



MEMORANDUM

October 29, 2025

VIA EMAIL

TO: NCAA Division I Commissioners, Directors of Athletics and Head Women's Basketball Coaches.

FROM: Kelly Barsky
NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Oversight Committee Chair.

SUBJECT: Sportsmanship – Regular Season

This year's women's basketball rules will emphasize the importance of good sportsmanship throughout the regular season and championship. With excitement for the 2025-26 season, the Division I Women's Basketball Oversight Committee wants to share its expectations.

The highest level of respect and integrity, which embody good sportsmanship, must be exhibited throughout the 2025-26 Division I Women's Basketball season and championship.

We have a mutual responsibility to serve as leaders and role models in this regard. Basketball is a competitive game, which, by its very nature, may lead to adversarial relationships between opponents. However, the relationship should not foster a negative interaction. Individuals should employ a behavior that respects the opponent and should not create an atmosphere that negatively influences the attitude of the game.

The Women's Basketball Oversight Committee expects all game officials to strictly and consistently enforce the bench decorum and the coaching box rule. As outlined in Rule 10, Section 12, Articles 3 and 4, and Appendix II of the 2025-26 Women's Basketball Rule Book, the committee expects the following:

For the coaching box:

- The coaching box rule shall be enforced and technical fouls called for misconduct.
- Coaches shall remain in the coaching box or, during a timeout or the intermission following the first and third quarters, inside the bench area.
- After a warning, a technical foul shall be assessed when a coach is clearly and completely outside the coaching box, or during a timeout or the intermission following the first and third quarters, outside the bench area (except when permitted by rule).

For the behavior of coaches:

- Coaches engaging in minor conduct infractions should receive a warning from officials. A subsequent violation results in a technical foul.
- Any blatant misconduct, while inside or outside the coaching box, shall be properly penalized **without warning** with a technical foul.

For assistant coaches and other bench personnel:

- All bench personnel, except the head coach, are required to be seated on the bench while the ball is live, except to react spontaneously to an outstanding play. They are then to immediately return to sitting on the bench.
- When assistant coaches or bench personnel violate bench decorum rules in a minor way, the official shall inform the head coach and request that the coach handle the situation. **This is an official warning. Any further violation by bench personnel shall result in a technical foul assessed to the offender.**
- Any egregious (blatant) conduct violations by assistant coaches or bench personnel need no warning and **shall immediately result in a technical foul.**
- Bench personnel may not move into the expanded bench area until the timeout begins. A timeout begins when the official signals the timer to start the timeout clock. **This is an official warning. Any further violation by bench personnel shall result in a technical foul assessed to the offender.**

Examples of misconduct by student-athletes and/or coaches include, but are not limited to:

- Comments directed at or referring to any game official that question the integrity of an official (for example, repeated references to the number of fouls called against each team; suggesting an official is “cheating” a team, making negative comments to an official’s partners about a call/no-call/warning made by an official, etc.).
- Profane, vulgar, threatening or derogatory remarks or personal comments relating to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability directed at or referring to any game official or opposing player/bench personnel.
- Prolonged, negative responses to a call/no-call, which is disrespectful or unprofessional and includes, but is not limited to, thrashing the arms in disgust, emphatically using an officiating signal to illustrate disbelief over a no-call, dramatizing contact by re-enacting the play, or running or jumping in disbelief over a call/no-call.
- A negative response to a call/no-call including, but not limited to, approaching and/or charging an official in a hostile, aggressive or otherwise threatening manner; emphatically removing one’s coat in response to a call/ no-call; or throwing equipment or clothing onto the floor.
- Disrespectful contact with an official or making a threat of physical intimidation or harm, such as but not limited to, pushing, shoving, spitting, or attempting to make physical contact shall result in the offender’s ejection and suspension from their institution’s next contest.
- Continual and prolonged criticism during a game regarding any incident after receiving a warning from an official.
- Taunting, baiting, ridiculing, finger-pointing, trash-talking, or inappropriate gestures (obscene, provoking, and intimidating).
- Pointing at video boards or attempting to show an official an electronic device to express disagreement with an official’s ruling.

NCAA MEMORANDUM

October 29, 2025

Page No. 3

When these behaviors are witnessed by fans in attendance or by those watching a broadcast, such actions also damage the image of the game, which is a concern to all who support the principles of sportsmanship. All stakeholders must agree that behavior exhibited by coaches, student-athletes, and institutional personnel should portray the highest ideals of higher education and intercollegiate athletics.

In closing, please note that the Women's Basketball Oversight Committee will monitor bench decorum throughout the season and into the championship. With your leadership, we can demonstrate our personal and collective commitment to ensuring that the season will be a great experience for student-athletes and fans alike.

We fully anticipate and appreciate your cooperation to further enhance sportsmanship throughout the regular season and championship.

KB:lda:pd:jl

cc: Ms. Penny Davis
Mr. Jon Levinson
NCAA Division I Conference Basketball Administrators
NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Committee
NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Oversight Committee
NCAA Women's Basketball Rules Committee
Selected NCAA Staff Members