

POST-GAME DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the most common mistakes made by officials is to believe their job is done once the final horn sounds to end the game. There are still several responsibilities that need to be taken care of and each one is as important as officiating the actual game. Remember how we discussed the importance of completing the pre-game responsibilities? Although there may not be as much to do when the game ends, the manner in which the officials complete their post-game responsibilities will leave a lasting impression on each of the participants.

Handshake Responsibilities

Even though the horn has sounded, the officials must still devote their attention to the players. A game which results in an altercation after the game will leave a bad taste in everyone's mouth, especially since the altercation could have been avoided with strong work by the officials. Awareness is still very much the key to managing the post-game activities.

When the horn sounds, the officials should immediately skate to get in between the opposing players. The teams will generally separate then and eventually will form a line for the handshake. One official should be positioned on each side of the handshake line and they should stagger themselves in order to have one official towards each end of the line. Be sure to monitor the entire line as all it takes is for one player to say something or make unnecessary contact with an opponent for action to develop.

Watch for potential problem areas. For instance, two players who were on each other the entire game need to be watched carefully as they meet in the handshake line. Another potential problem area involves a player who committed a violent infraction and injured an opponent. The injured player's teammates may look at the handshake as a good opportunity to seek revenge. A quiet presence by the officials during this time will be all that is needed to prevent potential altercations. Also, keep in mind that a player may be penalized after the game and be sure to do so when deserved.

Escorting Teams Off The Ice

When the handshakes are completed, both teams will be in a hurry to exit the ice. When a common exit is used for both teams, one team must be held back until the opposing team has completely left the ice. The team whose bench is farthest from the exit is the team who will be held by the officials. One official must be positioned in front of the team being held, signaling and communicating to please wait. This is done to prevent a log jam of opposing players at the exit door, where an altercation can easily be started and should be followed each time the teams leave the ice during an intermission.

Be sure to monitor all of the players leaving the ice all the way until they enter their dressing room. This quiet presence and awareness will help prevent off-ice situations from occurring and will enable the officials to identify players who incite opponents or spectators. While players are leaving the ice, limit conversations with players and coaches to rules questions or other pertinent topics. Avoid discussions about judgment calls or your partner. Maintain a professional and courteous appearance at all times and compliment players on a nice game as they stop to offer their respect with a handshake for a job well done.

Leaving The Ice

As you leave the ice surface, be sure to maintain a professional appearance and demeanor. Keep your helmet on and your sweater zipped until you have entered your dressing room. Move quickly to your dressing room and avoid conversations with spectators. It is also tempting to make a comment directed at a spectator who was hounding you the entire game. Refraining from doing so will uphold your integrity and not give the spectator the satisfaction that you were affected by the remarks. Maintaining a professional attitude until behind closed doors will portray officials who are in control and take pride in their work.

Officials' Dressing Room

The officials' dressing room after the game is the place where the official can finally relax and let it all hang out. The time spent in here getting changed can also be used as a time to review the game with your partner(s). Discuss any unusual situations and review those areas where you thought you could have performed better. Be sure to also praise your partner(s) for those areas where the job was done well. As before the game, be sure to respect your partners' privacy by not allowing any visitors into the dressing room. There will be plenty of time after you are changed to catch up on the latest or discuss the game with your guest.

Clean up the dressing area prior to leaving the room to enable the next officiating team to experience the same clean atmosphere you were entitled to prior to your game. Respecting the cleanliness of the officials' dressing room will also be appreciated by the arena staff who will show you the same respect the next time you are in the arena. Finally, if a game is scheduled immediately following your game, be sure the next officiating team is present to work the game. If not, your willingness to stick around and fill in for the missing official(s) will be greatly appreciated and may prevent an embarrassing situation for your local group of officials.