



Referee Newsletter: February 25, 2014

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## Preseason Evaluations: APPLY THE RULES AS WRITTEN

(1) **On the Perimeter:** There is too much grabbing and holding (off the ball) preventing good offensive flow. All Officials should be looking one or two places away from the ball especially when an ordinary foul is called. If the defenders are holding with two hands or one hand, preventing offensive flow, they should be excluded. Holding is an exclusion foul as written in the NCAA rulebook. Defenders off the ball seem to know the officials are not watching in press defenses. The burden of responsibility should be on the defense to show they are not holding with one or two hands or hand checking to control the perimeter offense. You need to be positioned well, and focused when the defense is pressing. Good collaboration and communication with your partner is very important. The game can become very physical and ugly if the offense isn't allowed to flow. The advantage rule shouldn't be a crutch for not calling a foul. The reality is the offense doesn't have an advantage if it can't create flow because defenders are fouling to prevent it.

Figure 1: Hand to the face at P-3. P-1 is being held. Defender at P-4 is pressing and has made hand contact.



- (2) **Intentional Fouls on the Perimeter:** Press defenses tend to enhance intentional fouling. The defender tends to greet the perimeter offensive player with one or two hands when they are pressing away from the ball. They may be attempting to get in the passing lane, direct a drive or make it difficult for the offensive player to be available for a pass. Or, they may be posturing to foul and drop back on the center forward area. As soon as the ball arrives defenders are in position to foul immediately and in some cases to foul before it arrives. If the defender is holding with one or two hands, sinking or hand checking the offensive player before the ball arrives an exclusion must be called. The defender needs to show they are playing the ball and not the player. If the defender simply impedes by reaching for the ball as it arrives without holding or sinking then a quick ordinary is appropriate. If the ball is playable then a no call is appropriate allowing the offensive player to be active and discourage the defender from dropping back. If the defender holds or sinks the offensive player, in any way, from freely moving to the ball it should be an exclusion foul.
- (3) **Hard Fouls on the Perimeter:** Player safety is an important issue. Hard fouls need to be exclusions when player safety is an issue, or very possibly, a game exclusion.

- (4) **A Premature Whistle:** A quick whistle anticipating that a foul will happen is not the answer especially on the perimeter. That basically is injecting your influence into the game and can quickly create inconsistencies. The right way is a quick whistles in response to a defensive or offensive action. It's essential along with making the appropriate call. The action of the players needs to dictate the call.
- (5) **2Ms, Center Forward:** The level of physicality can be directly related to how well the perimeter is being called when the defense is pressing. If you allow holding, sinking or hand checking on the perimeter offensive flow comes to a standstill and the battle for positioning intensifies at 2Ms. Referees need to call exclusions when the defense is gaining an advantage through holding or sinking to position on the center forward. The ball doesn't have to be at 2Ms to call an exclusion foul, nor does it have to be on its way. Allowing the 2M defenders to illegally pound on the center forward is not to the advantage of the offense. Calling 2M exclusions early in the game can send a strong message to the defenders. Why should the center forwards be physically punished with draping arms that are sinking and holding. Forearms or upper arms sinking or holding with two hands showing is still, sinking and holding!
- (6) **2Ms, Center Forward and Dropping Defense:** Don't make the mistake of calling an ordinary foul or making a no call when the defense drops on the center forward and the defender is holding and not releasing with two hands and arms up in a vertical body position in a timely fashion. Even if the pass is bad, the defender needs to respond appropriately or pay the consequences. The Burden of Responsibility is on the defense to show there is no fouling. Keep the physicality at 2Ms to a minimum, prevent game escalation.

## Key Points Too Think About

**Quick Whistles-** are necessary but should be executed based on the players actions. **CALL WHAT YOU SEE WHEN YOU SEE IT! Not what you think will happen.**

**Fouls Need to be Earned-** be patient, determine who the aggressor/instigator is and allow the defender to respond in a legal manner according to the rules. A no call may be more appropriate in some cases.

**While Holding the Ball-** The defender is allowed to tackle the offensive player in a non-overly aggressive manner. Unreasonable levels of physical contact involving player safety should not be allowed i.e. contact to the head or neck. The defenders strategy should be **"play the ball and not the person."**

**Offensive Fouls-** The offensive player is not allowed to use his free hand to create an advantage whether above the water or below by straight-arming the defender to create space or using the free hand/arm to keep the defender at bay. The offensive player may not invade the defenders space with the ball in hand to attempt drawing a foul. This can be a player safety issue if the offensive player leads with the head and rams the defender. A no call or contra (offensive foul) should be applied according to the severity of the action.

**PLEASE KEEP IN MIND:** When the offensive player initiates contact, **sinks into** the defender, and lets go of the ball, **two advantages are lost**, possession of the ball and position. **Therefore, no call should be made that favors the offensive player. Egregious contact is an offensive foul!**

**If the defender is pressing and initiates contact on the perimeter be prepared to call an exclusion foul if flow is prohibited.**

**Defender knocks the ball away-** when the ball is passed to the offensive player dry. Sometimes the referee assumes this is a foul and calls a quick ordinary. However, **there is no foul when the ball is in the hand** of the offensive player unless it's a player safety issue (defenders hand to the head or neck). Again,

be patient and see what follows, the defender needs to have the opportunity to respond after the ball is knocked away unless the follow-through has a negative impact.

**Intentional fouls-** Require a good read. If the defender holds, pulls back, or sinks, the rule is very clear, an exclusion foul should be called. If the ball is far away from the offensive player and the defender slightly impedes, give the offensive player the opportunity to get the ball if it is to their advantage. Calling a quick ordinary can give the defender an advantage, the time and opportunity to drop back and adjust. By having a little more patience a more significant penalty could be applied or the natural flow of the game could continue. uninterrupted. Playing the ball should be encouraged, **discourage intentional fouling by calling exclusions where appropriate.**



Figure 1: Defense can challenge hand is on the ball



Figure 2: Left hand of Offense used to fend off attack



Figure 3: Left hand stalls Defenses attack



Figure 3: **The use of the left hand is an offensive foul**



Figure 4: Offense drops ball and moves into defender



Figure 5: Offense makes contact attempting to simulate a foul



Figure 6: Defense gets two hands up in vertical body position



Figure 7: Ordinary foul was incorrectly called. **No call** or **Offensive Foul** is within the range of acceptability

When the offensive player uses their hands to fend off a defender's attack it is an offensive foul. If the offensive player just invades the defender's space attempting to draw a foul and the defender shows no foul the range of acceptability is a no call or offensive foul pending extent of contact.