



**FIBA**  
We Are Basketball

# **FIBA OFFICIALS MANUAL**

## **MENTAL PREPARATION FOR COMPETITIONS**

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Written by:  
Dubravka Martinovic  
Sports psychologist

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**FIBA - International Basketball Federation**

5 Route Suisse, PO Box 29  
1295 Mies Switzerland fiba.com  
Tel: +41 22 545 00 00  
Fax: +41 22 545 00 99

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FIBA Referee Operations.

If you identify an error or a discrepancy in  
this material, please notify the FIBA Referee  
Operations at [refereeing@fiba.basketball](mailto:refereeing@fiba.basketball)

# FIBA OFFICIALS MANUAL

## MENTAL PREPARATION FOR COMPETITIONS

### *FOREWORD*

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FIBA has created a wide range of supporting programmes that are aimed at facilitating a referees' preparation in order to ultimately be successful during the game. Some of these programmes relate to normal officiating training inclusive of, call selection, mechanics and techniques, physical performance training, using technological tools and equally important - mental preparation.

In order to help basketball referees prepare mentally, Mrs Dubravka Martinović, a sports psychologist and who has been collaborating with the FIBA Referee Operations since 2014, has developed a set of documents in this field. This guide will provide referees with new tools to improve their understanding of the mental requirements for officiating as well as their own responses and behaviour in the challenging situations that they may face. Finally, the application of these proper mental preparation tools can enhance your own wellbeing as well.

Note:

In addition to this Guide, some of the chapters have been sectionalized and will be distributed into smaller topics in the series of "Improve Your" documents.

Enjoy your reading and hopefully you will find this material helpful.

@ your service,

***FIBA Referee Operations***

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**PRE-GAME  
PREPARATION**

## CHAPTER 1: PRE-GAME PREPARATION

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Officiating at the top level is usually as a result of great knowledge, experience and top pre-game preparation. Mental preparation before the game helps you warm up mentally and optimizes your arousal levels to get ready for the game. You feel more concentrated, more confident, ready, and in control while doing your pre-game preparation plan.

Although pre-game routines are personalized and different for each referee, this chapter will present some general guidelines to assist with your preparation.

### ***Psychological or mental preparation for a game involves:***

- Rule and Interpretation knowledge preparation – this knowledge is essential and basic, and should be at the highest level. The better you know the rule book, the better you'll be able to apply it in a real game situation. So, if you feel that you need to renew some of the rules' knowledge, you should read the rule book, repeat them visually through imagery and watch them on video clips.
- Game characteristics preparation – it refers to venue and teams characteristics (i.e. specific type of team strategy and play, current team position, coach behavior, player behavior, playing style of specific player, injured players, statistics of the team, fan zone characteristics, etc.). This kind of information can help you prepare for possible specific situations – i.e. player who usually likes to flop – and your reactions and game control solution for those situations.
- Crew characteristics preparation – knowing the characteristics of your co-officials and their officiating style will help you to know what to expect in a point of view of game control and criteria, and also, your reaction to their behavior and performance during the game. Knowing your co-officials' characteristics helps you prepare for the pre-game conference topics and establish the required criteria.
- Arousal control preparation – refers to your individual preparation through imagery, self-talk and solution mode thinking.
- Focus on performance (not on outcome) – during the preparation for the game it is really important that you are highly focused on your performance (What should I do and how will I do it?) not on the outcome (Will I officiate good?).

**EXAMPLE 1:** If before the game you start to think "How will I be evaluated by the observer?" or "How many good or bad decisions will I make?" you are not focusing on your performance but on the outcome. By changing your outcome goals for that game, i.e. "I want to be highly evaluated by the observer", "I want to officiate this game without any mistakes" or "I want this game to end without any conflictive situations" to performance goals for that game, i.e. "I will concentrate on my AoR", "I will search for the best position in each situation to make a good decision", "In any conflictive situation with this challenging coach I will try to find the best possible solution to manage it" you are putting your focus and attention to your performance, to what you want to do in specific situations. By focusing on your performance you are getting closer to a better evaluation from the observer, higher number of good decisions, better game control.

## **EVENT PREPARATION**

If you are nominated to officiate at some tournaments during the summer (U16, U17, U18, U19) it is important to also prepare for your expectations and focus on your daily and performance goals – How do I want to officiate? How will I prepare for each day for every game I'll be nominated?

**EXAMPLE 2:** If you start thinking that you want to officiate finals (outcome), it is important that you prepare for each game as if it were the finals itself. You should prepare for each game, step by step, you should not think about the final game until it comes. Because, by focusing in each game separately (game characteristics, crew characteristics, arousal control and performance goals) you are able to perform (officiate) better, and by officiating at your highest level you are closer to your ultimate goal – officiating the finals.

The more you're prepared, the more you'll feel confident and ready, but remember, as much as you are prepared, be also ready for the unexpected. The better you're prepared, the better you'll find the solutions for the unexpected situations.

### **EXERCISE 1: WHAT IF" SCENARIOS**

While preparing for a specific game, you can use "what if" scenarios to prepare for possible difficult or unexpected situations (i.e. fight between players, broken time machine, one referee is late for pre-game conference, etc.).

- Scenario: What do you expect can happen?
- Describe the situation
- How should I react in this situation? – your self-talk, behaviour and actions

This type of preparation helps you to stay calm when something unexpected happens and focusses you on solution mode thinking. Also, when something actually does go wrong, you will have a clear blueprint for dealing with it.

### **EXERCISE 2: MANAGING A DIFFICULT COACH OR A PLAYER**

- Put on paper what are the characteristics of the coach/player that is troubling you in the last few games
- What are the situations that trigger his/her inappropriate behaviour?
- What is your reaction to this behaviour?
- How do you usually deal with him/her?
- Now, search for a better reaction and a possible game control scenario for that situation.
- How should I act, behave and talk to him/her?
- Think about the strategy as to how you will deal with it more successfully. See yourself acting in a calm, firm and professional manner.



# POST-GAME EVALUATION

## CHAPTER 2: POST-GAME EVALUATION

Self-evaluation after the game can help you to **learn** from your experience and **improve** your performance for the next game. By doing a self-evaluation you can recognize some patterns of your performance and behaviour that contribute to a good or a bad performance.

The best period for conducting a game analysis is **within 24 hours after the game**. Your memory is still fresh and you can easily recall many situations that you'd like to reconstruct. Use this information to maintain or modify your pre-game preparation and behaviour.

**EXAMPLE 1:** You may find that bad team work and different criteria among the crew is a result of a poor pre-game conference between crew members. According to that finding you can think about possible solutions for the pre-game topics for the same (or other) crew at some other game.

While doing the self-evaluation it is important to be honest to yourself, as well as objective and constructive. If the game was video recorded you can also see the game more objectively and more detailed. Video analysis information will help you understand some situations even better when you are watching them from the "camera point of view", with some time delay.

**EXAMPLE 2:** By watching the video of the situation in the 3rd quarter of the game, you find out that you made a bad decision (no call) because of your mechanics / position and therefore did not have a good angle to see the contact. Then, for each situation that you find wrong, search for solutions and write them down in a way "What can I do differently next time in the same or a similar situation to prevent the same mistake from happening again?!"

While doing the self-evaluation it is important to examine both situations where your performance was great, and situations you are not satisfied with. You can identify strong and weak areas and find the underlying reasons for your performance (either good or bad).

### EXERCISE 1: VIDEO – ANALYSIS COMBINED WITH IMAGERY

After the game search through the video for situations that you would like to analyse more than others.

1. Search for 2-3 great situations – where you were at your best and made a very good decision.
  - See what did you do good and what was your decision or move.
  - Repeat the same situation once more, and store it in your memory.
2. Search for the 2-3 poor situations – where you didn't do a good job - made a bad decision or movement.
  - See what did you do wrong – made a bad decision.
  - Search for the solution for the same situation – what will you do if this or similar situation happened again? Be specific and affirmative! – What you should do, not what you should not to do! Change the script of that situation so that the outcome is better.
  - Repeat that solution and changed script also through imagery scenario, first from external point of view – to see how this should look like, if you watch it on the TV. Then, repeat it through internal point of view – like you are doing it in the real situation.
  - Continue rehearsing this new outcome until you feel confident being able to cope with the original circumstances.

# MENTAL PREPARATION FOR THE TOURNAMENT



## CHAPTER 3: MENTAL PREPARATION FOR THE TOURNAMENT

One of the greatest acknowledgements and honour for referees (especially for the young ones) is to receive a nomination for FIBA World Tournaments. **Nomination to officiate the best teams in the world with the best referees in the world** it's for the most of you a dream goal from the day you have become officials. Therefore, preparing yourself mentally for officiating on the 'world stage' should be a very essential and important part of your preparation.

By setting the guidelines for your preparation, let's see first what are **the main characteristics of the FIBA competitions** and how they differ from the seasonal (club) competitions.

- National teams from all over the world – the best of the best (players and coaches) performing together for their **national teams**. You can expect the diversity in playing styles and performance levels.
- Referees and Instructors from all over the world – culturally and ethnically **diverse** backgrounds, different ways of communication and expression styles, as well as the levels of experience among all members of the Officiating Team.
- 10 – 15 days with games played every day – it means that you need to be physically and mentally fit **every single day**.

The understanding of these general characteristics of the FIBA competitions (tournament) will enable you to prepare yourself better and more specifically, therefore - more successfully. Although individual preparation and routines are personalized and differ for each referee, in this chapter some general guidelines will be presented on how to prepare yourself mentally prior to the tournament.

### **BEING REPRESENTATIVE**

It is very important to be aware of the areas you would like to improve and upgrade that are essential for your confidence and the representative performance on the 'world stage'. So when you receive your nomination, think about your areas of improvement and **make your action plan** for reaching the objectives until the start of the tournament. This will help you to **stay motivated, focused and confident**.

**EXAMPLE 1:** you know that rule knowledge is essential and basic and should be at the highest level at all times, but you feel that you need to refresh the knowledge of all the rules related to the travelling violation.

### **UPGRADE YOUR ENGLISH**

For some of you it can be a challenge to prepare to speak in English. However, it's the **official language in the FIBA tournaments**. If you upgrade and improve your English, your involvement in the communication during the Pre-Competition Camp (PCC) activities will become better and your confidence will be higher. You will be able to track, understand and participate in all the activities. Nowadays, you have many free online applications for learning a foreign language (especially English).

### **EXERCISE 1: UPGRADE YOUR ENGLISH**

- Read the rule book in English and make sure you understand everything so you are able to explain rule cases during the PCC group activities and/or during the games.
- Prepare yourself extra for the words, phrases, and interpretations mostly used in the language of basketball officiating.
- Ask for a favour. Contact your fellow referees, native English speakers, and ask them to meet with you a few times via some video-call app to practice your basic and officiating English.

### ***NATIONAL TEAMS' CHARACTERISTICS***

Also, it is important to prepare for all groups and teams' characteristics. You should know whom you are going to officiate (teams, players, coaches). All this information can help you to prepare for each group's characteristics and the **level of basketball expected** to be played.

**EXAMPLE 2:** Who were champions of each zone and their characteristics, host national team's characteristics, your national team's characteristics (if the team participates), which national teams were 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the previous tournament, etc.

Sharing the information you know about some national teams' characteristics (i.e. style of play, statistics, coaches' behaviour, etc.), can be beneficial to all the Officiating Team. If you had a chance to officiate your national team's games or any other national team during the zone competitions you can collect all the important and **relevant information into one file and share it with your colleagues** even before PCC, so everyone can prepare in advance. If each one of you does this, you will probably have a folder including all teams and their characteristics with beneficial information for each referee. Imagine, how this amount of information can benefit everyone – all the Officiating Team will be prepared and confident before the start of the games!

### ***UNDERSTAND CULTURAL DIVERSITY***

One of the main characteristics of FIBA competitions is cultural and ethnical diversity. Understanding the ethnic and cultural diversity of your Officiating Team can help you feel more comfortable and confident in a **multicultural environment**. Prepare yourself for diversity in communication styles, mindset, backgrounds and values. Be open to learn and understand something new and different that could help you form a strong alliance with your colleagues. This can be very useful during the whole tournament and every game, especially because it is expected that all referees should officiate applying the same criteria. Regardless of all the differences, remember, you are all part of the FIBA officiating family presenting its principles and values in the same way.

If you add these general guidelines to your personal mental preparation routine your confidence and level of overall preparation will be higher and better. The more you're prepared, the more you'll feel confident and ready. But remember too - as much as you are prepared also **be ready for the unexpected**. The high preparation level will allow for more effective solutions in unexpected situations.

# MENTAL PREPARATION DURING THE TOURNAMENT



## **CHAPTER 4:**

# **MENTAL PREPARATION DURING THE TOURNAMENT**

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When you arrive at the venue of the tournament, you have a few days of the Pre-Competition Camp (PCC) first. Activities and sessions presented during the PCC are usually stretched throughout the whole day, sometimes even 10 hours a day. This requires you to be active and to pay attention from the early morning to the late evening. Staying focused and aware during all the **PCC activities** is essential for you to learn and understand all the requirements, criteria and standards presented by Referee Instructors during these few days.

### **JET-LAG ISSUES**

Some of you may experience a jet-lag problem because of the UTC hours differences that can influence your attention during the PCC. Make sure to take all the required actions (food, liquids, physical activities, etc.) to prevent the jet-lag taking control of your concentration and attention abilities. For more information please see 'Improve Your... Jet Lag Management' document.

### **WORKING IN GROUPS – ACTIVITIES & DISCUSSIONS**

Working in groups during the PCC activities can be really beneficial for you. You can establish professional working relationship with your new colleagues actively participating in discussions and tasks. If your English is not fluent, try to build up your confidence by actively participating in all activities even if it means drawing on a paper or using some translation apps.

Prepare yourself for possible cultural diversities regarding the ways of gestures, communication, problem-solving and participation. Try to be open to some new information that can be useful to upgrade your performance and preparation.

### **CREW CHARACTERISTICS PREPARATION**

Knowing the characteristics of your co-officials and their officiating style will help you to understand what to expect from their points of view in terms of game management, in terms of game control and criteria. Also, this knowledge may help you to prepare for your reactions towards their behaviour and performance during the game. It is an important part of your individual pre-game preparation that can be beneficial for establishing pre-game conference topics and the required criteria. To be better prepared for your crew's cooperation, it is essential to understand that individuals function differently and that each person has a unique way of preparation. Some of you will need to psych-down or **relax** (i.e. stretching, low-beat music, visualization, etc.) before the game, while others will need to psych-up or **activate** (i.e. sprints, push-ups, high-beat music, etc.) before the game. It is important not to compare yourself with other co-officials and not to be judgemental of their way of preparing to reach their optimal performance level. All of you should respect each others individual preparation prior to the game. After all, the better each of you is individually prepared, the better you will perform together as a crew.

### **SAME CRITERIA**

When participating in the pre-game conference be specific and constructive. Try to use solution-mode thinking words and sentences to explain what should you as a crew do during the game (rather than saying what to avoid or not to do). Setting the same criteria from game one, on the first day of the tournament, is one of them. All the crews for all the games should be able to set the same criteria of officiating for the whole tournament. Sometimes this requires some adjustments and self-discipline (different from your officiating style that you have used during the season in your domestic or regional leagues). Prepare yourself mentally to stay concentrated to that adjustment from the first day. Use this as an opportunity to rebuild your officiating style by learning and adding something new to your performance. Look at this not as the change of your style but rather as a professional upgrade to the next level. While speaking during the pre-game, make sure that everyone understands what you are saying. If you are a crew chief, at the end of the pre-game conference make a summary of the top 3 most important points for the game you as a crew want to achieve, and double check that everyone understands.

**EXAMPLE 1:** You may notice that one of your colleagues is not fluent in English but you need to prepare for the pre-game conference to set the same criteria and to discuss about the game. Prepare to use video clips, a video application and a referee board if necessary to visually demonstrate what do you mean and what you want to explain. The visual information is more understandable to everyone, no matter the language differences.

### **GAME CHARACTERISTICS PREPARATION**

It refers to preparation for two teams' characteristics in each game (i.e. specific type of team strategy and play, coach's behaviour, players' behaviour, specific players' characteristics, statistics of the team, etc.) This kind of information can help you to prepare for possible specific situations – i.e. player who usually likes to flop or coach who usually likes to complain – and your solutions for those situations.

### **YOUR PERFORMANCE GOALS**

After you have gathered important information about the teams' characteristics and your crew's characteristics you start to prepare yourself mentally for each specific game. It is important also to prepare for your expectations and your daily goals.

You should focus on each game, and your performance goals, separately. Then you will be able to perform (officiate) at your highest level.

#### **EXERCISE 1: THINK ABOUT THE GAME**

- "How will I prepare for this game? How do I want to officiate this game?"
- "What are the most important things I need to pay attention to during this specific game?"
- "What kind of mindset, solution-mode thinking and self-talk phrases I could use to be ready for specific situations that may occur during this game?"

## **AFTER THE GAME**

You will receive post-game feedback from the top Referee Instructors in the world. Be open and ready to embrace all the information they provide regarding your areas of improvement, your strengths, and your potential. Advices they give could be crucial for your future career development. Be ready to correct and/or improve some elements of your performance by the next day (in the very next game), because Referee Instructors will track your improvement and will observe your progress every day. Some elements you will be able to improve immediately (within a day or few), others will require some more time (few weeks or few months) depending on the area you need to improve. More open you are to accept the Referee Instructors' feedback, more efficiently you will be able to improve.

**EXAMPLE 2:** You can improve within one day and show it in the very next game, for example being active in the centre position, using your whistle more firmly when making a call or verbalizing your decision when showing the signal. On the other hand, you will need more time, knowledge, practice and experience to improve some elements that require a better understanding of the basketball game, the flow of the game, emotional self-control or game control from the behavioural point of view.

### **EXERCISE 2: LEARN FROM THE FEEDBACK**

Make an improvement plan in one day:

- Watch the video clips Referee Instructors provide you and see what they mean when talking about i.e. mechanics, rotations and positioning, signals, presentation, or verbalizing the call, etc.
- Ask yourself "What can I improve immediately for the next game."
- Use imagery scripts to repeat the correct way in your mind. Visualize how you do this correctly. Repeat this several times until you feel you have it under control.
- Use a mirror or camera to see how you are doing a specific movement, signal or presentation. Practice in your room.
- Focus on the next game and think of how you can apply and show your improvement (not on what you would like to avoid repeating again).



# OFFICIATING ADOLESCENTS

## CHAPTER 5: OFFICIATING ADOLESCENTS

The participation in youth sports is increasingly popular and widespread worldwide. National and international basketball federations organize **youth competitions** in various age categories competing as low as **under-14 and up to under-21**. These competitions also represent the showgrounds where young talented players are identified and their future in basketball is directed, e.g. university/college basketball or professional playing career.

It is not uncommon for young talented players to attend 15-20 hours of specialized training per week and to compete every weekend or more often. For you, as a referee who will officiate youth competitions, it is important **to understand the main developmental characteristics of young players** that will help your efficient preparation for the games.

Some young players may look like adults but their cognitive, emotional and behavioral stage is not at that level yet. Their physical maturation has little correlation with emotional and cognitive development and it is critical to understand that **adolescents are NOT “young adults”** but they are a **unique group** with its own characteristics and developmental stages.

**EXAMPLE 1:** A 17 years old player looks like an adult, being over 190 cm high and over 90 kg weight. That does not necessarily mean that his cognitive abilities and emotional stability are developed and mature.

Adolescence is a period of frequent changes in many aspects of life. A period between childhood and adulthood, ages from 12 to 21, on average. **During these years, hormonal, physical, cognitive, emotional and social changes occur.** The most noticeable are the physical changes that teenagers experience, resulting in an increased height and weight, maturity of organs needed for reproduction and other visible changes. Within a span of a few years a dependent child becomes an independent member of society, adjusting to all these changes – new body presence, social identity, hormonal burst, more complex thinking and many others.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTIC OF ADOLESCENCE**

#### **Early adolescence 12 – 14 yrs (elementary school)**

A significant physical growth occurs (8-10 cm during just a few years). Frontal lobe, the part of the brain responsible for functions such as complex reasoning, problem-solving, decision-making, long-term planning, self-evaluation and regulation of emotions, just begins to develop during these years of early adolescence (completed at the age of 16-17, during the middle-adolescence). During this period teenagers can struggle with moodiness, more likely to express feelings by action than by words, with a tendency to return to the childish behaviour. Cognitively, concrete\* thinking dominates with limited ability to extend the logic to abstract\*\* concepts. Understanding the “cause-effect” relationship is underdeveloped. They tend to test rules and limitations set by adults. There is a gradual development of the ability to apply what they’ve learned to new tasks. They start learning new skills in sport, but still they are mostly playing for fun and having a good time with friends. When they think about sport and career they are mostly interested in the present and near future goals, that are changing quickly and frequently.

\*Concrete thinking is referred to “reading” the facts and what is visible. Refers to a thought process where a person perceives something that is present physically around him/her and interprets only

it as it is seen, heard, or touched. Do not go beyond these facts, because of the absence of concepts and generalization. It is literal thinking that is focused on the physical world, in the here and now literal definitions.

**\*\*Abstract thinking** refers to “understanding why” and it is based on ideas and using interpretation. It goes beyond physical facts and looks for interpretations and understanding. An abstract thinker is able to perceive analogies and relationships that concrete thinker may not see. Can go beyond what is present and form conclusions and deductions.

**EXAMPLE 2:** Concrete thinker would interpret “People who live in glass houses should not throw stones” to refer literally to breakable panes of glass. An abstract thinker, in contrast, would understand that the figure of speech means that people who have faults of their own should not criticize others.

### **Middle adolescence 15 – 17 yrs (high-school)**

The physical growth slows for females but continues for males. They continue to experience a growing capacity for abstract thought and develop new thinking skills, such as thinking about more possibilities, about the process of thinking itself, in multiple dimensions, being able to see something from other’s perspective. The capacity for problem-solving, reasoning, decision-making is bigger. The “cause-effect”**\*\*\*** relationships are better understood and they are able to see things as relative rather than absolute. The period is signified by increased capacity of self-regulation and emotional control. When under stress, usually they tend to revert to concrete thinking, childish behavior and emotional reactions, having no patience to think over the pros and cons or of the steps they are going to take. Impulsivity often wins over the intellectual growth and they often act before thinking of the long-term consequences. This is the main period of sports specialization which includes a more intense and specific every day training for a selected playing position.

**\*\*\*The “cause-effect relationship is a relationship when one event (the cause) makes another event happen (the effect). One cause can have several effects.**

**EXAMPLE 3:** Player making 4th foul at a tied game can understand that if he makes another foul he/she will be removed from the court and his team will have less chance to win the game because he/she is their best 3 point shooter. Therefore, he/she stays more focused on playing proper defence and not making a foul.

### **Late adolescence 18 – 21 yrs (from high-school to college/work)**

Most girls are fully developed while boys continue to gain height, weight and muscle mass. At this stage both genders typically experience more cognitive developments. They gain the ability to think about ideas rationally, delay gratification, plan for future, and develop a firm sense of identity. The capacity for analytical, hypothetical and reflective thought is greatly enhanced. Greater ability to consider different points of view and concern for others can result in an increased empathy. It allows them to better value the diversity of people (and their perspectives) and to realize that there may be many right answers to a problem. They also experience an increased emotional stability, self-regulation and independence. They start to think about their roles in life and can think about the future, considering many possibilities and logical outcomes of possible events. This is a stage of feeling in-between – seeing themselves as neither adolescents nor adults. They have stable interests. It is a transition period from school to work/college/independent living. In sport it is a

transition from junior to senior team – a transition from the amateur sport to professional sport, which is their biggest milestone in the career development.

While becoming more familiar with all these characteristics it is important to understand that not every teenager will experience these development stages in the exact same way at the exact same time. **Individual, cultural, and other differences** play an important role, but there is a number of normative developmental tasks that each of them will face. Nowadays, both, girls and boys are entering puberty at earlier ages than ever and is more gradual and varied (by gender, ethnicity, lifestyle, and social class) today than in the past.

### ***DURING THE GAMES***

Because adolescents can grow up to 25 cm (or even more) during these few years, they **can be clumsy**, unwieldy, with awkward non-coordinated movements. This can lead to mostly unwilling and unintentional forbidden contacts between two or more players which **can lead to more violations and even more possible injuries**. Therefore it is really important while officiating to pay more attention to their movements, anticipate possible contacts, and put criteria that will provide a safe environment for the play. Safety and protection from injuries!

You can also expect them to be **rich in emotional energy**, showing it **more expressively and less controllable** than in senior games. You can notice anger, frustration, sadness, disappointment, joy, pride, euphoria and many other emotions during a single game. Be aware that some of them are just learning to control their emotions and are not thinking clearly before acting (not even thinking about consequences or “cause-effect” relationship – they just want to express their emotions). Be calmer and under control, use specific and clear explanations when communicating and correcting their reactions and behaviour. Be prepared to use more solutions for the game control. If your **criteria is clear and consistent** from the very beginning of the game, there are high chances that players will be able to follow and understand it – what is allowed and what is not.

Sometimes they will even question your authority (especially if the criteria is not consistent). They can show disagreement with your decision expressing it too emotionally and vividly – more showing it with gestures and behaviour than verbally complaining to you. Stay **calm and professional** and be clear and specific while correcting it. Do not take it personally – it also has something with their developmental stage. They are unique and sensitive group. Keep this in mind when giving a warning and talking to them – do not humiliate them (in any way) just because you are older and they are young. Respect their age, development stage and effort they put for the game. Act as professionally as you can while talking to them – the younger they are the more influence on their rule understanding and its implications you have and more professional you should be.

### **EXERCISE 1: OFFICIATING LOCAL YOUTH TEAMS' FRIENDLY GAMES**

If you have a chance to officiate some friendly games make them as an exercise for you to better understand these developmental characteristics in adolescence.

- Prepare and recognize differences in a way of body strength, emotional self-control, behavioral self-control, understanding of the rules and their interpretation, etc.
- Prepare for situations where you'll be additionally explaining some rules while officiating (i.e. U14 games), helping young players to better understand rule implications during the game.
- Prepare to be more physically active, ready for a faster running and quicker changes in positioning while officiating (i.e. U17 boys games). They tend to be faster and potent in many actions, but sometimes not being able to finalize them successfully at the end. Sometimes, this may lead to their own frustration and disappointment, showing it too emotionally and vividly for everyone else. Make sure to prepare yourself for being calm and professional while dealing with this kind of reactions and emotions.
- Think about concrete and abstract level of thinking that may occur during the game.
- Prepare to explain some situations through "cause-effect" relationship, especially if you recognize that they do not understand.

# STANDARD QUALITY GLOBAL CONNECTION



5, route Suisse - P.O. Box 29  
1295 Mies  
Switzerland  
Tel.: +41 22 545 00 00  
Fax: +41 22 545 00 99