

2015 NBVOA Best Practices for Line Judges

This outlines several protocols and techniques that are advocated for use by top-tier line judges.

Pre-Match Briefing with First Referee

- First Referee sets the tone for the team and the value of having professional line judges.
- Line judges should arrive at least 35 minutes before match time. First referee should conduct the pre-match briefing courtside, but not on the playing surface, at some point after the coin toss.
- First referee will assign the line judges to their positions, unless previously assigned. LJ1 is nearest the first referee and LJ2 is on the bench side of the court.
- Decide on rolled-up flag location during timeouts (in front or behind)
- Review time out and between set protocol and position.
- Determine the exit plan for the referee team and location of the post match debriefing.
- After the pre-match briefing, line judges should take a position behind the score table or away from team benches until the time comes to warm-up their eyes..

Warming Up Your Eyes.

- The exercise is an opportunity to observe the court surface & markings, types of arm swings & shot selections, speed of the ball and types of serves; it provides stimulus to mentally prepare for the match.
- Stand upright during this pre-match exercise without a flag.
- There is no specific length of time to warm-up your eyes. Try to give equal time to both teams while hitting at the net..

Antenna Check

- As you take the court for line up check or introductions, each line judge checks the tautness and position of their antenna.

Position During Lineup Check.

- Each line judge will take a position approximately 10 feet straight back from their base position on the imaginary extension of the sideline.

- As the second referee delivers the game ball to the server, each line judge will take their base position.

During the Match

- When a server takes a position in preparation to serve that is within 3-5 feet of the line judges' base position, move to either a position behind the server on the sideline extended or on the side of the server on the end line extended (becoming the preferred position)

Timeout Protocol

- When the second referee whistles to acknowledge a timeout request, LJ1 retains their position while LJ2 walks outside the court along the end line. The line judges should roll up their flags. When LJ2 reaches LJ1's sideline, both line judges walk toward the first referee's stand to their timeout positions.
- Each line judge straddles the attack line extension with their flags held in front or behind them with both hands.
- Converse with the first referee only if they engage you or you have something important to share about crowd behavior.
- At the 15-second warning whistle to end the timeout or when both teams seem to be ready to resume play, both line judges give a glance toward each other to ensure that they leave their timeout position at the same time and return to their base position.

End of Set Protocol

- Line judges track and retrieve the game ball as able and take their timeout position at the attack lines on the first referee's side.
- After both team's participants have changed benches, both line judges walk across the court on the attack line and place the game ball at the score table.
- The line judges sit behind the score table or in another location off the court away from the team benches. If no chairs are provided or available, the line judges stand behind the score table if room is available.
- At the 30-second whistle line judges should return to their pre-match position – 10 feet back from their base position. LJ1 and LJ2 walk outside their sideline and not across the court with the first referee.

Position during the Deciding Set Coin Toss

- After gathering the game ball, the line judges will take their timeout position.
- If the teams are switching court, the line judges wait until all participants have changed benches and then take the game ball to the score table. If teams do not switch course, wait until the area near the score table has cleared and then return the game ball to the table.
- Line judges will take their between-set position.

End of Match Protocol

- All officials should leave the court together
- During the Post-match debrief, line judges need to engage in the discussion pertinent to the line judge duties or calls. Refrain from criticizing your fellow officials. Be a good team player.

Line Judge Reminders

- Avoid any dialogue or overly familiar contact with players, coaches or spectators. Continue eye contact with the R1
- DO NOT mirror or mimic the other line judge.
- If you have a concern about the crowd or if you are asked questions by players, coaches, spectators or event staff, respectfully refer them to the second referee.
- If you wish to alert the first or second referee to an unusual event situation, do so during a dead ball. Go up to and check the antennae on your side. While you are there, you should be able to talk to the referee on your sideline discretely.

Line judges are an integral part of the officiating crew. Thank you for your dedication and cooperation in demonstrating the NBVOA line judge protocol and techniques and for promoting consistency.

20 On Court Simulations

Set Up:

Two attackers other side of net
Three blockers our side of net
Three back row players our side of net
Two line judges
One talkative coach standing on sideline
One aggressive ex boyfriend taunting a player
One ball monitor

1. Get your eyes to the line before the ball, but only after you have determined that no player is in position to make a play on the ball.
2. When to move up the line for a better view.
3. When to get low to get the floor view.
4. When to move sideways to get the antenna call. (When a wide ball is being returned to the opponent. Step out to watch for an antennae fault. Be cautious not to move too far from base position. Recover to your line quickly in case you need to call a ball landing near a line.)
5. When to get tall to see the touch.
6. When a ball is coming at you, face the line and stay with the ball. If necessary, take one for the team.
7. In order to sell a line call, hold the call momentarily and look at the first referee while holding the call. DO NOT Double snap or snap high then low for an in call.
8. Either line judge can call antennae faults on either antenna. Line judges are responsible for calling a fault if the ball touches the antenna, not a player.
9. When an antenna fault requires additional information, indicate the team at fault with your free hand.
10. When a player chases a ball off the court and unsuccessfully attempts to pancake = TOUCH Anticipate pancakes. Move like a defender in order to get a good look but usually not more than 2-3 feet. Refrain from moving unnecessarily to avoid being a distraction.
11. The flag snap during the call can give the appearance of assuredness. Eliminate the snap after the call. Style is good, but don't showboat.
12. Ball contacts a net post or referee stand =OUT

13. Ball hits antenna, net, or cables/straps/ropes outside an antenna = ANTENNA FAULT
14. Attacked ball lands out on defending side of the net, after touching at least one defender= Touch
15. Attached ball lands out on attacking team's side of the net, after contacting on opposing blocker=OUT
16. Attached ball, after being blocked, then contacts a player on the attacking team and lands out on the attacker's side=TOUCH
17. Ball hits overhead obstruction after 3rd contact or over nonplaying area on any contact = OUT
18. Line judge sees a touch but is blocked from seeing the ball land, or the in/out decision belongs to the other line judge = TOUCH
19. Situations where Line Judges DO NOT SIGNAL
 - When ball completely crosses under the plane of the net
 - When ball lands "in/out" on the other line judges lines only.
 - When line judge is obstructed from seeing
 - When a line judge does not see a touch, even if the other line judge is signaling touch.
20. Coffin corner calls – each line judge calls their respective line.