

BENCH DECORUM/BEHAVIOUR

Objective: The purpose of this session is to summarize the points of emphasis and FIBA Rules regarding bench decorum.

Definition: Bench Decorum – appropriate conduct and sportsmanlike behaviour on the floor and bench.

A. Points of Emphasis & Philosophy

1. Coach Communication & Conduct

- A coach shall address the officials in a business-like manner
 - The officials appreciate that the head coach is under pressure during the season, that basketball is an emotional game by nature and not everyone will agree with the judgment of the officials.
 - Screaming, yelling, demonstrative gestures, charging officials, throwing objects on the bench, using offensive language, repetitive protests regarding the same issue, or overt gestures that undermine the integrity of the officials and the game will not be tolerated as they are unsportsmanlike in nature
- A coach should not expect the officials to “explain” their calls throughout the game
 - If a coach has a specific question that is genuine in nature regarding a situation in the game, the official will respond accordingly.
 - An official is not expected to provide an explanation after a player or assistant coach has been issued a technical foul

- An official is not expected to provide an explanation after a coach has been issued a technical foul nor should their partners have any discussions with the coach regarding the technical foul
- The Rules provide that a technical foul is to be called for unsportsmanlike behaviour and accordingly, the head coach should understand why any technical foul is called
- If the opportunity presents itself, an official may explain to the head coach the circumstances surrounding a technical foul
- A technical foul is to be treated and administered like any other foul
 - The foul is reported, the penalty is administered, and the game will continue with a throw-in at centre
- A head coach is not to enter the playing area and must remain in the team bench area during the game
 - Officials should work with coaches and remind them should they stray from this area
 - Should a coach leave this area to inappropriately interact with an official, it will be a technical foul
 - The team bench area is effectively the “coach’s box”
- Officials must understand their role as communicators
 - Attempt to warn a coach where it is appropriate
 - Understand when the intensity of a game is increasing and address emotional situations with coaches and players early in order to prevent technical fouls

2. Bench Conduct (assistant coaches)

- Assistant coaches are not to remain standing or address the officials in a disrespectful manner
- Officials will address this issue with the head coach, request assistance and expect cooperation
- Officials should make every effort to avoid penalizing any such infraction prior to warning the head coach but there may be circumstances where a warning is not applicable

3. Bench Conduct (players and team followers)

- Players on the bench and team followers are not to remain standing or address the officials in a disrespectful manner
- Officials will direct the players to sit down, address the issue with the head coach, request assistance in preventing it from reoccurring and expect cooperation
- Officials should make every effort to avoid penalizing any such infraction prior to warning the head coach but there may be circumstances where a warning is not applicable

4. Player Communication

- Should a player need to speak to an official, it must be done in a respectful manner
- Should an official need to speak to a player, it shall be done in a respectful manner regardless of the reason for the communication (i.e. simple request, warning)

- Officials may warn a player to prevent a technical foul and will attempt to advise the head coach of such a warning, but there may be circumstances where a warning is not applicable and a technical foul must be called

5. Player to Player Communication

- Taunting, baiting and “trash-talking” will not be permitted under any circumstance and will result in a technical foul

6. Communication with the Table

- Coaches and assistants may approach the minor officials at the table
 - For statistical information when the ball is dead
 - To request a timeout when the ball is live
 - Not to request a substitution
- Officials and coaches must remember that the table officials and volunteers, and must be addressed in a respectful manner

7. Flopping

- FIBA Rules specifically address the issue of flopping in the Technical Foul Article
 - Flopping has become prevalent in the game and must stop as it is contrary to the spirit of the game
 - FIBA has directed its officials to warn a player who falls to the ground in an attempt to draw an offensive foul and to call a technical foul the next time it occurs
- The head coach of the offending team will also be warned that the next “flop” by their team will result in a technical foul
- The warning will be issued in the first dead ball period following the inappropriate conduct and applies only to the offending team

8. Fighting

- Substitutes or team followers who leave the team bench area during a fight, or any situation that may lead to a fight (i.e. physical or verbal confrontations on the court), shall be disqualified
- Coaches and officials must make every effort to prevent players from leaving the bench area during this emotional time

9. Timeouts

- A timeout must be clearly requested by the head/assistant coach to the table and cancelled prior to the horn sounding
 - Conditional timeouts are not permitted
- All players are to remain at the bench during the time-out until the horn has sounded to end the time out period
 - If the players come on to the floor during the time-out, they will be asked to return to their benches.

10. Substitutions

- Substitutes are to report to the scorer and be seated at the table and ready to play
 - Shirts are to be tucked in and warm-up gear removed
- Players are not to enter the court until they have been beckoned on to the floor by an official
 - Except during a timeout or at the start of a new period

B. Summary of FIBA Rules re Bench Decorum and Related Issues

Article 7 – Coaches: Duties and Powers

Art. 7.1 At least 20 minutes before the game is scheduled to begin, each coach or representative shall give the scorer the roster of eligible players, the name of the captain, the coach and the assistant coach.

Art. 7.2 At least 10 minutes before the game, each coach shall confirm his agreement with the names and corresponding numbers of the roster by signing the scoresheet. At the same time, they shall indicate the five starters.

Art. 7.3 The coaches and assistant coaches (as well as substitutes and team followers) are the only persons permitted to be and to remain within their team bench area.

Art. 7.4 The coach and the assistant coach may go to the scorer's table during the game to obtain statistical information only when the ball is dead and the game clock is stopped.

Art. 7.5 Only the coach is permitted to remain standing during the game. He may address the players verbally during the game provided he remains within his team bench area.

Article 18 – Timeouts

Art. 18.3.1 Only a coach or assistant coach has the right to request a time-out. He/she shall establish visual contact with the scorer or shall go to the scorer's table and ask clearly for a time-out, making the proper conventional sign.

Art. 18.3.2 A time-out request may be cancelled only before the scorer's signal has sounded for such a request.

Art. 18.3.5 During the time-out and during an interval of play before the beginning of the 2nd, 4th or extra period, the players may leave the playing court and sit on the team bench and the persons permitted to be in the team bench area may enter the playing court provided that the team members remain within the vicinity of their team bench area.

Article 19 – Substitutions

Art. 19.3.1 Only a substitute has the right to request a substitution. He/she (not the coach or the assistant coach) shall go to the scorer's table and ask clearly for a substitution, making the proper conventional sign with his/her hands or by sitting on the substitution chair. He/she must be ready to play immediately.

Art. 19.3.2 A substitution request may be cancelled only before the scorer's signal has sounded for such a request.

Art. 19.3.4 The substitute shall remain outside the boundary line until the official gives the substitution signal and beckons him/her to enter the playing court.

Art. 19.3.6 A player who has committed his/her 5th foul or has been disqualified must be substituted immediately (approximately 30 seconds). If in the judgment of the official there is an unreasonable delay, a time-out shall be charged against the offending team.

Art. 19.3.7 If a substitution is requested during a time-out or during an interval of play, the substitute must report to the scorer before entering the game.

Article 38 - Technical Foul

The proper conduct of the game demands the full and loyal cooperation of the members of both teams (players, substitutes, coaches, assistant coaches and team followers) with the officials, table officials and commissioner.

Each team shall do its best to secure victory, but this must be done in the spirit of sportsmanship and fair play.

Any deliberate or repeated non-cooperation or non-compliance with the spirit of this rule shall be considered as a technical foul.

Officials may prevent technical fouls by warnings or even overlooking minor technical infractions of an administrative character that are obviously unintentional and have no direct effect on the game, unless there is a repetition of the same infraction after the warning.

A technical foul is a player non-contact foul of a behavioural nature including, but not limited to:

- Disregarding warnings by officials
- Disrespectfully touching the officials or the table officials
- Disrespectfully communicating with the officials or the table officials
- Using language or gestures likely to offend or incite the spectators
- Baiting an opponent or obstructing his vision by waving his hands near his eyes
- Delaying the game by deliberately touching the ball after it passes through the basket or by preventing a throw-in from being taken properly
- Falling down to fake a foul (flopping)
- Hanging on the ring unnecessarily
- Goaltending or interference during a last or only free throw by a defensive player

A technical foul by a coach, assistant coach, substitute or team follower is a foul for disrespectfully communicating with or touching the officials or table officials, or an infraction of a procedural or an administrative nature.

Article 39 – Fighting

Art. 39.2.1 Substitutes or team followers who leave the team bench area during a fight, or during any situation which may lead to a fight, shall be disqualified.

Art. 39.2.2 Only the coach and/or assistant coach is permitted to leave the team bench area during a fight, or during any situation which may lead to a fight, to assist the officials to maintain or to restore order.

Art. 39.2.3 If a coach and/or assistant coach leaves the team bench area and does not assist or attempt to assist the officials to maintain or to restore order, he shall be disqualified.