

I'm writing this letter in an attempt to clarify some of the BYB rules. BYB is first about recreation; secondly it's about basketball instruction. The rules have evolved over the years to insure the children can get the most out of learning to play basketball.

In the younger grades the rule about "No defense in the back court" is designed to keep the game flowing. If we allowed full court pressing for the early grades, the ball would seldom get over half court for either team. The "No Double Team rule" is designed for the same purpose. There is more recreational benefit in man to man defense than zone defense. There is a lot more running in a man to man defense. As a coach it's much easier to tell a player "you have number 3, stay with them on defense". A lot of what we understand about basketball might seem simple but, as adults we have had a lot of exposure to the game. To many of the children the game is new, very fast and confusing.

The rules about substitution do seem to be the most confusing (to the adults). This rule has been rewritten a number of times. BYB's intent is that **all children** should have equal playing time. In the ideal situation, if you have 10 players and the game is 32 minutes long each player should play 16 minutes. In the past we have had some coaches with a tendency to keep their best players in the game at the sake of other children's playing time. The rule was "all players must sit one full quarter". Then some coaches would claim they sat their best players 2 minutes of the first quarter, 2 minutes the second quarter, 2 minutes of the third quarter, etc... so that was the same as sitting out a full quarter. There is no way a referee can monitor that, so the rule was refined to "**all players must sit one full quarter and no substitution in the first half of a game**". That is why we have the children check into the game at the scorers table each quarter. The only exception to the substitution rule is with 6 or less players. In that situation the rule is waived for both teams but, we encourage the coach with the full roster to play everyone an even amount of time. It does seem crazy to make rules because of a few coaches who don't cooperate but unfortunately we do.

A few suggestions about refereeing, positioning yourself as a referee is simple, one referee needs to be at the baseline while the other referee is somewhere between the top of the key and half court. When the teams go in the opposite direction, the referee that had been near half court goes down to the opposite baseline and the other referee positions themselves somewhere between the top of the key and half court. So the most you need to run is from baseline to half court then back again.

There is a simple method to keep straight which team is going in which direction. Through all levels of basketball "You shoot towards your bench in the second half". All you have to remember is, if it's the second half, the team on offense shoots at the hoop near their bench (in the first half they shoot away from their bench).

As the season progresses we like to tighten up the rules on traveling violations and fouls. The games should be fun and where we can, teach the children about basketball. Rather than call each infraction I try to be vocal if I see something developing, i.e. "no reaching", "no double teaming", "you can't stay in the key on offense for more than 5 seconds", etc... If I have to make a call I try to explain to the player what the violation is and I find most will understand. Sometimes it takes some reinforcing but you'd be surprised how quickly they do pick it up.

Thank you for volunteering your time and efforts.

Bob O'Malley