

Games become less desirable to watch and support when they are influenced by factors other than the players on the floor. People see when a persistent coach is getting into the head of an official. The players see it too and adjust their behavior accordingly. The officials do not need the additional pressure of this sideline distraction and obviously are declining the job more and more. I'm referring to the practice of allowing coaches to talk to the officials during a game.

The perception fans have when a coach barks at a ref, or even whispers during a quick walk by, is that calls will suddenly switch favor. Truth is, it usually does. Who really wants to support or play in a game that has any appearance of being rigged?

It is extremely naïve to believe the kids don't recognize this affect and behave accordingly. Discipline starts at the top. Make the coaches lead by example.

Your organization pays for ads pleading with the fans to respect the officials and behave as good sports at all of the events. In these ads are comments about the struggles WDA and EDA have recruiting and keeping good refs. Take some of the problem away by eliminating the obnoxious behavior right on the floor. No judgment is needed for the official. Simply put – no conversation allowed between the officials and a coach.

I am not sure of this last part, but I did have one ref tell me the coaches are very influential in choosing which ref works in their gym. An obvious problem exists if this is actually true. This practice should cease immediately and the responsibility be given to the Athletic Director or WDA /EDA organization itself.

By allowing these conversations between coaches and officials to continue, you are explicitly implying that the refs do not know what they are to look for unless a coach points it out to them. The game is not a proper time to be learning how to referee a game. If a problem exists, point it out in private using film as a guide. Let's bring integrity back to our high school programs.

Sincerely,

Tom Jorda