

THE DOWNSIDE

If every now and then the shooters try to steal a foul by spreading a leg and looking for an improbable failed contact, much more problematic to handle is the situation where the defender goes to occupy the shooter's landing spot, recently renamed as "landing foul". We have dealt in the last post rights and duties of players who take their feet off the ground and fly back to where they jumped or are entitled to land on a spot that was free at the time of the jump. If in the "spread off leg" situations players can fall after touching each other in the air, the "landing foul" situation presents much more risks and injury possibilities for the players: than finding or landing, on a regular and flat surface such as parquet, they ends up "tripping" on one or both feet of the defender. Anyone who has played basketball will have experienced how painful it is to twist an ankle, even if only on the playing court, but landing on an opponent's foot can be much more dangerous and injuries as well as ankle or can affect all joints and even the back.

Clip 1 – 15red dribbles near the two points line, he stops and shoots, 22 yellow jumps to counter the shot but ends up under the feet of the opponent. The referee sanctions a foul on the shooter: 3 free throws.
Clip 2 – 14 white dribbles and stops for a 3pt shot, 10 black jumps to counter the shot and falling back goes to hit the opponent. The referee sanctions a foul on the shooter: a valid 3pt basket and 1 additional free throw.

In the first clip the defender, clearly late, arrives with one foot under the right foot of the shooter who has not yet returned with both feet on the ground, the basket is not made. The defensive movement could become dangerous for the shooter also in relation to the fact that the defender rotates on himself going to invade the opponent's cylinder.

In the second one the defender, besides being late, is also out of balance, the failed contact occurs when the shooter has put both feet on the ground, the basket will still have to be awarded, but the sanctioned foul will result in a white throw-in because the AOS has now ended. If the black team had been reached foul penalties in the fourth

quarter then the foul would have penalized with two free throws.

In both situations, the contacts are part of the game and the delay of the defenders; unfortunately there are some plays in which the defender "walking" gets right under the point of release and the consequences of the foul are dangerous. This type of action is configured in the criteria of the unsportsmanlike conduct or expulsion foul, depending on the manner in which it takes place. Curiously, the FIBA has included this criterion not in article 37 or 38, but in article "33.6 Player in the air": creating in fact the sixth criterion for the assessment of an unsportsmanlike foul.

This type of contact must be sanctioned consistently, and its abuse by defenders must be limited, especially in conditions where the contact could cause a serious injury to the opponent. Players are the primary asset of basketball and must be adequately protected (by referees), but respect for opponents must be a dogma for any player!

OFFENSE/DEFENSE?

One of the biggest difficulties in refereeing basketball is contacts evaluation among players in movement. A decision taken only on the final moment – impact – often is not enough to "guess" the responsible and "strike" the call. Refereeing is not a bet : knowledge of the play and of the rules must be conjugated with a punctual reading of the play, mostly when the players collide coming from different directions and often floating in the air.

What happened: 3blue receive in the 3pts area, start in cross to overtake his opponent, two dribbles end jump for a shoot in the paint, 9 and 21yellow close the space in front the semicircle. 3blue and 9yellow fall on the floor. Centre and trail ref call a foul, their body language is eloquent: they exactly call one the opposite of the other! While the ball lies in the net for blue overtake, the trail ref makes "a step back" and let the scene to his mate: defensive foul, 3blue basket&1 which leads blue tem to 100pts and final victory.

On the rule book the criteria is extremely clear: after establishing a defensive legal guard position, the defensive player may move to guard his opponent, and move laterally or backwards in order to maintain the initial legal guarding position, and if the contact is on the torso of the defending player he's responsible of the contact and an offensive foul must be called if the defensive player receive a damage or a disadvantage physical/technical.

9yellow executes perfectly his defensive movement, stopping outside the no-charge semicircle before 3blue lift from the floor;

9yellow steps backwards his right foot leaving space for the offensive player which causes the contact before releasing the shoot; charging foul!

The basket have to be cancelled and the game resumed with a throw-in yellow on the side line at free throw line extended.

After the release (you find the link under) Euroleague decides to stops the referees of the games, revoking nominations just sended. The referees have "jumped" the following four days of the tournament.

For further informations you may click on this links:



Where with Tommaso Tani we make a detailed analysis of the play in the podcast 3PO (only Italian version available)

Euroleague press release: <https://www.euroleague.net/news/i/aaaw3k4ot9ucr8p8/euroleague-basketball-report-on-fenerbahce-beko-istanbul-valencia-basket-defensive-foul-call>

ISN'T A SHOOT! BUT ...

Sooner or later, we were sure it would happen! The ball is deflected out of bounds, the game resume with 7red throw-in with 19" frozen on the shot clock. The ball in flight to the basket touches the ring then

bounces twice on the floor before it been caught by 12red. The shot clock operator starts the countdown for red team from 19". Right or wrong?

This case is similar to the one explained in FIBA Official Interpretations (17-30), but the interpretation are not complete and probably wrong in some indications. They didn't cover the spectrum of situation which may be occur: as usual we try to describe all the possible scenarios and we found a tricky one.

When the ball hit the ring, nor clock, game & shot, have to start! But, if the interpretations provide that the shot clock operator shall not reset his clock, until the game clock starts and he must reset the shot clock to 14/24 when one team gains the control of the ball, the interpretation didn't cover the case when the ball touches or is touched by a player whose not establish the control of the ball. By rule the shot clock start when the ball touches/is touched: art. 50.1 2nd dot! Then reset when the ball is controlled by one team: FIBA OBRI 17-30. It seems very difficult to apply, especially when few seconds are displayed.

We think that as during a field goal, a pass or any other situation, live ball, if the ball touches the opponent's ring the shot clock must be reset and where is possible with no display visible, including the throw-in case.

From a throw-in A in frontcourt, the ball touches the opponent's ring:

- The shot clock must be reset "blank"
- The game clock starts when the ball touches or is touched by a player
 - The shot clock starts from 14" if team A control ball in his front-court
 - The shot clock starts from 24" if team B control ball in his back-court
 - The shot clock starts from 24" if team B control ball in his front-court
 - The shot clock starts from 14" if team A control ball in his back-court ... and if the referees didn't call a ball returned to back-

court!

In many situations, like in the clip, touch and control are simultaneous.

If you enjoy you make the other cases when the throw-in A is in his backcourt

JUMP & LAND!

The players jump! The four clips below are very interesting, in more of them the referee miss the call, probably surprised by the player's play! We want to deepen our [previous topic \(*\)](#):

11blue receive the ball and is ready to shoot from the 3pts area. After 11blue has lifted both feet an opponent try to block the shoot, without touching nor the ball or the body of the shooter. To avoid the block 11blue throw the ball to the floor. Once landed the 11blue picks the ball and shoot again. – Violation / nobody calls –

25white receive the ball and want to shoot immediately. After he has lifted both feet from the floor, 25 White realize that the difensive player is coming, 25white interrupt the shooting movement to avoid the block, then before Landing he throws the ball, with a crooked pass, towards his mate on his left side. – Legal –

25white gains the rebound after the 3pts shoot by 0white. Probably he thinks to shoot immediately, but the continuos movement has been interrupted. 25white jumps & lands with the ball in his hands. After landing 25white starts a dribble and try a shoot. – Violation / nobody calls –

16red receive a pass and try immediately to shoot while 0white defend on him. After he has lifted both feet from the floor and the way to basket is closed by the opponent, 16red throws the ball on the floor

and after landing he picks the ball to shoot again. 0white didn't touch the ball and the ball didn't touch him.— Violation / nobody calls –

A player who holds the ball may jump; when he is airborne and before landing on the floor with one foot or both feet he:

- can only Shoot and Pass
- cannot dribble: if the ball exits from the hand(s) after lifting the pivot foot he commits a violation.

If the player loses the control of the ball which escapes from the hand/s, he doesn't commit any violation (fumble).

Some people say: the player let the ball falling down. What does it mean? Did he release a shoot? Did he release a pass? Is it a fumble? Is it a dribble? We have other options: if any other player touches or is touched by the ball? We think that if a player let the ball falling on the floor, he is dribbling. A dribble is "a movement of a live ball caused by a player in control of ball who throws, taps, rolls or bounce the ball on the floor". (RB24.1.1)

The referee must be able to read the play and recognize the movement of the players, as they do when they evaluate an act of shooting. For a referee is useless to say to everybody "I have seen" waving his arms; especially when the player commits a violation! A call/no call - can be wrong although the explanation is accepted.

FOUL CANCELED

13white in the act of shooting is fouled by 50red, while 22white pushes the 10red in rebound situation. The lead ref calls two times: one personal foul (P) on 50red and one unsportmanlike foul (U) to 22white. The ref signals the two fouls: P and U and the intention to review the U foul on the IRS. After the reviewing of the play referee informs coach red of his decision and then signals again to the officials table the foul by 50red, correcting the first wrongly signal for a foul by 10red (2 free throws), after he have canceled the U foul by

22white; the game resumes with two free throws by 13white with players line up.

- When the foul to 22white is called the ball is dead
- A personal foul is a player illegal contact with an opponent, whether the ball is live or dead (RB 34.1.1); An unsportmanlike foul is a player contact ... ° Excessive, hard contact caused by a player in an effort to play the ball or an opponent (RB 37.1.1 2nd dot – C2)
- The IRS can be used to decide before to sign on the scoresheet: ... During any time of the game – whether a personal, unsportmanlike or disqualifying foul meet the criteria for such a foul shall be upgraded or downgraded or shall be considered a technical foul (RB 46.12 3rd dot 3rd line)
- The foul reviewed even if not occurred cannot be cancelled (FIBA OBRI 46-11) in case the contact not occur the U foul maybe downgraded to a P or T foul in case of fake or swinging elbow without contact (FIBA OBRI 46-10)
- The FIBA OBRI 42-3 mustn't be applied cause the first and the second foul are on two different players and not on the same player in the act of shooting (the ball didn't become dead).

We can not see the IRS images examined on the court, but only the images transmitted by Eurosport. The contact caused by 22white seems useless and near the shoulders/neck of the 10red, the ball is dead (or "very close to die" when the contact occurs). The contact called U mustn't be downgraded and the initial decision should be confirmed. The game should resume with 2 free throw by 13white with no players line up, then two free throws for 10red and possession of the ball red at the throw-in line with 14" on the clock shoot.

Many people ask us if the U foul maybe downgraded to P foul; rules book provides that it can be done (RB 46.12 3rd dot 3rd line), but when the foul is downgraded it cannot be cancelled by the scoresheet (FIBA OBRI 46-11). In case of downgrading the U foul to P foul the game resumes as follows:

1. If 22white foul is less or equal than the 4th white team penalty in the quarter the penalty for the personal foul by 22white will be a throw-in for red team. The game resume with two free throws for 13white no players line up. Even if the last free throw is scored or

not the red throw-in from the base line in back court is from the designated throw-in place.

2. If 22white foul is more than the 4th white team penalty in the quarter the penalty for the personal foul by 22white will be 2 free throws for 10red. The penalty is equal to the one for the foul by 50red on 13white. Both penalties are equal and shall be canceled; because at the moment of the first infraction the ball was in white team control, the game resume with a throw-in from the offensive base line in white front court with the seconds showed on shot clock at the moment of the first infraction called.

Rules ranks fouls: personal, unsportmanlike, disqualifying in a grave-ness stair (by damage and by sanction) IRS protocol allows to reclassify the foul up or down this stair, without necessarily doing step by step. As you read we may jump from P to D and the other way around without going through U, in some cases P/U/D may be turned in T but a foul reviewed on the IRS cannot be canceled!

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PERCEPTION

Many people wonder about what's going through the mind of a referee when he calls something that didn't happens or miss an infraction that everyone sees. You can smile or fall in desperation depending on the angle of your sight. Talking about an evaluation error, in some cases, might be paradoxical, often the difference between perception of reality (decision) and what really happens unfortunately it's huge.

Perception is a process of elaboration of sensorial data coming from outside and their translation in complex information to be entrusted to "cognitive functions". This is not a passive answer, fragmented, automatic, but an active and direct organization of data. Referee must manage many complex situations, in which data arrives through eyes and ears, in a three-dimensional space and as a function of time: the real marked by the clocks; the emotional conditioned by the mood; the one of perception of the objects wich moves around and how fast they

change the position.

This complex process request the ability to express hypothesis (not to guess) about what happens, the elaboration of all data, associated to knowledge and experience produce choices, sometimes simple and immediate, other times complex therefore slower. At any choose should match a decision: call-no call, possibly connected with reality. Anyway in the game occurs situations which overcome the human perceptive limit, an help may arrive by the review of TV shots, but the limits imposed by the IRS protocol or by the two-dimensionality of TV images, are unable to dispel all the doubts.

At any level of officiating should match a degree of knowledge and ability to manage the largest part of the situations, It could be enough to stop for a moment, to understand what's happens around; the teamwork increases different point of sight, from comparison should germinate the seed of equity. The main matter is to understand to have committed a blunder, and if it possible to correct it! Turn a blind eye, push ahead, sell the call, not to ask or to listen, may be an immediate analgesic, but without a specific care, in a short time the pain come back, probably harder.

The clips shows a crescendo of wrong perceptions, subjective, where the interpretation and the consequent choose leads to a, objective, wrong decision. The "physical" proxemic of the call and the signal subtract lucidity and self-critical capability; contribute to inhibit a possible help by the mates, but above all didn't convince nobody! If not yourself.

Today the web and the television rebounds immediately the images worldwide, often with the intent to expose the actors to the public derision. Once again we try, with our rereading, to give ideas and suggestions to limit or correct the wrong perceptions, always within the rules. Understand and develop efficient knowledge and strategies to not confuse our perceptive system and cause it to fall into error. Gain the skills about the method of perceiving the external world regarding the available tools. To be able to perceive reality not only from a subjective point of sight, but also from an objective side, in the awareness that's all is relative and has not universal value. To grow up by overtaking yourself, shifting your own limits ahead, modifying the sights angles on ourselves and others, by boosting the chang-

ing.

Clip 1 – Goal tending, interference

The 24white shoot is blocked by 0blue in his upward flight and before the ball has touched the backboard is sanctioned as a violation of GT/I from the centre ref. The call arrives in lagging behind the legal play of 0blue. The “strength” signal by the centre ref, turns off the correct evaluation of the trail ref who make a nod of assent with his head, to endorse the legality of the 0blue block shoot. During the dead ball a communication by the trail ref to his mate could repair the mistake, but may lack courage to help and correct the mate? Cancelling the wrong decision the ball will be awarded to the blue team, indicated by the possession arrow, but the basket wrongly awarded would be correctly cancelled. We don't know if the blue coach asks for a review of IRS, opportunity not granted in that moment of the game.

Clip 2 – travelling violation

Few seconds left on the game clock, blue team is trailing by 2, 11blue jumps for a 3pts shoot, but 6yellow, although late, close the shooting space with the left arm, 11blue to not take the block shot and not having time to pass the ball, let it fall on the floor. Releasing the ball after have lifted the pivot foot 11blue has committed travelling violation. The trail ref, well placed, after have lifted the right arm to signal the attempt but miss the travelling call, then he bends over his legs and indicate with the two joined arms an imaginary point on the floor. 11blue regain the ball and release another 3pts shoot to win, but the ball bounce on the ring and the game ends. You can see in the background the centre ref who after reporting him too the 3pts attempt, drops his arm, probably comforted by safe expression of his mate, closest to the play, he decide for a no call and lift shyly half arm on the 2nd 3pts attempt. The play of 11blue is not a fumble, an eventual touch of the ball by the leg of 6yellow after the release of the ball by 11blue mustn't change the evaluation on the violation committed. Missing the call, no decision can be taken to correct the mistake – imagine if the second attempt enters the basket? – you can only apologize!

Clip 3 – Offensive foul

Fast break 2white stops in the paint and release a shoot, while the ball enters sweetly in the net, the lead ref calls an offensive foul to 2white, guilty to have pushed 6red, and cancel the basket. The great emphasis put in the call and signal decrease lucidity and concentration, it would be enough to stop for a moment to understand that nobody has understood! 6red is convinced that he makes the foul, except then to realize reality and distance themselves with his mates. No help arrives from the other referees, turned off by the signal sureness of the lead ref? Mostly from the centre who accompany the fast break slowly, guilty in late. A brief analysis of the play, by the crew, or only an answer about the moment of the contact related to the shoot, could have light on the "lamp" to correct the error. The foul called couldn't be cancelled, but since the contact occurs after the ball was released the 2pts must be granted. The game resume, after recording the foul and the basket on the scoresheet, with a throw in from the end line for the red team following a successful basket – white team hasn't finish is penalties in the period – with 24" on the shot clock.