

We live in a win-at-all-costs culture where people do not always treat those involved in competition with dignity. Officials face the challenge of being the ones to uphold a positive, safe sports environment. You are the one group that regularly gets training on how to handle bad behavior by coaches, fans and student-athletes. For that reason, PCA will has a few tips to support you during the competition.

1. Introduce Yourself to Coaches

When you first arrive, introduce yourself to those coaching. This familiarity can help humanize you and make dealing with challenges easier.

2. Set Clear Expectations

Before competition begins, address athletes and set expectations for how you prefer interactions to go.

3. Nip Problems in the Bud

Address violations that take away from a positive sport experience for all involved as soon as you see them.

4. Remember the Rule of “First 15 Contacts”

The first part of the game is the learning phase for players, coaches and officials. People will evaluate what you call or don't call in the early stages of the game and adjust their tactics accordingly.

5. Control the Sidelines

When possible, work with the coaches to control the sidelines. Coaches can let unruly fans know directly of their potential negative impact.

6. Answer Questions Calmly

Coaches and athletes may have seen things differently than you, but if you explain your point of view calmly, they know why you made the call you did.

