

MHSAA OFFICIALS BULLETIN



GAME MANAGEMENT: “BE WHERE YOU DON’T BELONG”

Being in the right place at the right time gets us where we’ll be looking at the right thing in order to make the right call. Being where we belong when we belong there is the essence of the positioning mechanics expressed and illustrated in our new officials’ manual.

But there is one time we want to be where we DON’T belong: when we’re “bringing in subs.” We want to be so out of position that our partner notices and wouldn’t possibly make the ball live with us so obviously “where we don’t belong” on the court during the substitution process.

“The official beckoning the substitutes must: Step out onto the court to make visually obvious the indication to the partner administering a free throw or throw-in NOT to make the ball live while the substitution process is still taking place.” (MHSAA Officials’ Manual, pp.166, 168)

Do it like the official in this video: [Being Where You Don’t Belong on the Court](#).

APPROVED MECHANICS: STEP DOWN ON ALL “FINAL” FREE THROWS

As Center and as Trail in the 2- and 3-person systems, make it a habit to step down toward the nearer end line on every final and potential final free throw. Where your body goes your mind will follow and this habit will keep you connected to the rebounding action that follows a miss and the resulting activity that takes place when the offensive team gains the rebound and with

whatever pressing the defense employs after a successful free throw attempt. To assume that the free-throw will be good and step the other way or actually turn and bail early to the other end abandons the action and overloads the end line official. Step down on all final free throws and stay connected to the action and activity involving and immediately following the play that is at hand. (MHSAA Officials’ Manual, pp.75, 83)

Video examples of this good habit: [Step Down on Final FT 1](#)
[Step Down on Final FT 2](#)

RULE REVIEW: GOALTENDING and BASKET INTERFERENCE

Just because . . .

. . . the defender contacts the ball after it deflects off the backboard, that does not mean it’s automatically a goaltending violation. According to our NFHS rules code, if the ball is still on its upward flight when contacted, that’s legal. Goaltending can only occur when the ball is on its downward flight (review Rule 4-22).

. . . the backboard shakes as a result of being struck by the hand of a defender, that does not automatically result in basket interference or a technical foul. As long as that contact with the backboard was part of a legitimate attempt to block the shot, that’s legal (review Case 10.4.4).

Here’s an extensive PDF slideshow resource that illustrates and explains the significant rule principles regarding these action around the rim and backboard: [NFHS Goaltending and Basket Interference Rules - Illustrated](#)

Upon Reflection: The newly-published MHSAA Basketball Officials Mechanics Manual is available online in PDF format, or officials may purchase a printed copy for \$10. To do so, please reach out to MHSAA Officials Registrar, Laura Roberts (laura@mhsaa.com).

This manual is meant to provide consistency across the state in the mechanics utilized by MHSAA officials; however, it cannot cover all circumstances on the floor. In the last Bulletin, free-throw positioning was highlighted, showing the Trail at the 28-foot mark for ALL free throws. It should be noted though, that if done to avoid a possible conflict with a coach, the Trail may be positioned further back toward the division line on any free throw that does not have the possibility for rebounding action. Officials, though, **MUST** be at the 28-foot line once the ball is presented to a shooter on a free throw that could result in rebounding action.