



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

2020-21 NCAA Women's Basketball

RULE INTERPRETATIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

As of 10/12/20

Prepared by Jon M. Levinson, Women's Basketball Secretary-Rules Editor

The following rule interpretations/clarifications are for the 2020-21 basketball season only, unless extended by the NCAA Women's Basketball Rules Committee at their annual meeting in May 2021.

10/12/20 – Bench Area (Rules 4-4.1 and .2).

The front boundary of the bench area is defined as the outer edge of the sideline or the nearest free-throw lane line during timeouts and the intermissions following the first and third period or prior to the start of any extra period. The back boundary is defined as the "back of the team bench". In order to provide an additional opportunity for spacing between members of bench personnel, subject to social distancing guidelines, it is recommended that team benches now consist of multiple rows of seats where space is available. The back of the last row of seats is the back boundary of the bench area. These added rows of seats are considered to be within the bench area. The bench area begins at the 28-foot line and extends indefinitely beyond the end line extended parallel to the sideline. For facilities that need additional space to accommodate the recommended social distancing of bench personnel, the bench area may also turn so that it is parallel with the end line (i.e., an "L" shaped bench area). When the bench area is extended behind the end line, it must be completely behind the restraining line (located 6 feet from the end line) and may not go further than the lower defensive box "tick" marks located three feet from the nearest free-throw lane line. There is no change to the dimensions of the coaching box (38-foot line to the end line extended outside the sideline).

10/12/20 – Team Benches – Scorers and Timers' Table (Rule 1-21.2).

Rule 1-21.2 requires that both team benches shall be located equidistant from the division line extended and at each side of the scorers' table. Based on the resocialization document for basketball, it is recommended that to provide additional spacing between Tier 1 personnel (players, coaches, officials) from other tiered individuals (i.e., table crew personnel), that institutions may either move the scorers' and timers' table across the playing court from the team benches or, when moving the table is not feasible due to the lack of power outlets and/or permanent plugs for the clocks and scoreboard, move the team benches across the playing court from the table. When the team benches are moved across the playing court from the table, the proper court markings must be in place. If an institution does not want to place permanent markings on the floor, they may use water-based paint or tape. The required markings include: 1) a 2-inch wide line extending three feet beyond the end line, 2) a 2-inch wide line 28-feet from each end line, extending three feet out of bounds and three feet inbounds, 3) a 2-inch wide line two feet in length 38 feet from each end line, and 4) an "X", NCAA logo, or NCAA Basketball logo at the division line in front of the scorers' table.

10/12/20 – Substitutions (Rules 1-3.6 and 3-6.1.c).

The original intent of the “X”, which under the current rules is located at the division line in front of the scorers’ table and may now also be an NCAA or NCAA basketball logo, was to identify the location of the official scorer so a substitute would know to whom they needed to report prior to their entry into the game. Currently, while the “X”, NCAA logo, or NCAA basketball logo is required to be marked, there is no stated purpose within the rules for this mark. In some facilities, the “X” may not be located in front of the official scorer. Many believe that substitutes are required to be at the “X” in order to properly enter the game when beckoned by an official. This is not true. A substitute is only required to remain outside the boundary line until beckoned by an official (Rule 3-6.1.c). In addressing COVID-19-related concerns to provide adequate spacing, once a substitute(s) has reported to the official scorer, the substitute(s) shall remain between the “X” and the 38-foot coaching-box line on the same side of the division line as their team’s bench area. No substitute is to remain on the “X” to ensure some distance between substitutes from opposing teams. When the team benches are not on the same side of the playing court as the scorers’ and timers’ table, substitutes shall report to the marked area and raise their hand to gain the attention of the table crew.

10/12/20 – Recorded crowd noise (Rules 5-14.17 and 10-12.2.h.1).

The rules committee was requested to allow “piped-in” artificial crowd noise during the 2020-21 basketball season. The rules committee approves this request with the following stipulations:

1. That artificial noisemakers, such as but not limited to, “Thundersticks”, cowbells, whistles, horns, etc., may not be a part of the crowd noise;
2. Bands, amplified music, or sound effects are still only permitted during dead-ball periods;
3. The artificial crowd noise may not drown out the officials’ whistles or disrupt the official’s management of the game;
4. That the decibel level, not to exceed 85db, must remain constant throughout the game when the ball is live;
5. The referee shall have the authority to regulate and/or eliminate the artificial crowd noise in the event they determine that it is interfering with the conduct of the game.
6. Conferences are encouraged to approve the crowd noise being used by its institutions and it is recommended that all institutions’ artificial noise be similar.
7. This does not prevent a conference’s or institution’s media partner(s) from adding crowd noise to their broadcast provided it is inaudible within the facility.

9/1/20 – The Captain (Rules 3-2.1 and 3-3).

It has been the prevailing practice that during the captains’ meeting with the officiating crew, all captains as chosen by their respective institutions participate in this meeting. The playing rules state that at the start of the game, one of the five players on each team shall be the teams’ respective captain. To help with keeping a physical distance between game officials and players, there should be no more than one captain from each team taking part in the captains’ meeting. It need not be the “official” captain that represents the team at this meeting.