



MEMORANDUM

November 10, 2023

VIA EMAIL

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

FROM: NCAA Division II Men's and Women's Basketball Committees.

SUBJECT: Sportsmanship.

With the start of the 2023-24 basketball season, the NCAA Division II Men's and Women's Basketball Committees want to emphasize clear expectations moving into the season.

The highest level of respect and integrity, which embody good sportsmanship, must be exhibited throughout the 2023-24 NCAA Division II Men's and 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 behavior that respects the skill level of an opponent and should not create an atmosphere that negatively influences the attitude of the game.

The Men's and Women's Basketball Committees expect all game officials to strictly and consistently enforce the bench decorum and the coaching box rule as outlined in Rule 10, Sections 3, 4 and Appendix III of the 2023-24 Men's Basketball Rules Book and Rule 10, Section 12, Articles 4 and 5, and Appendix II of the 2023-24 and 2024-25 Women's Basketball Rules Book.

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

1. 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.).
2. 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.
3. 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.

4. 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.
5. Continual and prolonged criticism during a game regarding any incident after receiving a warning from an official.
6. Taunting, baiting, ridiculing, finger-pointing, trash talking or inappropriate gestures (obscene, provoking and intimidating).
7. Pointing at video boards or attempting to show an official an electronic device to express disagreement with an official's ruling.

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 Men's and Women's Basketball Committees will continue to 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 is 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.

AP/JP:eb/kk

cc: John Blazek
Connie Perkins
NCAA Division II Conference Coordinators
Selected NCAA Staff Members