

Good morning, hope your game went well last evening and was competitive!

Speaking of hoping games are competitive, they are WAY easier to officiate when they are competitive....kids seem to PLAY and less 'goofiness' arises. Just stay focused even in those 'spinner' games since bad stuff can happen when we let our guard down and relax for just a second or two.

Today's tip.....was that play a held ball or a foul? Ever have this decision to make? You KNOW it was one or the other but aren't POSITIVE? Take a look at the clip and try to see what happens in 'real-time' first.....click [here](#) for the clip.

So what do you have? Real time from the angle first shown is REAL tough to tell *for sure*, isn't it? In slo-mo and from the Pitt hoop angle it is WAY easier to see a foul, right?

So what do you do in a game in a situation like this? What do you do if you are not positive? What do you have when you KNOW there was contact but you also KNOW there was a 'stalemate' with the ball? Which happened first? Did the contact allow the defense an advantage to be ABLE to get the held ball? All tough questions to answer, right?

I believe that we first off HAVE to get the first action here. What was the FIRST action by the defender? Was it contact or was it on the ball? Think about the play on a rebound where two players on opposing teams grab the ball at the same time over their heads (first action was grabbing the ball, not contact), then the player in front pulls the ball AND defender over him and on his back and everyone yells "OVER THE BACK!" In this case, we have a held ball since the held ball was first *and maintained*, THEN contact occurred BECAUSE of the held ball. Since the held ball happened and was maintained, the contacted or violation that might have happened after it was a result of the held ball, so we must call just that...a held ball.

Think about a couple other possibilities.....two players seem to have a held ball and one or both goes to the floor (a traveling violation)....since the held ball initiated the violation, we need to have a held ball so as to not penalize one team or the other. Similarly, if both players are holding on so tight that one player takes several steps (travels) when the ball is ripped away, we need to have a travel since that preceded the violation.

On the other hand, when contact happens first and seems to aid in the defender acquiring a held ball, we MUST get the foul for the contact first. If we allow defenders to make contact and we come out with a held ball, we are promoting more plays like this in our game the rest of the night. Plays like this are VERY difficult to officiate and the fewer of them the better.....if contact happens first, GET THE FOUL!

On a similar note, talk in pre-game about these types of plays and others that you 'don't want to have to officiate all night long' like a player getting a rebound and the opposition raking in on it, how are you going to handle a defender who runs at a jump shooter and 'touches the shooter in the gut' as he/she is shooting.....think about those types of plays and be ready for them when they occur!

Have a great game today, stay healthy and safe travels!

Tim