



## **Rule Interpretation, Commentary and Play Situations**

**By Art Hyland, Secretary-Rules Editor, NCAA Men's Basketball Rules Committee**

**February 20, 2019**

Backcourt Violations (Rule 9-12.5) - This rule states that “A pass or any other loose ball in the front court that is deflected by a defensive player, which causes the ball to go into the backcourt may be recovered by either team even if the offense was last to touch the ball before it went into the backcourt.” The requirement that the deflection causes the ball to go into the backcourt also includes those plays when the offensive player gains control of the deflected ball while airborne and lands in the backcourt or when the offensive player gains backcourt status and then touches or controls the ball which is still in the front court. In both cases, the offensive player has technically caused the ball to go into the backcourt, but to prohibit the offensive player from touching/controlling the ball in these situations would prevent the offensive team from gaining possession of a loose ball until the ball gained backcourt status by its own momentum after the deflection. This unfairness is not within the spirit or intent of the rule. However, note that similarly to Rule 9-12.6, after a deflection by the defense in the front court and the offense establishes player control while the player is on the playing court, that player would commit a backcourt violation if he then stepped into the backcourt. The following play situations demonstrate the intent of this interpretation:

Play 1 - Team A has possession of the ball in its front court when B1 deflects a pass in the direction of the backcourt. A1 jumps in the air, controls the loose ball and then lands in the backcourt.

**RULING** - This is not a backcourt violation even though A1 touched the ball before it had gained backcourt status. Legal play. Rules 9-12.5, 9-12.3.a and 9-12.4.

Play 2 - Team A has possession of the ball in its front court and B1 deflects the ball toward the division line. A1 attempts to secure control of the ball and steps into the backcourt before touching or gaining control of the ball which is still bouncing in the front court.

**RULING** - This is not a backcourt violation even though A1 touched the ball before it had gained back court status. Legal play. Rules 9-12.5, 9-12.3.a and 9-12.4.

Play 3 - Team A has possession of the ball in its front court and B1 deflects the ball. A1 recovers the ball and establishes player control on the playing court while still in the front court. A1 then steps into the backcourt.

**RULING** - Backcourt violation. Rules 9-12.5, 9-12.6, 9-12.4 and A.R. 228.