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NATIONAL RULE EXAM 2012-2013

PRELIMINARY STATISTICS

For the second year, the national rule exam was administered on line. The format was similar as that of last year, except that the exam period was abridged to December 15th instead of December 31st, and the time allotted to complete the exam was reduced from 120 to 90 minutes.

Here are the numbers of exams completed compared to last year's results:

	2011-2012	2012-2013	Difference	% Variation
BC	334	363	29	8,68%
AB	555	561	6	1,08%
SK	137	145	8	5,84%
MB	157	167	10	6,37%
ON	285	547	262	91,93%
QC	523	494	-29	-5,54%
NB	211	190	-21	-9,95%
NS	199	216	17	8,54%
PE	35	36	1	2,86%
NL	96	83	-13	-13,54%
National	2532	2802	270	10,66%
Paper	193	3		

Compared percentages of officials having reached the minimum requirement at each certification level

		<u>2011-2012</u>	<u>2012-2013</u>
Level 3	86% & above	48%	43%
Level 2	80% to 84%	14%	13%
Level 1	70% to 78%	19%	19%
Unsuccessful	68% & under	19%	25%

More detailed results will be posted on the CABO website as soon as the compilation is completed.

Thanks to Matthew Koivisto, our webmaster, for his excellent management of the exam and for providing the data for this article.

ELEVEN TIPS FOR REDUCING CONFLICT WITH COACHES

Submitted by Bruce Covert, Supervisor for Ontario

Interacting with coaches is one of the most the challenging aspects of officiating. Here are some tips that may help reduce conflict.

- **Start Off on the Right Foot.** Get to the game on time, early if possible. Be mentally and physically ready to referee. Put all distractions aside when you enter the gym.
- **Look Like an Official.** Good officials are physically fit, athletic and well groomed. They appear calm and composed at all times. Their uniform is neat and tidy. The better you look the more accepting coaches and players are. The more accepting they are, the less conflict you'll have to manage.
- **Project a Strong Image.** Use your voice, your whistle, your signals as tools to project strength and confidence. Show composure on obvious calls. Sell tough calls.
- **Stay Calm.** When a person yells at you what is a your first reaction? More than likely it is to raise your voice and yell back. It's a natural defence mechanism. Doing so will not help defuse the situation, rather it will escalate it. Raising your voice may make the coach feel it necessary to "fight back", to protect his image with his team and fans. Avoid putting a coach in such a position. Officials should never indulge in verbal retaliation. A much better strategy is for the official to become calmer as the coach becomes more

emotional. This is far more likely to defuse the situation. The way you speak to a person has a tremendous impact on the response you receive. Keep a respectful tone and never resort to sarcasm.

- **Ask Questions.** This is one of the best conversation management techniques. For example, when a coach is harassing you, calmly ask what he saw, or what he thinks you're missing. More often than not the coach will stop yelling and redirect his effort into explaining.
- **Sometimes Less is More.** You cannot ignore coaches as this may escalate their frustration. However you must recognize that not all comments require a response. Many times a simple nod of the head to acknowledge you have heard the coach will suffice. When you believe a conversation is necessary do it during dead ball time. Make it brief. Give a quick explanation and move on. Do not get caught up in a debate. The more you talk the more opportunity you have to say something that is going to get you in trouble. Remember the old saying, "God gave you two ears and one mouth for a reason."
- **Never use profanity.** At times a coach may resort to profanities. As much as you might feel the urge to respond in kind you can never do so. Like it or not you are held to a higher standard. If you do use profanity and it is reported to your supervisor he/she will have no way to defend your behaviour.
- **Don't be Afraid to Admit You Made a Mistake.** We all do. It is much better to admit a mistake than to be thought of as incompetent. It may even increase your credibility with the coach the first time you do it. Not so much if you are doing it two or three times a game! When you do make a mistake it is critical that you put it out of your mind and regain your focus immediately. You cannot afford to make a second mistake because you are dwelling on the first one.
- **Let Them Know When They are About to Cross the Line.** Do not threaten or give ultimatums such as "Not another word". Ultimatums place officials in corners as much as coaches. Instead of using threatening words, use phrases like, "I've heard enough". That's far less provocative. If you do "draw the line" with the coach be prepared to back it up if the inappropriate behaviour continues.
- **Don't Be Quick To Call a Technical Foul.** Sometimes a coach's actions are so demonstrative or spontaneous that you have no choice but to immediately call a technical foul. Other times the situation builds slowly and you have time to warn the coach as described above. Some criteria for warning a coach or calling a technical include:
 - **Personal attacks:** "You are terrible, You'll never work here again."
 - **Body language and actions that are meant to embarrass you:** Yelling at you from across the floor; overt gesturing.
 - **Persistent complaining or comments on calls,** "That's a foul. Three seconds in the key. Traveling."
- **Be Ready to be Tested.** Accept the fact that when you work with coaches that do not know you they will test you. Coaches want to know how you are going to deal with them. Unfortunately conflict with coaches is a part of the game. Do not take it personally.

Applying the above tips will not eliminate conflicts with coaches but may help reduce them. In most cases, as coaches become more familiar with you, the level of conflict will go down and you will be more accepted by them.

RESOLUTION FOR A NEW YEAR

Submitted by Tim Heide, Supervisor for British Columbia

Officiating basketball is only one of many elements that make up our busy lives; one that carries very different levels of importance and priority in the context of our respective lives. No matter how large or small our commitment, the decision to become a basketball official brings with it external expectations; that we know and understand the applicable rules, that we use acceptable and effective mechanics and that our personal goals for officiating accomplishments reflect the commitment we're prepared to make.

As a new year begins, let's take a few minutes to reflect on how we've done as basketball officials. What, if any goals did we set for 2012? Were they realistic? What efforts did we make to accomplish them? Were there highlights to be proud of? Were there difficult experiences that we can learn from and be better as a result of? While considering these questions and assessing the accomplishments, disappointments, fortunes and misfortunes of 2012, let's turn our thoughts towards expectations, goals and resolutions for the New Year.

The successful achievement of any goals we set for ourselves will be dependent upon, or directly related to our performance. Performance may be measured in many ways. Amongst them, physical condition, appearance and ability, effectiveness of communication, sharpness and effectiveness of mechanics, personal confidence, philosophical understanding of the game relative to the level of competition, and the knowledge and understanding of rules.

Let's concentrate for a moment on the last one mentioned, knowledge and understanding of rules. Many coaches, players and fans judge action within a game, based on what it looks like. Rules of the game however, are not based on what it looks like, but rather on principles. As arbiters of the game, we need to know and understand those principles. Assessing potential violations can be very confusing without a clear understanding of their respective principles. All contact fouls are based on one or more of the following principles : the cylinder principle, the principle of verticality, legal guarding position and screening principles.

All principles can be found in the rule book and all have been written about extensively. Reviewing the many excellent articles that can be found in past editions of Post Play Express, or on the FIBA website will assist with understanding them, and understanding the principles will simplify the decisions that we must make during games.

As a basketball official, if there is one goal or resolution you consider for 2013, make it to review, study, discuss, clearly understand and make these principles instinctual to your decision making process. Doing so will build confidence, earn respect and improve performance.