

Good morning!

Take a look at the illegal screen clip [here](#). I think we can all agree this was a definite foul and needed/was called. What I want to focus on more are the responsibilities of the crew.

This particular illegal screen was obvious and relatively easy to see by the T. Screening is the toughest play we have to officiate. This is because there are nearly always three players involved (the ball handler, defender and a screener). The toughest part of a screening play is seeing HOW the screener got to his/her spot, WHEN the screener got to his/her spot and WHAT the screener did once at his/her spot. Just as a secondary defender on a drive to the hoop from C or T usually is the lead's responsibility, the official with the ball handler and his/her defender may very well need help on a screening play.

Take a look at this play and look at the T....he has the ball handler and his defender. The screener comes up and sets a screen on a moving defender within the defender's vision (to the side). This means that he must allow enough time and distance for the defender to avoid the screen. It looks as though he does that legally and the defender was avoiding contact by going around him. The foul occurs when the screener leans into the defender, creating the contact and thus a foul. This is about as easy as it gets to officiate a ball handler/defender AND a screen in your own primary.

Now watch the clip again and focus on the C. He has two matchups in his PCA but neither one is contested so he is able to potentially help with the screen in T's primary. Notice what he is looking at – the screen. He IS HELPING on the screen. I am willing to bet they talked about helping (if possible) on screens between C and T in their pregame. I am also willing to bet that if the T had not blown the whistle that the C would have.

Screens are a point of emphasis. Screens are TOUGH to officiate when on the ball. Screens NEED to be talked about in a pregame. Screening criteria needs to be KNOWN – the rule.....when is time and distance relevant? When may the screener set the screen just short of contact? If all officials realized that a moving defender being screened makes time and distance a required element of a legal screen, we might get more screen plays officiated correctly. Take the time to read the screening rule (4-40) and case plays today!

Have a great game tonight and talk about screen plays! This may be the biggest area we can improve as a whole!

Tim