

## **2009-11 Mechanics Revisions**

**2.2.3; 2.4.2** Crew of Two Only: When free-throws are to be attempted, the calling official will become trail and will be positioned table side. The lead official will be positioned opposite the table.

**3.2.2. D** Crew of Three Only: The trail shall mirror the lead's stop- and start-clock (chop) signals for frontcourt end line throw-ins.

**Diagrams 2-12 & 3-17** Coverage areas for free throws were adjusted based on players occupying the marked lane space closest to the shooter.

**2.2.3. B.5 & 3.2.3.B.5;** Clarified that the Lead takes the same position for all free throws.

### **2.3.6. F & 3.3.6.F**

Language added addressing a state association authorizing a monitor review for a state championship contest.

**2.4.3 & 3.4.3** A section was added to provide guidelines when play is stopped for held-ball situations.

**4.1** Duties of the alternate official were added to the appendix.

## **Mechanics Points of Emphasis**

**0.2.1 Signals and Communication.** The key to quality signaling is remembering that it is a sequence of fluid movements. Take your time. Signals executed with separate and distinct motions ensure clarity; jumbled quickly together and messages are lost. It's not a style contest – it's a means of communicating valuable information to the players, coaches, scorers and fans. Use only NFHS approved signals. The use of "personal" signals is inappropriate and can be confusing.

Use the same signals that have the same meaning for all involved in the game. During the signaling sequence, keep your head up to watch for additional player activity and ensure dead-ball officiating.

Do not leave the area to report a foul or move to your next position until players appear calm and you're confident your partner(s) are observing dead-ball action. If a play involves significant contact and players end up on the floor, move in toward the action and communicate with your partners that you're in the area – this also lets the players know they are being closely monitored. Remain in the area until the players have returned to their feet and are separated.

Once you've decided it's safe to move to report, go around the players to the reporting area. Do not run through a crowd; that puts players behind you and you lose sight of them – that's when problems occur. By running around the crowd, you're ensuring your own safety and the players' safety. Get to the reporting area. It is not acceptable to stand one step off the end line to report a foul; the scorer has to be able to see you report. Communicate effectively with your partner(s). It is imperative that your partners be the first to know what you've called and how the ensuing action will restart (free throw, throw-in). On time-outs, communicate the spot where play will be resumed before reporting the time-out to the scorer. Don't consider your call completed until you're partners know what you've got. It's not a race, so take your time and communicate clearly.

**0.2.2 Positioning on Free Throws.** Free-throw administration requires effort and teamwork among officials to properly control the action and any rough play that can result. Smooth administration looks sharp and sends a message to all involved that the officials aren't on a break. It also ensures the ball will quickly and correctly become live with the clock running following free-throw activity.

**A. Lead.** The Lead is always positioned off the court. It is not acceptable to stand on the lane line in the now vacant free-throw spot. Being off the court allows the lead to see players along the lane line without having obstructed vision. The lead is positioned "approximately four feet from the nearer lane line well off the end line." That position is maintained regardless of the number of free throws. Do not move up near the players on the first of two or the first two of three free throws. Before administering the free throws, look for late-arriving substitutes at the scorer's table. After the shot is airborne, adjust your position along the end line a step or two to get a good angle on strong-side rebounding.

**B. Center.** The Center watches players on the opposite lane line (closer to the lead) except in the bottom free-throw spot. The officials look opposite because it's easier to see players stepping toward you and violating than it is to see them step away from you, especially when other players are blocking your view. The center is positioned just above the free-throw line extended halfway between the center-side lane line and center-side sideline.

Many officials back up all the way to the sideline; it's impossible to properly watch the players on the opposite lane line from that position. Do not take a spot even with the free-throw line extended; move about one or two strides toward the division line. That angle allows you to clearly see the free thrower and the opposite lane line.

**C. Trail.** The Trail is responsible for all players outside the three-point arc. Be especially wary of trouble players in that area; a player might think it's an ideal time to start a problem because the ball is dead. Be aware of players in the backcourt and turn your body so those players can also be observed.

**0.2.3 End of Time-out Procedures.** In two- or three-person crews, officials are responsible for communicating with teams that time-outs are about to end. When the warning horn sounds, the two officials will go to the nearest team huddle, raise the index finger and verbalize "first horn." While moving toward the huddle, get the attention of an assistant or the head coach by making eye contact and reinforce that the first horn was blown. Stay near the huddle and encourage the teams to break and prepare for play. Clap your hands and verbalize what you want – "Let's go, first horn." "Your ball white." Do not assume they heard the horn. When the players break the huddle, begin moving to your position and count the players from that team.

**0.2.4 Positioning.** All three officials must work hard at understanding and obtaining proper angles. Your line of sight must provide you with an opportunity to view a developing play. You must be able to completely see through the play, which means your vision must be unobstructed by the players directly involved in the play and others near the play. You cannot effectively call traveling if you don't have a proper angle of vision to the ball handler's feet. Likewise, if you are screened from seeing the defender on a block/charge, you'll have no ability to determine if a legal guarding position was established. Basketball is a game of nearly continual motion. An official's angle and distance adjustments are constant as a play is in motion. A step or two in the right direction may open up a whole new viewing experience, free from obstruction. A step in the wrong direction may screen you from critical game action.

While it's important to have a patient whistle, it's equally important to anticipate movements. Putting yourself into a correct spot to see the action will give you a much greater opportunity to correctly call the action.