

**SUMMARY OF RULES**  
**FOR REFEREES OFFICIATING**  
**GREAT NORTHWEST BASKETBALL LEAGUE MEETS**

- 1) WIAA high school (not middle school) rules apply generally except as stated below.
- 2) **LENGTH OF PERIODS.** All periods are 7 minutes long – stop clock – no running time, except in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter where the losing team has the option of running the clock if down by more than 15 points at the beginning of the quarter (see Paragraph D-2 of Rules). The only time the losing team can be required to have the clock run if down by more than 15 points is if the meet is behind schedule (Tournament Director’s call).
- 3) **TIME BETWEEN PERIODS.** One minute breaks between periods, except a three-minute halftime break (see Paragraph D-8 of the Rules).
- 4) **TIME BETWEEN GAMES.** As soon as one game is over, the clock should be set at 7:00 and started. Players from the previous game should clear benches by the 5:00 mark – if they don’t, encourage them to hustle. The next game starts when the 7:00 runs down – even if that means starting before the game’s posted time (see Paragraph B-6 of the Rules). The one exception: teams should not be rushed to start their first game of the day before the published start time. If a meet is significantly behind schedule, there will be only five minutes between games (as opposed to the standard 7:00).
- 5) **REFEREE ATTIRE.** All referees must wear a striped shirt or vest (shirts are strongly preferred). Shorts are fine, but absolutely no caps or other headgear (see Paragraph C-4 of Rules).
- 6) **OVERTIME.** In all overtime games, the first overtime is two minutes in length; if a second overtime is necessary, the clock is turned off and the first team to score three points, by any means, wins. There is one exception to this general rule: In the championship game of an eight-team meet, after the first 2-minute overtime, additional 2-minute overtime periods will be played until one team wins, unless both coaches agree to use the sudden death 3-point option at the beginning of the second or later overtime period. There will be a jump ball at the beginning of each overtime period (see Paragraph D-3 of the Rules).
- 7) **ZONES.** Half court zone defenses are allowed in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade meets. Half court zones are generally not allowed in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 4<sup>th</sup> grade meets. There is an exception for certain 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade games (See more on this in Item #9 below.) This sounds complicated, but it’s really not.

All you need to remember is this: in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 5<sup>th</sup> grade and Pioneer Division games, even if you see a team blatantly playing an illegal half court zone, **do not** call a technical or in any other way try to stop them. Any coach who does so will be sanctioned by the League after the meet (not during the meet), up to and including expulsion, if enough opponents complain to the League in writing after the meet about their violating this rule. See Paragraph D-4 and Attachment #4 to the Rules for a detailed discussion of this subject.

- 8) **PRESSING.** No team can press if up by more than 15 points. Otherwise, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade teams can press at any time; 6<sup>th</sup> grade teams at any time in the second half or overtime; and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams at any time in the fourth quarter or overtime (as with the zone rule, there is an exception for certain 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams explained in Item #9 below). Teams in 4<sup>th</sup> grade games can not press at any time. When pressing, **full court zone** presses are allowed, even by 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams. Sixth and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams, however, cannot use a **half court** zone press or trap, such as the 1-3-1. Unlike the use of half-court zones, which referees should not try to regulate during 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 4<sup>th</sup> grade games, presses should be carefully regulated, including telling a 6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade team that they can’t use a half court zone trap press if they attempt to do so. Please fully read Paragraph D-5 of the Rules, which includes a special rule on rolling the ball in bounds during times when pressing is not allowed in 6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade games.

9) SPECIAL 6<sup>TH</sup> AND 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE PRESS AND ZONE RULES IN CERTAIN GAMES. See the last paragraph of Rule D-5. The League adopted a special exception to the zone and pressing rules for 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls teams, starting with the 2003-2004 season. During registration, coaches were able to express interest in allowing zone defenses to be played in their games, or allowing full court pressure for all four quarters (unless ahead by 16 or more points). Teams interested in doing so have a “Z” (for allowing zones) or a “P” (for allowing full-time pressure) after their names on the schedule board.

When two teams with a “Z” and/or a “P” listed in common play each other, the two head coaches will confer before the game. They will decide whether to allow pressing in the full game and/or allow the playing of a half-court zone for the full game. Regular League rules (against the use of zones, pressing in the first half for 6<sup>th</sup> grade teams or pressing during the first three quarters of a 5<sup>th</sup> grade game) will be waived only where both coaches are in agreement. Neither coach can be forced to use the expanded, liberalized rule in that game unless he/she agrees during that pre-game discussion. The coaches will inform the referees before the game of their mutual decision. Once the referees have been informed, neither coach can change his/her mind part way through the game about the decision that was made.

Referees need not take any preemptive action to enforce this rule. If you’re officiating a 6<sup>th</sup> grade or 5<sup>th</sup> grade game and neither coach approaches you prior to the game, the zone and pressing rules as outlined in #7 and #8 above apply. Both coaches need to approach one or both officials and reach a consensus with you before the game starts for the exception discussed in this paragraph to apply.

- 10) FOULS – TECHNICAL AND PERSONAL. Each player gets 5 personal fouls. As for technical fouls:
- A technical foul issued against a player is not also assessed as a personal foul.
  - If a player gets two technical fouls, he/she is ejected from the game, although that player can still sit on the bench, and play in subsequent games at the meet.
  - If a coach gets two technical fouls, he/she is ejected from the game (not the meet) and must leave the gym area for the rest of that game. If a referee issues a technical foul against someone other than a player who is not on the court at that time, make sure to clarify with the coaches and the scorer’s table who received the technical. A technical issued against the bench generally should not be charged to any specific player or the coach. (An example of a bench technical: You hear someone on the bench use profanity, but you don’t know for sure who did it.)
  - When shooting a technical foul, the opposing team gets **two** shots and the ball out of bounds (see Paragraph D-13 of the Rules).
- 11) TIME-OUTS. Each team gets two time-outs per half and one in each overtime period. Unused time-outs cannot be carried from the first to the second half, from the second half to overtime or from one overtime period to another.
- 12) CONDUCT. See Paragraph D-10 of the Rules and the Preamble to the Rules. Poor sportsmanship from fans, coaches, and players is not to be tolerated. The coach is ultimately responsible for all three. Paragraph D-10 describes how you should handle untoward conduct.
- 13) 5<sup>TH</sup> AND 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE FREE THROW LINE. At 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 4<sup>th</sup> grade boys and girls meets, meet organizers must put a piece of tape 13 feet from the basket in the center of the lane. Through normal wear and tear, this line may need to be replaced periodically throughout the day. Fifth grade and 4<sup>th</sup> grade players who initially line up behind the 15 foot line will **not** be guilty of a lane violation if they step over the 15 foot line before the ball is in or above the cylinder, so long as they have not crossed the 13 foot line prior to that time. (See Paragraph D-11 of the Rules.)

- 14) COACHES BOX. One coach (not two or more) will be able to move about within the coach's box while the game is in progress to talk to players on the bench and provide brief instruction to players on the court. For purposes of this paragraph, "brief" shall mean running time of not more than 60 seconds per incident and amassed time not exceeding twenty (20) per cent of game time. Referees will use their best subjective judgment to determine if a coach is exceeding either time limit. The coach's box shall consist of that portion of the out of bounds side court running from the scorer's table to five feet past the player seated farthest from the scorer's table. The coach may not stand when the opposing team is in the process of in-bounding the ball within ten feet of any portion of the coach's bench. A coach violating any aspect of the rule in this paragraph will first be provided a warning and, if a second warning is necessary, will be assessed a technical foul, with the other team shooting three free throws and obtaining possession of the ball.

There is one main exception to the Coach's Box rule as defined above. In some divided cross-court gymnasiums, the player benches are end court. In those situations where the benches are end court, in 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade boys or girls games only, one coach (not more than one) from each team will be allowed to stand side court for as long as they wish, provided they are out of bounds and do not generally pace the length of the side line. This is allowed only in 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade games because players at this level are just starting their traveling careers and often need more on-court instruction than do more experienced players.

- 15) OFFICIAL SCORE. Since most hosts use an inexperienced official scorer, the score posted on the electronic board controls over the official scorebook, unless objected to within a minute after the alleged error occurs. See Paragraph D-14 of the Rules for more specifics.
- 16) NO SHOOT AROUNDS. Under League Rules, no one is allowed to shoot baskets between games or periods other than the teams that are currently competing. This rule is focused primarily at younger children and other teams not involved in that game. However, it applies to referees, clock operators and scorekeepers as well. There are safety and decorum reasons for this rule. Please make life easier for your community's meet director by not participating in shoot arounds, so he/she doesn't need to remind anyone of this requirement while out on the floor. Also, please help the meet director enforce this rule by asking others who start shooting to leave the floor.
- 17) BENCH SELECTION. On the rare occasion that two teams argue about who gets which bench, Rule D-16 addresses that issue:
- The home team(s) always get first choice.
  - Where both teams are visiting teams, the choices will be done alphabetically:
    - On odd numbered days (e.g., November 5, December 17, January 21, etc.), the team with the community/school name (as listed on the score placard at that meet) nearest the first letter of the alphabet (i.e. "A" gets first choice) will have the first choice as to preferred bench location in each game.
    - On even numbered days (e.g., November 12, December 10, January 14, etc.), the team with the community/school name (as listed on the scoring placard at that meet) nearest the end of the alphabet (i.e. "Z" gets first choice), will have the first choice as to the preferred bench location in each game.
- 18) COLOR OF UNIFORM JERSEYS. Where both teams want to wear the same color in a given game, the referees will conduct a coin flip as far in advance of tip off as possible. If the team losing the coin flip does not have an alternate jersey with them, but the team that won the coin flip does, the latter team will be required to put on their alternate jersey, with the team that lost the flip assessed a bench technical. The team that switches jerseys then will start the game by shooting two throws and getting the ball out of bounds (i.e. in these situations, there will be no opening game tip off).