



NCAA MEN'S BASKETBALL RULES INTERPRETATIONS (AMENDED)
By Art Hyland, Secretary-Rules Editor NCAA Men's Basketball Rules Committee
January 22, 2021

The following are updated rule interpretations/clarifications for the 2020-21 men's basketball season. Language in red below is updated from the November 24, 2020, rules bulletin.

Games With Less Than Two Officials – Per Rule 2-1.1.a, there must be at least two officials to begin a game. The game may not begin or continue with only one official present (Rule 5-3.7). However, the rules committee has amended its prior interpretations of this rule by now permitting a game to be officiated by one official if the game began with at least two officials. Under the “Interrupted Game” rule (Rule 5-4), the procedures for continuation of the game when there is only one official shall be determined by applicable conference rules for conference games or by the two teams for non-conference games. When developing procedures for continuing an interrupted game, the rules committee suggests that the conference consider the following:

- Assign a standby official to all home games.
- Direct officials to adjust the mechanics of officiating to accommodate an injured official who is unable to continue at 100% capacity.
- Delay the continuation of the game for a reasonable time to allow the conference to assign a replacement official.
- If the two competing teams are located within a reasonable distance of each other, reschedule the game on a mutually convenient date to be continued at the point of interruption.
- If the two teams are scheduled to play a return game at the visiting team's home court, the teams may complete the interrupted game at the visiting team's home court before the start of the return game.
- As a last resort the committee suggests, a conference should consult with their coordinator of officials before instituting a policy that contemplates the ability for the one official to complete the remainder of the game. This could include developing a formula considering both time remaining and the score differential of the game to determine when a game is complete and when one official would be permitted to finish the game. As a reminder, the official maintains the authority to end the game when game conditions warrant.
- **If a conference has a policy in place to complete a contest with one official, that official may utilize instant replay for unlimited monitor reviews on any call or no-call when only one official is able to complete the game but only in the last two minutes of the second period and the entire overtime period(s).**

- If the game is never completed under any of these alternatives, it becomes an “interrupted game” and neither the score nor any statistics associated with the partially completed game shall count.
- Conferences may always contact me if there are questions in formulating procedures for finishing interrupted games.

Positions During Free Throws (Rule 8-4.4) – In order to assist in social distancing where feasible during free-throw attempts, please note the following would be permissible:

1. When a player has been awarded two free throws, an opponent of the free thrower must occupy the first lane space above and adjacent to the block on both sides of the lane.
2. There is no requirement that a teammate of the free thrower must occupy the second lane space. However, all players other than the free thrower and those legally positioned on the lane lines must be positioned behind the free-throw line extended and behind the three-point line. (Rule 8-4.4)
3. This interpretation provides relief for a teammate of the free thrower to move off the lane line directly backwards toward the sideline approximately 8-10 feet. That player(s) may stand in the designated position during the first free throw. During this time frame, that player is not subject to the requirements of Rule 8-4.4 but is subject to all of the disconcertion rules in Rule 8-5.1.f.
4. At the end of the first free throw, the free thrower’s teammate should move quickly to the lane space to which they are entitled or to a position behind the free-throw line extended and behind the three-point line if he does not intend to occupy the lane space.
5. Officials should work with players to ensure that the intent of this interpretation is accomplished by encouraging players to hustle to their positions without delay. The intent is to provide social distancing and not for players to communicate with coaches on the sideline.

If there are any questions with regard to this interpretation, please contact me at art.hyland@comcast.net.