

Good morning! I was talking with my partners last night about the season and how it seems to have gone fast on one hand yet it has been so long on the other.....hopefully it has gone WELL and you have accomplished the goals you set at the beginning of the year.

Today's tip.....let's look at the clip first [here](#).

Obviously and end of game situation with the win on the line. The foul was called on white 4, NOT white 32. I want to discuss what white 32 did as a defender. Remember that we need to referee the defense....ask ourselves 'what did the defense do wrong'? If we do that, we can get MANY more plays correct than if we do not SEE what the defense did or how he/she 'got there'.

Let's break down white 32 as a defender. Did he establish legal guarding position? He was facing the ball handler and initially had 2 feet on the floor. THAT is what need to happen to establish LGP. To *maintain* LGP, he can do nearly anything **except move towards the ball handler and make contact**. Here is the definition again of guarding, rule 4-23.

ART. 1

Guarding is the act of legally placing the body in the path of an offensive opponent. There is no minimum distance required between the guard and opponent, but the maximum is 6 feet when closely guarded. Every player is entitled to a spot on the playing court provided such player gets there first without illegally contacting an opponent. A player who extends an arm, shoulder, hip or leg into the path of an opponent is not considered to have a legal position if contact occurs.

ART. 2

To obtain an initial legal guarding position:

- a. The guard must have both feet touching the playing court.
- b. The front of the guard's torso must be facing the opponent.

ART. 3

After the initial legal guarding position is obtained:

- a. The guard may have one or both feet on the playing court or be airborne, provided he/she has inbound status.
- b. The guard is not required to continue facing the opponent.
- c. The guard may move laterally or obliquely to maintain position, provided it is not toward the opponent

ART. 4

Guarding an opponent with the ball or a stationary opponent without the ball:

- a. No time or distance is required to obtain an initial legal position.
- b. If the opponent with the ball is airborne, the guard must have obtained legal position before the opponent left the floor.

ART. 5

Guarding a moving opponent without the ball:

- a. Time and distance are factors required to obtain an initial legal position.
- b. The guard must give the opponent the time and/or distance to avoid contact.
- c. The distance need not be more than two strides.
- d. If the opponent is airborne, the guard must have obtained legal position before the opponent left the floor.

So did white 32 *maintain* LGP? He jumped vertical, so yes he DID maintain LGP. In the case of contact from a ball handler such as this, we need to allow for the defender's arms to move forward to SOME extent when the ball handler contacts the defender. In this particular case, the defender's arms/hands did NOT contact the ball handler's arms anyhow, so there was no chance of a foul there, but there ARE cases where the contact initiated by the ball handler causes the torso of the airborne defender to move backwards while the arms do not move back as fast as the torso. As mentioned, we must allow for 'some' movement of the arms that appears to be towards the ball handler simply because of physics! The amount of that movement is open to judgment. In the play here, white 32 was contacted by the ball handler's off arm and **his** arms came forward. If there was contact on the ball handler by white 32, it would be a judgment decision if they came 'too far' forward.

Not sure if anyone remembers a play(s) in the 2015 Cavs/Warriors finals where LeBron was called for an offensive foul on a drive when the defender jumped into the air.....the defender HAD gained LGP and did nothing wrong.....GREAT call....take a look at that play [here](#).

So the morale of today? REFEREE THE DEFENSE!!!!

Have a great game tonight and remember.....tomorrow is probably a day you want to make sure your significant other knows you appreciate him/her...thank him/her for 'putting up' with this great avocation we do for 3 months!

Tim