

# Mechanics for Two Referees

- Alan Richardson

What are mechanics? Mechanics are the method by which a referee is able to move around the court and be in the correct position at the correct time to make the correct call. It all about making a QUALITY call. (Position, angle and distance.)

The mechanics book is the same as the rulebook. It is the second book of the Bible and should be used as a GUIDELINE not as life and death. Do not get caught up in the argument about where you should be on the court, follow your "feeling" and GO WHERE YOU NEED TO GO IN ORDER TO SEE WHAT YOU NEED TO SEE.

There are 6 main areas of responsibility on the court. Also there are times depending on the position of the ball when there is double responsibility for the play around the ball. Generally the two referees work ON and OFF the ball; ON the ball when it is in your area, OFF the ball when it is in your partner's area.

We talk about "boxing-in" the players. This does NOT mean diagonally opposite an different sides of the court. You can be on the SAME side of the court yet still boxing- in, if you and your partner are using ON/OFF ball techniques. GO WHERE YOU NEED TO GO IN ORDER TO SEE WHAT YOU NEED TO SEE.

Always work hard to be in the best possible position to see the WHOLE play, wherever it is on the court. You have both PRIMARY and SECONDARY coverage. Primary is your official area; secondary is your "peripheral" view of the court. The best officials use secondary coverage when they are working with young and/or inexperienced partners.

MOVE WHEN THE BALL MOVES. The ball is never stationary on the court! We are not asking you to be constantly running around the court like some demonic possessed idiot, but to be constantly adjusting your position in order to see the play. It might only require a small step or a turn of the head to achieve this objective.

COOPERATION with your partner is essential if the referee team is to be successful on the court. This is achieved through good COMMUNICATION, both visually and verbally. Always know where your partner is during the same, especially when the whistle is blown. Be ALIVE and alert during any DEAD ball situation.

If you have to stop the game please ensure that you restart it as soon as possible. Make ALL ADMINISTRATION quick and efficient. Look busy and business like on the court.

NEVER TAKE YOUR EYES OFF THE PLAYERS AT ANY TIME DURING THE GAME.

## LEAD REFEREE

The lead is responsible for box 4 and shared responsibility in boxes 5 and 6. He also covers the end line and nearest sideline. When the ball moves from 4 to 5 to 6 the lead must move as the ball moves.

Referee from the "OUTSIDE-IN" on both sides of the basket. If possible take a deep position behind the end-line in order to get the best possible view of the play (WIDE and HIGH). When the ball settles in box 6, move across to that side and referee the post play. If the offensive post player rolls baseline, move as the ball moves. If he rolls away from the lead into box 5, move to the opposite side of the basket.

On a drive to the basket always be in good position, to referee the END of the dribble and/or shot, under the basket. The lead PENETRATES laterally along the end line.

When a shot takes place in box 4 the lead assumes the responsibilities as follows:

1. the cylinders of both players
2. the verticality of both players
3. the position of both players
4. the movement of both players

5. the contact by both players
6. the shooter returning to the floor
7. the flight of the ball
8. the ring and the backboard (if transparent)
9. the basket if scored or missed (in cooperation with partner)
10. the initial rebound
11. the rear of the fast break
12. the position of your head and eyes during transition

If a shot is taken in any other area ensure that you look OFF the ball and observe players under the basket contesting for rebounding positions.

In a fast break situation, as the new lead, when there is a 1 vs. 1, 2 vs. 1 or 2 vs. 2 in the front court and the trail is just coming off his end-line; stop between the free throw line and end-line in order to referee the **play**, any possible foul and goal tending during the flight of a shot.

If you are caught up in a fast break, drop behind the players and referee the play from the REAR. Look through the space from the reverse angle.

#### GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

When reporting fouls, please ensure that after indicating the player who committed the foul, RUN (not walk) into a space clear of the players with a view of the table and signal the foul and penalty AFTER coming to a complete STOP.

#### TRAIL REFEREE.

The trail is responsible for areas 1-2-3 and shared responsibility in boxes 5-6. Cover the nearest sideline to the play and also the mid-court line. When the ball moves from 1 to 2 and 2 to 3 the trail moves accordingly. GO WHERE YOU NEED TO GO TO SEE WHAT YOU NEED TO SEE.

There is no invisible wall in the middle of the court. You can cross to the other side if that is where the ball goes. You may be on the same side of the court as the LEAD but so what? You are ON ball and he is OFF ball. The pre-game conference will help you to achieve this.

There are TWO sides to every "window" or "space" between opposing players. We have traditionally looked OUTSIDE-IN from the left side of the court but now you can also look INSIDE-OUT from inside the court. GO WHERE YOU NEED TO GO IN ORDER TO SEE WHAT YOU NEED TO SEE.

This is particularly helpful when you cross the court and the team in possession then reverses the ball quickly. You do not need to run to the left side of the court. Open your body to the play and referee "INSIDE-OUT".

There have been many arguments about who is responsible for 3 pt attempts on the free throw line extended which divides boxes 3 and 4. The TRAIL will now cover all 3 pt shots from this area in order to clear up any confusion.

In box 6 the trail referee has PRIMARY cover outside the 3 pt are and secondary cover inside the 3 pt are. Referee the 3 pt shooter and the post players in these areas. If the ball goes BASELINE, leave it to the LEAD. If the ball comes inside, the trail follows the ball.

Penetration does not mean rushing to the basket. It means taking 1 step or even turning the head to the basket during a shot. Move to get a clear view of the shooter, opponent and flight of the ball, not to impress someone with your athletic ability.

**NEVER GO BEYOND THE FREE THROW LINE EXTENDED!!!**

You have a lot of responsibilities during a shot for goal. You have to referee:

1. the cylinders of both players
2. the verticality of both players
3. the position of both players

4. the movement of both players
5. the contact by both players
6. the shooter returning to the floor
7. the flight of the ball
8. the ring and backboard
9. the basket if scored or missed
10. the initial rebound
11. the fast break
12. the position of your head when turning during transition

The "free" official freezes the eyes on the players and starts to move into the restart position as soon as the "active" official starts reporting the foul. This enables a quicker restart to the game. Always use the thumbs-up signal to your partner before giving the ball to a player.

Free throws should be administered quickly and efficiently. The trail official should **LOOK TO THE TABLE BEFORE** stepping into the lane to administer the free throw in order that coaches may effect last second requests for time-outs or substitution.

Violations of the jump ball should be whistled by the free official. Do not allow players to tap the ball before it has reached its highest point.

Switching on fouls is **NOT NECESSARY** in many occasions. There is no need for long switches during the game. Call the foul and administer the throw-in where possible. Do not waste time during the game.

Keep away from the team benches during time-outs. Stand on the opposite side of the court to the teams.

There should **NEVER** be **TWO** whistles on an out of bounds violation. Know your lines and stick with them. Even if you are not sure who got the last touch before an out of bounds violation, stop the clock if it is your line and look to your partner for **HELP** in making the correct decision. **DO NOT GUESS!**

Whenever the ball goes out of bounds on the end line or sideline, **NEVER TAKE YOUR EYES OFF THE PLAYERS** when signalling the direction of play. Try and signal with **ONE** hand. **STOP** the clock (**PALM**) and then use the same arm to signal the direction. Do **NOT TURN YOUR BACK** to the players at any time.

When there is a drive to the basket in box 5 and a foul occurs, resulting in both officials blowing the whistle, the **LEAD** official takes the call as he is switching to the table. No double fouls please, trust your partner even if you disagree.

Long distance telephone calls are expensive. So are long distance whistles on the basketball court. Trust your partner and referee in your primary area, not in your partners'. Trying to explain a call from the mid-court line when there is no whistle from under the basket can create enormous problems for both officials. There is the exceptional case, but there are very few that can be justified and accepted.

The **PRE-GAME** conference is an essential part of game preparation and particularly mechanics. Use the time wisely in order to produce very smooth and efficient teamwork by the two officials.

**YOUR PARTNER IS THE ONLY FRIEND YOU HAVE ON THE COURT, SO LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER DURING THE WHOLE OF THE GAME.**

Keep the game moving as much as possible, try not to interfere with the play and when you have to stop the game get it restarted as soon as possible.

CONCENTRATE

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