

# Dealing with player/coach behaviour

As referees we are an important part of the game, but we should not be subjected to abuse with regards to what we are doing on court. Everyone who participates in a game of basketball does so because they enjoy it, and tries their hardest to do the best that they can. As such, basketball is a game of emotion and we as referees are exposed to this emotion from all participants. Participants see the game with their hearts, and as officials we see the game with our eyes, so obviously there is a huge possibility that a conflict of opinion can occur.

It is part of our job to diffuse this emotion and stop it from forming into abuse.

Together with the MWBA I have created a document to encompass clear behavioural expectations of participants and spectators, to hopefully eliminate any grey areas in people's understanding as to what is acceptable and what is not.

After reading the directive, I would like to you think about how you would handle different conflict situations. In my experience, there are four ways in which to respond to players and coaches (spectators are dealt with separately).

## **Ignore – Acknowledge – Warn – Penalise**

### **Ignore**

Statements – “How long?” “3 seconds” “Over the back” “That’s a foul” can be ignored when made in isolation, however if they are continual, I’d move to the next step – **acknowledge** – and let the instigator know that if it continues then the behaviour will have to be dealt with further - warning.

### **Acknowledge**

A simple wave of the hand, or a nod of the head to a player or coach asking “Can you please watch how long #13 is in the key?” or “Please can you watch the hand checking?” is usually enough to satisfy most coaches or players. Continued and repeated questions however will lead to the next step – **warning**.

### **Warning**

A warning can be issued for the following:

- Continuing to discuss calls after the referee has responded
- Waving arms in the air, or holding them in the air for an extended period after a call has been made so as to bring attention to themselves
- Attempting to demonstrate actions, such as travelling, etc.
- Repeatedly asking questions, making comments, or gesturing in response to calls

Any warning given must be clear to all participants (including your partner) as that whole team is now under the effect of the warning.

### **Penalise**

- Excessive or aggressive motioning of the arms
- Aggressive hand claps directed at an official
- Running towards, or aggressively approaching a referee
- Shouting in reaction to a call/no call using profanity
- Extended or prolonged complaining about a call/no call
- Not responding to a warning by repeating the action (or some other disrespectful action)

Please note that you do not have to follow this whole procedure. If a player (for example) aggressively claps or aggressively approaches you after a call, you do not need to warn them, just go straight to the penalty.