

CENTRE LINE RULE CHANGES 2009 **For Knox Domestic Coaches, Players and Officials**

A number of players and coaches have become confused with some of the changes to the rules that came in to effect this season. These changes relate to Article 30 – Ball Returned to Backcourt and to Article 28 relating to the Eight Second Rule. Let's look at the Rules from the **Official Rule Book 2008** and the **Official Interpretations of 2008**. I have highlighted some important wording and made comments where I hope it may help.

ART. 30 BALL RETURNED TO THE BACKCOURT **(from the Official Rule Book)**

30.1.1 The ball goes into a team's backcourt when:

- It **touches** the backcourt.
- It **touches** a **player** or an **official** who has part of his body in contact with the backcourt.

30.1.2 The ball has been illegally returned to the backcourt when a player of the team in control of the live ball is:

- The **last to touch the ball in his frontcourt**, after which that player or a teammate is the **first to touch the ball in the backcourt**.
- The **last to touch** the ball in his **backcourt**, after which the ball **touches** the **frontcourt** and then is **first touched by that player** or team-mate in the **backcourt**.

This restriction applies to all situations in a team's frontcourt, including throw-ins.

However, it does not apply to a player who jumps from his frontcourt, establishes new team control while still airborne and then lands in his team's backcourt.

Explanation and Interpretation of this Rule.

While **airborne**, a player retains the same status relative to the floor as when **he was last touching the floor** before jumping into the air. The application of this principle has sometimes resulted in an unfair situation.

When an airborne player

- (a) jumps from his/her **frontcourt**,
- (b) gains control of the ball (e.g. **intercepts** a long pass) while still **airborne** and in doing so is the **first player** on his/her team **to establish team control**, and
- (c) then **returns** to the floor in that team's **backcourt**,

Then that player **cannot avoid a violation** for **illegally** returning the ball to the **backcourt**.

To **eliminate** such an unfair situation, an **exception** to Art. 30 has been adopted, stipulating that if an **airborne** player establishes a **new team control**, that **player's position** relative to frontcourt/backcourt **will not be established** until the player has **returned both feet** to the **floor**.

Example 1:

A4 in **team A's** backcourt attempts a fast break pass to **A5** in team A's **frontcourt**. Player **B3**, in team **B's frontcourt** (team A's backcourt) jumps and **intercepts the pass** while still **airborne**, after which B3 lands

- (a) With both feet in the **team B backcourt**.
- (b) **Straddling** the **centre line**.

Interpretation:

No violation has occurred. When B3 established the **first team control** for team B while airborne, B3's position relative to frontcourt/backcourt was **not established** until both of B3's feet **returned to the floor**. In both (a) and (b), B3 is now considered to be legally in the team B backcourt.

Example 2: (This is only at the **START** of the game and is another **MAJOR** change)

On the **jump ball** that **begins** the 1st **period/half**, the ball has been legally tapped when non-jumper **A5 jumps from team A's frontcourt**, gains control of the ball while **airborne** and lands in team A's **backcourt**

- (a) With both feet in the team A backcourt.
- (b) Straddling the centre line.

Interpretation:

No violation has occurred. Team A **first established team control** when A5 gained control while **airborne**. In both (a) and (b), A5 is legally in the team A backcourt.

Example 3:

Thrower-in A4, in the **team A frontcourt**, attempts to pass the ball to A3. A3 jumps into the air, gains control of the ball and returns to the floor

(a) With both feet in the team A backcourt.

(b) Straddling the centre line.

Interpretation:

Team control in the frontcourt **has already been established** before A3 gained control of the ball while airborne. In both (a) and (b), a **violation has occurred** by illegally returning the ball to the backcourt.

ARTICLE 28 Article 28 Eight Seconds

(Note: This change relates to the **dribbler** while he is **still dribbling only**. When he **stops** his dribble, he is **no longer “the dribbler”**).

THE RULE AS STATED IN THE RULE BOOK:

The ball goes into a team's frontcourt when:

- It **touches** the **frontcourt**.
- It **touches** a **player** or an **official** who has **part** of his **body** in **contact** with the frontcourt.
- During a **dribble** from backcourt to frontcourt, **both feet** of the **dribbler** and the **ball** are in contact with the frontcourt. This applies to the player only as long as he is dribbling.

Example 1:

A1 (not a dribbler) **stands** on the court **straddling the centre line**. He receives the ball from A2 who is in the backcourt. A1 then **passes the ball back** to A2 who is still in the backcourt.

Interpretation:

This is a violation by A2 as A1 is not the dribbler. The Art. 28.1.3, 3rd bullet applies to the **dribbler** only. This has always been interpreted that way.

Example 2:

A2 dribbles the ball from his backcourt and **ends his dribble** while **straddling the centre line** holding the ball. After that A2 passes the ball to A1 who stands on the court also straddling the centre line.

Interpretation:

The **dribbling ends when the player touches the ball with both hands simultaneously** or permits the ball to come to rest in one or both hands. Therefore A2 is **no longer a dribbler**. **Any pass** of A2 to A1 who is straddling the centre line or a pass **to** any other team-mate in **the backcourt** is a **violation**. This has always been the case.

Example 3:

A2 **is dribbling the ball** from his backcourt and has **one foot** (but not both) already in the frontcourt. A2 then passes the ball to **A1, who is straddling the centre line**. A1 then continues to dribble the ball in his backcourt. Note A1 is **not** the dribbler.

Interpretation:

Violation by A1. The original dribbler, A2, has not caused the ball to move into the frontcourt. However, the ball does move into team A's frontcourt **when it touches A1 who has part of his body in contact with the frontcourt**. A1 shall not be permitted to then return the ball to his backcourt.

Example 4: *Here is the change*

Dribbler A4 is advancing the ball from the team A backcourt when A4 stops his forward motion but **continues the dribble**

(a) While **straddling the centre line**.

(b) While **both feet are in the frontcourt** but the **ball** is being dribbled **in the backcourt**.

(c) While **both feet are in the backcourt** but the **ball** is being dribbled in the **frontcourt**.

Interpretation:

In (a), (b), and (c), dribbler **A4 continues to be in the backcourt until both feet as well as the ball are touching the frontcourt**. The eight-second count shall continue in each situation. **No violation** has occurred.

Example 5:

Dribbler A4 is advancing the ball from the team A backcourt when A4 **dribbles along the centre line** with **both feet in the team A frontcourt** but with the **ball being dribbled in the backcourt**. A4 then continues the dribble by **returning both feet to the team A backcourt**.

Interpretation:

Dribbler A4 **continues** to be in the **backcourt** until **both feet and the ball** are touching the frontcourt. The eight-second count shall continue. No violation can be called **while he is still dribbling**.

I hope that these examples help to explain these rule changes and changes in interpretation of the rules. Changes occur every year and it is difficult to get them clearly communicated to everyone that should know about them. I am always happy to talk with coaches, clubs or representatives to help explain rules and rules changes that are not fully understood.

If there are any questions please contact me at adviser@vbraknox.org.au or on my mobile 0416 297256 or feel welcome to ask me in person any time I am at a stadium.

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