



National Basketball Association

TO: TEAM OWNERS, GENERAL MANAGERS, COACHES AND REFEREES
FROM: MIKE BANTOM
DATE: JANUARY 7, 2015
RE: POE MEMO #5: DEFENDERS FIGHTING OVER SCREENS AND DANGEROUS PLAYS

Below are two types of plays that we want to bring to your attention. We will be working with referees in the area of screens, and appreciate team cooperation in the area of limiting dangerous plays.

DEFENDERS FIGHTING OVER SCREENS

There have been a number of plays recently involving defenders fighting over screens, and we thought it would be helpful to break them down so that players approach the situation legally.

In both on- and off-ball situations, defensive players must allow offensive players who are setting or using screens freedom of movement.

- A foul will be called when a defensive player maintains contact with an offensive player as he goes around a screen and the contact effects his Rhythm, Speed, Balance and/or Quickness (RSBQ). For example, a defensive foul will be called when the contact causes an unnatural side-to-side movement by the offensive player in his attempt to use the screen.
- A foul will also be called when a defensive player dislodges an offensive screener who is in a legal screening position. A trailing defender must go around the screen without dislodging the offensive player. If the trailing defender deliberately pushes or fights through the screener, a defensive foul will be called.

Here are some examples of a trailing defender making illegal contact with an offensive player as they attempt to go around a screen:

http://dmmx2.nba.com/video/redirect?&project=/bballops/bballops_Defenders_fighting_over_screens_Foul_1

http://dmmx2.nba.com/video/redirect?&project=/bballops/bballops_Defenders_fighting_over_screens_Foul_2

http://dmmx2.nba.com/video/redirect?&project=/bballops/bballops_Defenders_fighting_over_screens_Foul_3

Here is an example of a trailing defender pushing or fighting through a screen:

http://dmmx2.nba.com/video/redirect?&project=/bballops/bballops_Defenders_pushing_through_screens_Foul_1

When a trailing defender goes over a screen, he may maintain contact with the offensive player using the screen as long as the contact does not disrupt the offensive player's RSBQ

Here is an example of legal contact by the trailing defender as they attempt to go around a screen:

http://dmmx2.nba.com/video/redirect?&project=/bballops/bballops_Defenders_fighting_over_screens_Legal_1

If an offensive screener is not in a legal screening position when the defensive player attempts to go over the screen, an offensive foul will be called. As addressed in the previous memo on illegal screens, a screener must provide the defender with the opportunity to stop and/or change direction. The screener may not move into the trailing defender at the last second or make contact with him with his legs wider than the plane of his body.

Here are some examples of an offensive foul on the screener for setting an illegal screen on the trailing defender:

http://dmmx2.nba.com/video/redirect?&project=/bballops/bballops_Defenders_fighting_over_screens_Illegal_Screen_1

http://dmmx2.nba.com/video/redirect?&project=/bballops/bballops_Defenders_fighting_over_screens_Illegal_Screen_2

DANGEROUS PLAYS

There have been a few incidents of contact that has -- or could have -- resulted in injury to players because the contact was made when the players were in vulnerable positions (e.g., pushed while looking for lob passes or when airborne). This type of dangerous contact happens sporadically each season, but given the potential consequences, we felt a league-wide reminder is prudent.

These types of plays run the risk of causing severe physical injury and they have no place in our game.

We will continue to closely monitor dangerous plays and will impose increased substantial fines and suspensions where appropriate.

The physical well-being of players is of the utmost importance to the NBA, as is providing an environment where our games can be played safely. While we want you to continue to play aggressively by making legitimate basketball plays, it is critical that the basketball decisions you make do not jeopardize your safety or that of your opponents.

Sincerely,

Mike