

SPORTS

New basketball rules confusing

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Staff Writer

The 1982-83 ACC basketball season will be one of experimentation, with the thirty second clock and the three point field goal being used for the first time in the history of the conference. These changes have left many area fans confused about the new rules, and also wondering what effect the changes will have on the game they hold so dearly.

In principle, the rules are simple; the team with possession of the ball has thirty seconds in which to attempt a field goal, and any shot made from beyond a line positioned nineteen feet from the front surface and plane of the backboard counts three points. The difficulty arises in the definition of possession and in the lack of a uniform rule for the entire NCAA.

The new rules state that a team is in possession when holding, passing or dribbling the ball. The team remains in possession until a shot is attempted or possession is lost in some other manner, or until the thirty second clock has expired.

The question of when the clock should be reset is also a confusing one. The clock is reset at thirty seconds anytime there is a violation or a foul, a kicking violation, or a technical foul. The clock is also reset whenever a shot or a pass hits any part of the rim, but not if it touches only the backboard or the net. If the ball is knocked out of bounds by the defensive team with less than five seconds on the shot clock, the clock is reset to five seconds.

The players will likely share in the fans' confusion for at least the early part of the season. They will be instructed to play the official's whistle instead of the buzzer on the thirty second clock. Possession may be lost prior to that time and play will continue.

With all of this confusion in just one conference, the non-uniformity throughout the nation could cause the coming year to be a national disaster in the world of basketball. With many of the major conferences employing different combinations of the shot clock and the three point field goal, fans will receive a mixed bag of gimmickery in the next

year. The distances for the three point field goal range from 19 feet in the ACC to 23'6" in the Southern Conference. Clocks around the nation will click off anywhere from twenty-four to forty-five seconds.

What will the rule changes mean to the ACC? Most likely, the rich will get richer and the poor will get poorer. There will be no more stalls in the ACC, no more chances for the weak sisters to hold the ball and stay in the game until the end. It will also keep the Four Corners under wraps until the final four minutes of each game when the thirty second clock is turned off.

The changes will cause scores to go up and the game to become more offensively oriented by drawing the defense out to protect against the three point goal. With the three point line only 19 feet from the basket and sharpshooters like Carolina's Michael Jordan and Jimmy Braddock routinely shooting from that distance, the Tar Heels and most other ACC teams could be putting points on the board at three points a pop in this season's ACC contests.



Michael Jordan

The rule changes could mean a shot in the arm for the already booming industry of ACC basketball, or it could mean a bust, with comparisons to the less popular but improving NBA. Only time will tell.

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