**Handling Situations**

By: Dan Payne

While handling situations, it is imperative to be cool, calm and collected when being confronted by a head coach.

It is better to listen and understand his perspective and why he is on the field before speaking. Remember, there are instances when he is on the field to address you simply to vent or specifically to defend a player and NOT necessarily be in disagreement of a call.

Situational awareness is key: Is it a one run game? Have a number of close calls gone against his team over the course of the game?

Avoid becoming defensive, confrontational or sarcastic. We are the ones in control of the game and must maintain our own composure and confidence. Making eye contact and keeping our chin up is an important part of the body language that is required to retain support and respect with the head coach. Base partners have the obligation to keep additional players and coaches away from the conversation while also reading body language and keeping within ears distance when possible.

It is important to address when the conversation has gone on too long or is going in circles. We want to let them have their say and we want to be good listeners, however arguing about a call that is not going to change only holds up the game and we must respectfully keep it going. Consider using language such, “Bill I heard your concern and appreciate your perspective, however I am not going to change the call and it’s time to move on.” Or, “We’re going to have to agree to disagree on this one.”

If after using this courteous language it is still not working, it is possible that it is time to use an official warning. However, if he is just giving a parting shot and walking away, we don’t want to open up a whole new can of worms. Remember, we don’t need to get the last word in, we just want to resolve the situation and ideally keep him in the game while restoring whatever order whenever possible.

If and when the ejection is warranted, be sure to get an official warning in whenever possible. Work then with your partners in the postgame to ensure the ejection report is handled professionally and all of the facts are included.