

10 tips for Communicating with Coaches

1. Before the game, meet with Home coach first so if there is anything unusual before the game or at halftime that you have not been told by the AD, he can inform you. Then you can tell the visiting coach if he does not know.
2. At the pregame meeting you get your first chance to be recognized as someone in charge. This goes for Ref, Ump, and LOS official on that sideline. Look them in the eye, tell them your name, and give them a firm handshake. It is okay to wish them good luck and tell them you are there to help them understand any unusual situation that might happen during the game. Be confident but not arrogant.
3. Discuss with head coach how you plan to handle a bad actor. Tell them you will try to let them know if a player is acting inappropriately and they can handle the situation. “ Coach it is better for your team if you handle the problem than if I am forced to.”
4. Referees, tell the coach that you will look for him if there is a decision to be made about penalty enforcement. He should also be looking for the guy in the white hat in these situations.
5. Should there come a time when the coach is angry and wants to talk with you (either the LOS or Ref) go to the sideline and don't let him come on the field. If he is on the field, just keep going to the team box. I guarantee he will follow you there. Listen with no emotion. If there is a question answer it. If there is a rant just listen and say, “ I hear what you are saying” or something non-committal. NEVER say anything negative about another official.
6. When a coach gets louder your voice gets softer. If a coach continues to rant after the second play following the problem, tell him you have heard him and will consider his opinion but now we all have to move on. “Coach, I hear what you are saying, Now let's get on with the game. It is going to be 2nd and 3 (or what ever the situation is).”
7. If an assistant coach is out of line, tell the head coach and he usually will handle it. Try not to penalize the players for a knucklehead assistant coach's actions.

8. Do not feel that you need to have the last word. I know it is hard to swallow sometimes, but it will help in the long run if he gets to have his say and we all can move on.
9. If a coach wants to discuss a first half situation as you are leaving the field at the end of the half, talk to him! If there is a problem he wants to discuss at the end of the game make him run fast because that is what you ought to be doing.
10. If we hear the infamous, "I'm going to call Tracy", tell him Tracy loves to talk to coaches anytime. Tracy will not throw you under the bus.

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