

Helping Your Table Crew

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I am writing this, first as a High School Physical Education Teacher and Department Head, second as an official and third as a coach.

Part of my role as Phys. Ed department head is to train and assign students to complete service hours as minor officials for our team athletic events. To ensure things run smoothly, I assign a timer, score keeper, shot clock operator, and score board operator. The timer can help the score keeper by calling player numbers in a fast paced game.

During one of our recent games, I was short one minor official and had to operate the shot clock myself. The table crew did a great job trying to stay on top of things. As the game progressed, I noticed how demanding the position of minor official can be.

Students who act as minor officials may or may not be basketball players, and even if they are basketball players, they may not truly understand all of the rules and procedures of play. They also may not be familiar with the mechanics of a basketball referee.

Because it is early in the season and many schools are training new table crews, I am asking the referee and umpire to assist the minor officials. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Introduce yourself to the table crew, let them know your name and that you will support them throughout the game. Some of these students may be nervous about the game, particularly if it is their first game or if they know it may be a tight game.**
- **Ask them if they have any questions or need any clarification. You should not have to train the officials, but a short explanation of when to start and stop the game clock and reset the shot clock may eliminate problems later in the game. Show them the mechanics you will use for this.**
- **When reporting fouls, please clear past the players on the court and get to a spot where the table crew can see you. Slow down! Be very clear in your signals and speech when you report the team and number for fouls. It is particularly tough for the table crew when you report a made basket, foul, and time out at the same time while the crowd is going crazy and both coaches are up out of their chairs. Help the table crew get it correct by slowing down.**
- **If you see a coach at the bench during play, help the table crew by asking the coach to stay in his or her box. These kids are trying to concentrate on the game just like you.**
- **During the game let them know how things are going and what to expect.**
- **At the end of the game, thank them as you would your partner. These students are part of your crew, making them feel that way will help them perform better.**