

REFEREE THE DEFENSE

The block/charge is not the toughest call to make if you're looking at the right things.

What is the toughest call in basketball...the block /charge? Consider a multiple foul situation followed by technical fouls on both coaches and players leaving the bench for a fight as the toughest call. Do you know how to administer that? The block/charge is not difficult if you know what to look for.

Let's start by reviewing some basic ideas. When guarding a player with the ball, the player with the ball must be prepared to immediately stop or change direction when the defender appears in the player's path and assumes a legal guarding position. The dribbler does not get any time or distance to stop or change direction in order to avoid contact. What is a legal guarding position? The defender merely must have both feet on the floor and be facing the opponent. Once the defender obtains a legal guarding position, even if the defender beats the player with the ball to the spot by a split second, the burden then shifts to the player with the ball to stop or change direction in order to avoid contact.

Ask yourself, was the defender at the spot first without illegally contacting an opponent? Was the defender facing the offensive player? Did the defender have both feet on the floor when obtaining the legal guarding position? If you answered "yes" to all three questions, then the burden is on the player with the ball to stop or change direction in order to avoid contact. The defensive player is then allowed to stay in the path of the player with the ball and move to maintain position after initially obtaining legal guarding position. In that situation, the responsibility for contact is still on the player with the ball unless the defender is moving toward the player with the ball when contact occurs. Remember, the defender is never allowed to move into the path of an airborne offensive player. If, however, the defender gets to a spot first and the offensive player then becomes airborne, the burden to avoid contact is on the airborne player.

After determining that the offensive player is dribbling straight to the basket, take your eyes off the dribbler and locate the defensive player. Where is the defensive player? Has the defensive player established a legal guarding position? Has the defensive player legally gotten to the spot first, initially facing the dribbler with both feet on the floor? If so, the offensive player has committed a foul if significant contact occurs.