visual images of basketball action available through technology. The ability to spontaneously identify infractions by rule is a crucial step in gaining the knowledge to be able to make the all-important 'calls' on court if appropriate.

WHY DON'T YOU COME OVER?

By Paul Deshaies, Post Play Express Editor

Chuck :

«Hello, Bud? Chuck here. How are you doing? I haven't seen you since the last rule session, a month ago. Listen, a couple of guys and I are getting together this evening to go over some of the more complex rules and interpretations that were not covered in depth in the sessions. The exam is upcoming and we thought it would be a good idea to spend some time getting ready. Want to come and join us?»

Bud :

«I don't think so, Chuck. I heard that, this year, it's going to be an open-book exam, so what's the point?»

Chuck :

«Well, that's right. But, there is more to review the rules than just preparing for the exam. As officials, it's our duty to know what to do under any circumstances. So, having a thorough knowledge of all the rules is a basic requirement in order to play our role and ensure a fair and safe environment in every game we officiate, correct?»

Bud :

«I guess so. But I never had any problem. Whenever anything unusual happened and I wasn't quite sure of what the ruling should be, I relied on my partners to do the appropriate thing.»

Chuck :

«Yeah, I can remember a few instances of that nature when we worked together in the past.»

Bud :

«It didn't occur too often, did it?»

Chuck :

«Not the point, Bud. It should not happen at all. That's why the guys and I thought that you should join us so that not knowing what to do in any situation never happens again to any of us, you included. Plus, wouldn't it be great if you did not have to look in the books to answer everything in the exam? That would then really be a test of your rule knowledge. Wouldn't you be proud if you were successful just based on what you actually know?»

Bud :

«I never thought of it that way.»

Chuck :

«I know how professional you are in your regular job, Bud. You take pride in providing the best service possible to the people you are dealing with everyday. So why not transfer that attitude to your officiating? Hey, Bud, forget the open-book rule exam. Just come over and let's have a go at learning all those rules, you, me, and the guys, okay?»